

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 scanned originals with text recognition applied
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND NINTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1023

H. P. 823

House of Representatives, March 5, 1979

On Motion of Mr. Wyman of Pittsfield, referred to the Committee on Labor.
Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Gray of Rockland.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-NINE

**AN ACT to Define Suitable Work after the First Twelve Consecutive Weeks of
Unemployment.**

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

26 MRSA § 1193, sub-§ 3, ¶ A, is amended to read:

A. In determining whether or not any work is suitable for an individual **during the first 12 consecutive weeks of unemployment**, the commission shall consider the degree of risk involved to his health, safety and morals, his physical fitness and prior training, his experience and prior earnings, his length of unemployment and prospects for securing local work in his customary occupation, and the distance of the available work from his residence.

In determining whether or not work is suitable for an individual after the first 12 consecutive weeks of unemployment, the commission shall consider the degree of risk involved to his health, safety and morals, his physical fitness, prior earnings, length of unemployment and the distance of the available work from his residence. Any work otherwise suitable after the first 12 consecutive weeks of unemployment shall not be considered to be unsuitable if it offers to the individual wages equal to or exceeding the average weekly wage in the State of Maine.

STATEMENT OF FACT

Under the present system, an unemployed individual is entitled to collect benefits even if he has declined an offer of employment which pays wages that are more than sufficient for his support but which are less than the wages he was paid before he became unemployed. Currently, the average benefit duration is less than 12 weeks. This would appear to be more than an ample period of time for an individual to find new employment in his customary occupation. To allow individuals to collect benefits after 12 weeks, while refusing to accept relatively good paying jobs, encourages unnecessary depletion of unemployment fund reserves. This bill would require an individual to accept any job which is otherwise suitable for him if it pays wages equal to or exceeding the average weekly wage. The average weekly wage is now approximately \$180, nearly twice the maximum weekly benefit under the Employment Security Law.