

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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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

cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect April 1, 2026.

Effective April 1, 2026.

CHAPTER 581

S.P. 852 - L.D. 2059

An Act to Provide Required Funding for the Reimbursement of Assigned Counsel

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, the State's constitutional and statutory obligations include ensuring that each person facing a potential loss of liberty in a criminal or juvenile proceeding and each parent facing a potential loss of parental rights in a child protection proceeding is provided with effective representation; and

Whereas, on January 3, 2025, in *Robbins v. Billings, et al.* No. CV-22-054 (Me. Super. Ct., Ken. Cty., Jan. 3, 2025) (Combined Order on Partially Dispositive Motions), the Maine Superior Court concluded that the State has violated its constitutional obligations under the United States Constitution, Amendment VI to provide continuous representation to certain criminal defendants in the State; and

Whereas, the State's primary method for fulfilling its constitutional and statutory obligations is through the appointment of qualified attorneys to provide indigent legal services to eligible persons and reimbursement of these attorneys by the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services in accordance with the hourly rate established by law and the restrictions on eligible expenses established by the commission by rule; and

Whereas, due to a shortfall in funding, the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services is anticipated to exhaust available appropriations to reimburse assigned counsel in April 2026; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

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

Sec. 1. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

**PUBLIC DEFENSE SERVICES, MAINE
COMMISSION ON**

Maine Commission on Public Defense Services Z112

Initiative: Provides one-time funding to address the shortfall in funding available to compensate constitutionally and statutorily required assigned counsel in fiscal years 2025-26 and 2026-27.

GENERAL FUND	2025-26	2026-27
All Other	\$13,000,000	\$9,000,000
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$13,000,000	\$9,000,000

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

Effective March 19, 2026.

CHAPTER 582

H.P. 1411 - L.D. 2096

An Act Regarding Scheduling of Agricultural Fairs and Pulling Events

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, agricultural fairs and the harness racing season will begin soon and this legislation needs to take effect before the expiration of the 90-day period to allow the change in the conditions of an agricultural fair license to occur as soon as possible; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

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

Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §84, sub-§4 is enacted to read:

4. Prohibition. Except as provided under subsection 5, a licensee may not:

A. Operate an agricultural fair outside of the fair dates assigned by the commissioner under this section; or

B. Advertise or market an agricultural fair as taking place outside of the fair dates assigned by the commissioner under this section.

For purposes of this subsection, a licensee holding an event within one week of a fair's assigned fair dates is considered to be operating a fair outside of the fair dates assigned by the commissioner.

Sec. 2. 7 MRSA §84, sub-§5 is enacted to read: