

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from electronic originals
(may include minor formatting differences from printed original)

LAWS
OF THE
STATE OF MAINE

AS PASSED BY THE

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION
JANUARY 7, 2026 to APRIL 29, 2026

THE GENERAL EFFECTIVE DATE FOR
SECOND REGULAR SESSION
NONEMERGENCY LAWS IS
JULY 29, 2026

PUBLISHED BY THE REVISOR OF STATUTES
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MAINE REVISED STATUTES,
TITLE 3, SECTION 163-A, SUBSECTION 4.

Augusta, Maine
2026

A. Attracting and selecting, through recruitment and other measures, qualified law school applicants from rural and underserved areas in the State who demonstrate a commitment to and aptitude for practicing law in those areas upon graduation;

B. Placing or otherwise connecting enrolled and qualified law school students with internships, externships and other professional opportunities with organizations and other entities that provide legal services to individuals in underserved areas in the State;

C. Placing or otherwise connecting recent qualified law school graduates with employment or other professional opportunities providing legal services to individuals in underserved areas in the State; and

D. Encouraging collaboration between the school of law and secondary school students, undergraduate school students and other individuals in underserved areas in the State, as well as with organizations and other entities that provide legal services to individuals in those areas.

2. The school of law shall administer the rural practice track and develop and implement guidelines, policies and procedures for the operation of the track and for staff and students participating in the track. The school of law may accept gifts, bequests and endowments, as well as federal, private and other grants or donations, to support the objectives of the rural practice track. In administering the rural practice track, the school of law must:

A. Provide, in each academic year, a housing stipend sufficient to cover the cost of dormitory housing at the University of Southern Maine for up to 6 first-year or 2nd-year law school students who reside in underserved areas in the State or who have demonstrated a commitment to and aptitude for practicing law in those areas upon graduation, as determined by the school of law;

B. Provide, in each semester of the academic year and over the summer, internship, externship and other professional opportunities with organizations and other entities that provide legal services to individuals in underserved areas in the State for up to 6 2nd-year or 3rd-year law school students who reside in underserved areas in the State or who have demonstrated a commitment to and aptitude for practicing law in those areas upon graduation, as determined by the school of law;

C. Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing and communications plan to recruit and retain students from underserved areas in the State who demonstrate a commitment to and aptitude for practicing law in those areas upon graduation and support the placement or other employment of law

school students and recent graduates in those areas; and

D. Collaborate as necessary with the Finance Authority of Maine in its development, implementation and administration of the Access to Justice Loan Program established under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 12312.

No later than January 1, 2026, the University of Maine System shall submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs and to the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary outlining its plan for implementation of the rural practice track at the University of Maine School of Law, including any recommendations for legislative or other action. After reviewing the report, either committee may report out legislation related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

Sec. 3. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

FINANCE AUTHORITY OF MAINE

Access to Justice Loan Program Revolving Fund N541

Initiative: Provides base allocations to authorize the expenditure of funds received for the Access to Justice Loan Program.

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2025-26	2026-27
All Other	\$500	\$500
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	\$500	\$500

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 509

H.P. 1156 - L.D. 1738

An Act to Establish the Biohazard Waste Disposal Grant Program to Support Public Health Efforts in the State

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

Sec. 1. 22 MRSA c. 252-A, headnote is amended to read:

CHAPTER 252-A

HYPODERMIC APPARATUS EXCHANGE PROGRAMS AND BIOHAZARD WASTE DISPOSAL GRANT PROGRAM

Sec. 2. 22 MRSA §1342 is enacted to read:
§1342. Biohazard Waste Disposal Grant Program

1. Grant program established. The Biohazard Waste Disposal Grant Program, referred to in this section as "the program," is established to fund hypodermic apparatus mitigation and collection efforts in community settings. The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention shall administer the program, subject to available funding resources. The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention may hire staff to oversee and manage the program, including but not limited to: data collection, building community partnerships or coalitions and developing public education campaigns related to the program. Subject to available funding resources, the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention shall dispense funds on a quarterly basis to selected applicants.

2. Fund established. The Biohazard Waste Disposal Grant Program Fund is established within the department as a nonlapsing fund for the purposes specified in this section. The fund consists of any money received as contributions, grants or appropriations from private and public sources. The fund, to be accounted for within the department, must be held separate and apart from all other money, funds and accounts.

3. Eligibility. The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention shall make grants under the program available to:

- A. Community-based organizations, including hypodermic apparatus exchange programs certified pursuant to section 1341; and
- B. Municipalities, including municipal health departments.

4. Matching funds from opioid settlement resources. A municipality that receives opioid settlement funds and submits an application for funding under the program shall contribute matching funds from its opioid settlement allocation equal to the amount requested from the program. The matching funds must be dedicated to eligible uses as described in subsection 7.

5. Application process. The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention shall develop an application process for the program that includes, but is not limited to:

- A. Criteria to demonstrate community need;
- B. A narrative description of the proposed project, including goals and objectives, as determined by the office;
- C. Budgetary requirements, projected outcomes and a data collection plan; and
- D. For a municipality required to provide matching funds pursuant to subsection 4, documentation of the amount and source of matching funds, including a signed attestation that the matching funds are derived from opioid settlement allocations and will be used in accordance with subsection 7.

6. Funding prioritization. The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention shall give funding priority to applications that involve one or more of the following:

- A. Addressing geographic areas with a documented increase in calls for service regarding improperly discarded hypodermic apparatuses;
- B. A demonstrated collaborative approach involving community stakeholders; and
- C. Innovative or evidence-based strategies to increase access to biohazard waste disposal programming.

7. Use of funds. Grant funds must be used:

- A. To purchase and install disposal boxes suitable for indoor and outdoor use in locations strategically identified to maximize use and reduce biohazard exposure risk;
- B. For appropriate permanent disposal of collected hypodermic apparatuses by an in-state facility in good standing with the Department of Environmental Protection and applicable compliance-related standards or certifications;
- C. To hire and train staff of the grantee to collect and dispose of improperly discarded hypodermic apparatuses; and
- D. For other innovative or evidence-based strategies designed to mitigate and prevent improper disposal of hypodermic apparatuses.

8. Annual report. The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention shall submit a report annually to the Legislature summarizing grant program outcomes, including recommendations for improvements or additional funding needs. The reporting period begins on November 1st and ends on October 31st. The report may be included in the report under section 1341, subsection 3 or submitted at the same time annually.

Sec. 3. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF

Biohazard Waste Disposal Grant Program Fund N547

Initiative: Provides allocations to establish a fund and authorize expenditures.

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2025-26	2026-27
All Other	\$500	\$500
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE	\$500	\$500
FUNDS TOTAL		

See title page for effective date.