

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

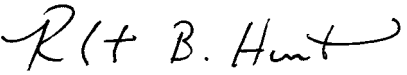
No. 1598

H.P. 1056

House of Representatives, April 10, 2025

An Act to Provide Relocation Assistance to Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Sex Trafficking

Reference to the Committee on Judiciary suggested and ordered printed.


ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative STOVER of Boothbay.
Cosponsored by Representatives: GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, MEYER of Eliot,
PLUECKER of Warren, RANA of Bangor, SATO of Gorham, Senator: RENY of Lincoln.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §3360, sub-§3-A is enacted to read:

3-A. Domestic violence crime. "Domestic violence crime" means domestic violence assault, as described in Title 17-A, section 207-A; domestic violence aggravated assault, as described in Title 17-A, section 208-D; domestic violence elevated aggravated assault, as described in Title 17-A, section 208-E; domestic violence elevated aggravated assault on a pregnant person, as described in Title 17-A, section 208-F; domestic violence criminal threatening, as described in Title 17-A, section 209-A; domestic violence terrorizing, as described in Title 17-A, section 210-B; domestic violence stalking, as described in Title 17-A, section 210-C; and domestic violence reckless conduct, as described in Title 17-A, section 211-A.

Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §3360, sub-§7 is enacted to read:

7. Qualified counselor. "Qualified counselor" means a sexual assault counselor as defined in Title 16, section 53-A, subsection 1, paragraph B and an advocate as defined in Title 16, section 53-B, subsection 1, paragraph A.

Sec. 3. 5 MRSA §3360, sub-§8 is enacted to read:

8. Sexual assault or trafficking crime. "Sexual assault or trafficking crime" means sexual assaults as described in Title 17-A, chapter 11 and aggravated sex trafficking or sex trafficking as described in Title 17-A, sections 852 and 853, respectively.

Sec. 4. 5 MRSA §3360-E, sub-§6 is enacted to read:

6. Relocation assistance for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or trafficking crimes. Notwithstanding the compensation limits in subsections 1 and 3, if the underlying crime is a domestic violence crime or a sexual assault or trafficking crime, the board may award compensation for actual and unreimbursed relocation expenses in accordance with the provisions of this subsection.

A. The board may award up to \$3,000 to a victim, except that, if the victim is the victim of one or more subsequent domestic violence crimes or sexual assault or trafficking crimes, the board may award additional compensation as long as the lifetime total compensation the victim receives under this subsection does not exceed \$5,000.

B. Compensation may be awarded under this subsection only if:

(1) A qualified counselor certifies in writing that the victim had an urgent need to relocate to escape an unsafe environment directly related to the domestic violence crime or the sexual assault or trafficking crime and that the relocation was part of a safety plan developed by the victim with a qualified counselor; or

(2) A prosecutor certifies in writing that the victim had an urgent need to relocate due to the threat of future violence associated with an ongoing investigation and criminal prosecution of the domestic violence crime or the sexual assault or trafficking crime.

SUMMARY

This bill provides that a victim of a domestic violence crime or a sexual assault or trafficking crime is eligible to receive up to \$3,000 in compensation from the Victims'

1 Compensation Board for actual and unreimbursed relocation expenses to escape an unsafe
2 environment directly related to the underlying crime or to alleviate a threat of future
3 violence associated with the ongoing investigation and criminal prosecution of the
4 underlying crime. If the victim is the victim of one or more subsequent domestic violence
5 crimes or sexual assault or trafficking crimes, the board may award additional relocation
6 assistance as long as the total lifetime relocation assistance the victim receives from the
7 board does not exceed \$5,000.