

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

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SECOND REGULAR SESSION
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JULY 29, 2026

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

Augusta, Maine
2026

the franchisee's ability to satisfy a warranty created by the franchisor or any recall by performing labor competently or by providing parts in accordance with generally accepted standards.

4. Costs; fees. If a franchisee brings a legal action to collect a disapproved claim and is successful in that action, the court shall award the franchisee the cost of the action and reasonable attorney's fees. Reasonable attorney's fees must be determined by the value of the time reasonably expended by the attorney and not by the amount of the recovery on behalf of the franchisee.

Sec. 10. 10 MRSA §1250-F, as amended by PL 2001, c. 246, §2, is further amended by amending the section headnote to read:

§1250-F. Civil remedies; attorney's fees

Sec. 11. 10 MRSA §1250-F, sub-§2 is enacted to read:

2. Attorney's fees. When a franchisee or personal sports mobile dealer is seeking injunctive or other relief pursuant to subsection 1, the franchisee or dealer is deemed to have prevailed for the purposes of the franchisee's or dealer's entitlement to payment of attorney's fees pursuant to subsection 1, if, in the same action, a judgment or other final order providing equitable relief is entered in the franchisee's or dealer's favor.

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 593

H.P. 335 - L.D. 517

An Act Regarding Synthetic Media in Campaign Advertising

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

Sec. 1. 21-A MRSA §1014, sub-§3, as amended by PL 2025, c. 224, §7, is further amended to read:

3. Broadcasting prohibited without disclosure. ~~A~~ Except as provided in subsection 5-C, paragraph C, a person operating a broadcast, cable or satellite system within this State may not broadcast any public communication, as described in subsections 1 to 2-A, without an oral or written visual announcement of ~~the~~ each disclosure required by this section.

Sec. 2. 21-A MRSA §1014, sub-§3-B, as amended by PL 2025, c. 224, §7, is further amended to read:

3-B. Newspapers. ~~A~~ Except as provided in subsection 5-C, paragraph C, a newspaper may not publish a public communication described in subsections 1 to 2-A without including ~~the~~ each disclosure required by

this section. For purposes of this subsection, "newspaper" includes any printed material intended for general circulation or to be read by the general public, including a version of the newspaper displayed on a website owned or operated by the newspaper. When necessary, a newspaper may seek the advice of the commission regarding whether or not a communication requires the disclosure.

Sec. 3. 21-A MRSA §1014, sub-§4, as amended by PL 2025, c. 224, §7, is further amended to read:

4. Enforcement. A violation of this section may result in a civil penalty of no more than 100% of the amount of the expenditure in violation, except that a violation of subsection 5-C may result in a civil penalty of no more than 500% of the amount of the expenditure in violation and except that an expenditure for yard signs lacking the required information may result in a maximum civil penalty of \$200. In assessing a civil penalty, the commission shall consider, among other things, how widely the public communication was disseminated, whether the violation was intentional, whether the violation occurred as the result of an error by a printer or other paid vendor and whether the public communication conceals or misrepresents the identity of the person who financed it. If the person who financed the public communication or who committed the violation corrects the violation within 10 days after receiving notification of the violation from the commission by adding the missing information to the public communication, the commission may, except for a violation of subsection 5-C, decide to assess no civil penalty.

Sec. 4. 21-A MRSA §1014, sub-§5-C is enacted to read:

5-C. Use of synthetic media. Whenever a public communication that requires a disclosure under subsections 1, 2, 2-A or 2-B contains synthetic media, the public communication must include, in addition to any other required disclosure, the words "THIS COMMUNICATION CONTAINS AUDIO, VIDEO AND/OR IMAGES THAT HAVE BEEN MANIPULATED OR ALTERED." The commission shall adopt rules regarding the manner, size and placement of the disclosure required under this subsection. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

A. For purposes of this subsection, "synthetic media" means an image, an audio recording or a video recording depicting a candidate's appearance, speech or conduct that:

(1) In a manner that is likely to deceive a reasonable person, depicts the candidate saying or doing something that the candidate did not say or do; or

(2) Has been manipulated or altered in a manner that is likely to provide a reasonable person with a materially different understanding or impression of the candidate's appearance, action or speech than a reasonable person would have from an unaltered, original version of the image, audio recording or video recording.

B. For purposes of this subsection, "synthetic media" does not include:

(1) An image, an audio recording or a video recording depicting a candidate's appearance, speech or conduct that has been modified to improve audio, video or image clarity, to add captions or to highlight a specific section of the image, audio recording or video recording as long as the modification does not create a materially different understanding or impression of the candidate's appearance, action or speech than a reasonable person would have from an unaltered, original version of the image, audio recording or video recording; or

(2) Satire or parody.

C. A person operating a broadcast, cable or satellite system within the State that broadcasts a public communication does not violate this subsection and a newspaper that publishes a public communication does not violate this subsection unless the broadcaster broadcasts or newspaper publishes a paid public communication with actual knowledge that the public communication contains synthetic media. The broadcaster's or newspaper's receipt of an allegation made by a 3rd party that a public communication contains synthetic media does not, by itself, constitute actual knowledge by the broadcaster or newspaper that the public communication contains synthetic media. For purposes of this paragraph, "newspaper" has the same meaning as in subsection 3-B.

D. The commission shall notify the Office of the Attorney General if a person who is in violation of this subsection does not cease violating this subsection after being notified of the violation by the commission or if the commission is unable for any reason to notify a person that the person is in violation of this subsection. The Attorney General may bring a civil action in the Superior Court of Kennebec County for injunctive or other appropriate equitable relief requiring the person to comply with this subsection. An action under this paragraph may be combined with an action under section 1004-B for the purposes of the enforcement of penalties assessed by the commission. If the Attorney General prevails in an action under this paragraph, the court may award to the Attorney General the costs of the action together with reasonable attorney's fees as determined by the court.

E. This subsection may not be construed to prohibit or limit any other cause of action that a person may have against a person who violates this subsection.

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 594

S.P. 815 - L.D. 2001

An Act to Clarify the Laws Governing Facilities for Children and Adults Under the Health and Human Services Laws

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

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §7504, as enacted by PL 1981, c. 693, §§5 and 8, is amended to read:

§7504. ~~Residential child~~ Children's residential care facilities

"Residential child ~~Children's residential~~ care facilities" shall ~~must~~ be licensed in accordance with Title 22, section 8104.

Sec. 2. 22 MRSA §4061, sub-§1, as amended by PL 1983, c. 354, §6, is further amended to read:

1. Department. The department shall care for a child ordered into its custody in licensed or approved family foster homes, in other ~~children's residential child~~ care facilities or in other living arrangements as appropriate to meet the child's individual needs.

Sec. 3. 22 MRSA §7703, sub-§2, ¶B, as enacted by PL 1983, c. 691, §2, is amended to read:

B. Notwithstanding sections 3474 and 4008, any information gathered and all records created or obtained in the course of an investigation of neglect or abuse, including all post-investigation activities and proceedings, except a statement indicating whether or not a report of abuse or neglect has been received, the nature of the alleged abuse or neglect and the conclusion reached by the department, if any;

Sec. 4. 22 MRSA §7802, sub-§1-A, as amended by PL 2023, c. 405, Pt. A, §78, is further amended to read:

1-A. Consolidation of functions. All staff performing general licensing functions within the Office of Child and Family Services, including the out-of-home abuse and neglect investigating team when investigating pursuant to section ~~8354, subsection 2, paragraph C 4099-L~~, are consolidated as a single organizational unit.

Sec. 5. 22 MRSA §8103, sub-§2-A, as enacted by PL 2019, c. 444, §3, is amended to read: