

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

(h) Individuals who received or were eligible to receive federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits on July 3, 2025 but who are no longer eligible pursuant to the federal Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended by Public Law 119-21 (2025); and

(2) The individual is:

(a) Elderly or disabled, as described under the laws governing supplemental security income, 42 United States Code, Sections 1381 to 1383f;

(b) A victim of domestic violence or human trafficking or experiencing the effects of domestic violence or human trafficking;

(c) Unable to work or the dependent child of a parent who is unable to work due to the time necessary to obtain proper work documentation, as defined by the department in rule. Rules adopted by the department under this division are routine technical rules as defined by Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A; or

(d) Unemployed or the dependent child of a parent who is unemployed but has obtained proper work documentation, as defined by the department by rule. Rules adopted by the department under this division are routine technical rules as defined by Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 648

S.P. 861 - L.D. 2143

An Act Facilitating the Reconstruction or Replacement of Storm-damaged Commercial Fisheries Facilities and Infrastructure

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

Sec. 1. 30-A MRSA §4353, sub-§4, as amended by PL 2013, c. 186, §1, is further amended to read:

4. Variance. Except as provided in subsections 4-A, 4-B and 4-C and section 4353-A, the board may grant a variance only when strict application of the ordinance to the petitioner and the petitioner's property would cause undue hardship. The term "undue hardship" as used in this subsection means:

A. ~~The~~ Except as provided in subsection 4-D, the land in question ~~can not~~ cannot yield a reasonable return unless a variance is granted;

B. The need for a variance is due to the unique circumstances of the property and not to the general conditions in the neighborhood;

C. The granting of a variance will not alter the essential character of the locality; and

D. The hardship is not the result of action taken by the ~~applicant~~ petitioner or a prior owner.

Under its home rule authority, a municipality may, in a zoning ordinance, adopt additional limitations on the granting of a variance, including, but not limited to, a provision that a variance may be granted only for a use permitted in a particular zone.

Sec. 2. 30-A MRSA §4353, sub-§4-D is enacted to read:

4-D. Floodplain reasonable return variance for functionally dependent use. The board may grant a variance from a prohibition on construction seaward of mean high tide or requirement to elevate structures above the base flood elevation when placed upon a dock, pier or wharf as prescribed in a municipal floodplain management ordinance that is filed with the municipality's board of appeals if:

A. The petitioner demonstrates to the board that the petitioner suffered substantial damage, as defined in the municipality's floodplain management ordinance, to a dock, pier or wharf or a structure placed thereon;

B. The damaged dock, pier or wharf or structure placed thereon identified pursuant to paragraph A is proposed to be reconstructed or replaced and be permitted for a functionally dependent use as defined in 44 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 59.1; and

C. The dock, pier or wharf or structure placed thereon under paragraph B is proposed to be elevated or otherwise protected from flood damages to the extent practicable.

A variance granted pursuant to this subsection must be the minimum variance from the municipal floodplain management ordinance necessary to afford relief for the functionally dependent use.

Sec. 3. 30-A MRSA §4364-A, sub-§5, ¶C, as enacted by PL 2021, c. 672, §5, is amended to read:

C. Establish alternative criteria that are less restrictive than the requirements of subsection 4 for the approval of a housing structure only in circumstances in which the municipality would be able to provide a variance under section 4353, subsection 4, 4-A, 4-B ~~or~~ 4-C or 4-D.

Sec. 4. 30-A MRSA §4364-B, sub-§8, ¶C, as enacted by PL 2021, c. 672, §6, is amended to read:

C. Establish alternative criteria that are less restrictive than the requirements of subsections 4, 5, 6 and 7 for the approval of an accessory dwelling unit only in circumstances in which the municipality would be able to provide a variance under section 4353, subsection 4, 4-A, 4-B ~~or~~, 4-C or 4-D.

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 649

S.P. 818 - L.D. 2129

An Act to Prohibit Liens on Principal Residences and Wage Garnishments for Medical Debt

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

Sec. 1. 9-A MRSA §5-105, sub-§4 is enacted to read:

4. A court may not make, execute or enforce an order or process under this section based on medical debt as defined in Title 32, section 11002, subsection 7-A.

Sec. 2. 9-A MRSA §5-116-A, sub-§5 is enacted to read:

5. Prohibition of liens on principal place of residence. An execution against a consumer's principal place of residence may not be filed for a judgment in any action in which the claim against the consumer is based on medical debt. For the purposes of this subsection, "medical debt" has the same meaning as in Title 32, section 11002, subsection 7-A.

Sec. 3. 9-A MRSA §5-116-A, sub-§6 is enacted to read:

6. Prohibition of salary or wage garnishment. The garnishment of a consumer's salary or wages may not be issued for a judgment in any action in which the claim against the consumer is based on medical debt. For the purposes of this subsection, "medical debt" has the same meaning as in Title 32, section 11002, subsection 7-A.

Sec. 4. 14 MRSA §4422, sub-§1, ¶E, as enacted by PL 2021, c. 382, §2, is amended to read:

E. The amount of any exemption claimed under this subsection is limited to the amount of the exemption in effect on the date of the recording of the lien on the property against which the exemption is claimed.

Sec. 5. 14 MRSA §4422, sub-§1, ¶F is enacted to read:

F. Notwithstanding paragraphs A and B, a debtor's principal place of residence is exempt from attachment and execution based on medical debt as defined in Title 32, section 11002, subsection 7-A;

Sec. 6. 14 MRSA §4655 is amended by enacting at the end a new paragraph to read:

Notwithstanding this section and any other provision of law to the contrary, interest may not be collected upon execution of a judgment related to any disposition of property subject to any lien or attachment of a judgment debtor's principal place of residence based on medical debt as defined in Title 32, section 11002, subsection 7-A for the amount of interest that has accumulated on the medical debt subject to that lien on or after the date on which section 4422, subsection 1, paragraph F takes effect.

Sec. 7. 32 MRSA §11013, sub-§12 is enacted to read:

12. Prohibition of liens on principal place of residence. A debt collector may not initiate an action that attaches a consumer's principal place of residence for a judgment in any action in which the claim against the consumer is based on medical debt.

Sec. 8. 32 MRSA §11013, sub-§13 is enacted to read:

13. Prohibition of wage garnishment. A debt collector may not initiate an action to garnish the salary or wages of a consumer in which the claim against the consumer is based on medical debt.

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 650

H.P. 1491 - L.D. 2212

An Act Making Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027

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

PART A

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