

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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LAWS
OF THE
STATE OF MAINE

AS PASSED BY THE

ONE HUNDRED AND NINETEENTH LEGISLATURE

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J.S. McCarthy Company
Augusta, Maine
2000

CHAPTER 629

S.P. 840 - L.D. 2239

An Act to Ensure Civil Rights and Prevent Discrimination

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

Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §4552, as amended by PL 1993, c. 327, §1, is further amended to read:

§4552. Policy

To protect the public health, safety and welfare, it is declared to be the policy of this State to keep continually in review all practices infringing on the basic human right to a life with dignity, and the causes of these practices, so that corrective measures may, where possible, be promptly recommended and implemented, and to prevent discrimination in employment, housing or access to public accommodations on account of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry or national origin; and in employment, discrimination on account of age or because of the previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A and in housing because of familial status; and to prevent discrimination in the extension of credit on account of age, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, ancestry or national origin; and to prevent discrimination in education on account of sex or physical or mental disability.

Nothing in this chapter confers legislative approval of, or special rights to, any person or group of persons.

Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §4553, sub-§9-C is enacted to read:

9-C. Sexual orientation. "Sexual orientation" means having an orientation for heterosexuality, homosexuality or bisexuality, having a history of that orientation or being identified with that orientation. "Sexual orientation" refers to a person's actual or perceived status, condition or gender expression. This chapter is intended to ensure specific defined rights, and not to endorse or extend to any form of sexual behavior, and does not include sexual attraction to a minor by an adult.

Sec. 3. 5 MRSA §4553, sub-§9-D is enacted to read:

9-D. Religious entity. "Religious entity" means:

A. A religious corporation, association or society;

B. A college, school, university or other educational institution, not otherwise a religious entity, if it is in whole or substantial part funded, controlled, managed or owned by a religious corporation, association or society; or

C. A nonprofit organization that is operated for charitable purposes if it is in whole or substantial part funded, controlled, managed or owned by a religious corporation, association or society.

Sec. 4. 5 MRSA §4553, sub-§10, ¶E, as amended by PL 1983, c. 578, §2, is further amended to read:

E. In determining whether ~~any~~ a person is acting as an agent or employee of another person so as to make ~~such~~ the other person responsible for ~~his~~ that person's acts, the question of whether the specific acts performed were actually authorized or subsequently ratified ~~shall~~ is not ~~be~~ controlling; ~~and~~

Sec. 5. 5 MRSA §4553, sub-§10, ¶F, as enacted by PL 1983, c. 578, §2, is amended to read:

F. Unlawful educational discrimination as defined and limited by subchapter V-B; ~~and~~

Sec. 6. 5 MRSA §4553, sub-§10, ¶G is enacted to read:

G. Discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodation and credit as defined in subchapters III, IV, V and V-A, on the basis of sexual orientation, except that a religious entity is exempt from these provisions with respect to discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Sec. 7. 5 MRSA §4554, sub-§§4, 5 and 6 are enacted to read:

4. Contracts. The exemption provision of section 4553, subsection 10, paragraph G does not prohibit a state agency from including provisions in a contract with any entity, including a religious entity, that may require nondiscrimination on the basis of sexual orientation otherwise consistent with this chapter with respect to and as a condition to continuation of such a contract; nor does this Act require any religious entity to enter into any contract. With respect to a contract with any religious entity, the employment defenses provided in section 4573-A, subsection 2 are applicable to any dispute arising under such a nondiscrimination clause to the extent related to alleged employment discrimination based on sexual orientation.

5. Educational policy. This Act does not mandate any public or private educational institution to

promote any form of sexuality or sexual orientation or to include such matters in its curriculum.

6. Affirmative action. The provisions of this Act relating to sexual orientation are not intended to modify federal or state requirements for affirmative action in effect as of the effective date of this subsection, nor intended to create any new obligations with respect to affirmative action or numerical goals or quotas.

Sec. 8. 5 MRSA §4571, as amended by PL 1991, c. 99, §6, is further amended to read:

§4571. Right to freedom from discrimination in employment

The opportunity for an individual to secure employment without discrimination because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin is recognized as and declared to be a civil right.

Sec. 9. 5 MRSA §4572, sub-§1, ¶¶A, B and C, as amended by PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. E, §7 and affected by §47, are further amended to read:

A. For any employer to fail or refuse to hire or otherwise discriminate against any applicant for employment because of race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, because of the applicant's previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A or because of previous actions taken by the applicant that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter V-B; or, because of those reasons, to discharge an employee or discriminate with respect to hire, tenure, promotion, transfer, compensation, terms, conditions or privileges of employment or any other matter directly or indirectly related to employment; or, in recruiting of individuals for employment or in hiring them, to utilize any employment agency that the employer knows or has reasonable cause to know discriminates against individuals because of their race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, because of their previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A or because of previous actions that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter V-B;

(1) This paragraph does not apply to discrimination governed by Title 39-A, section 353;

B. For any employment agency to fail or refuse to classify properly, refer for employment or otherwise discriminate against any individual because of race or color, sex, sexual orientation,

physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, because of the individual's previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A or because of previous actions taken by the individual that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter V-B; or to comply with an employer's request for the referral of job applicants if a request indicates either directly or indirectly that the employer will not afford full and equal employment opportunities to individuals regardless of their race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, because of previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A or because of previous actions that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter V-B;

C. For any labor organization to exclude from apprenticeship or membership or to deny full and equal membership rights to any applicant for membership because of race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, because of the applicant's previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A or because of previous actions taken by the applicant that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter V-B; or, because of those reasons, to deny a member full and equal membership rights, expel from membership, penalize or otherwise discriminate with respect to hire, tenure, promotion, transfer, compensation, terms, conditions or privileges of employment, representation, grievances or any other matter directly or indirectly related to membership or employment, whether or not authorized or required by the constitution or bylaws of that labor organization or by a collective labor agreement or other contract; to fail or refuse to classify properly or refer for employment or otherwise discriminate against any member because of race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, because of the member's previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A or because of previous actions taken by the member that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter V-B; or to cause or attempt to cause an employer to discriminate against an individual in violation of this section, except that it is lawful for labor organizations and employers to adopt a maximum age limitation in apprenticeship programs, if the employer or labor organization obtains prior approval from the Maine Human Rights Commission of any maximum age limitation employed in an apprenticeship program. The commission shall approve the age limitation

if a reasonable relationship exists between the maximum age limitation employed and a legitimate expectation of the employer in receiving a reasonable return upon the employer's investment in an apprenticeship program. The employer or labor organization bears the burden of demonstrating that such a relationship exists;

Sec. 10. 5 MRSA §4572, sub-§1, ¶D, as amended by PL 1995, c. 393, §12, is further amended to read:

D. For any employer, employment agency or labor organization, prior to employment or admission to membership of any individual, to:

(1) Elicit or attempt to elicit information directly or indirectly pertaining to race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, any previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A or any previous actions that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter V-B;

(2) Make or keep a record of race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, any previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A or any previous actions that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter V-B, except under physical or mental disability when an employer requires a physical or mental examination prior to employment, a privileged record of that examination is permissible if made and kept in compliance with this Act;

(3) Use any form of application for employment, or personnel or membership blank containing questions or entries directly or indirectly pertaining to race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, any previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A or any previous actions that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter V-B. This section does not prohibit any officially recognized government agency from keeping records permitted to be kept under this Act in order to provide free services to individuals requesting rehabilitation or employment assistance;

(4) Print, publish or cause to be printed or published any notice or advertisement relating to employment or membership indi-

cating any preference, limitation, specification or discrimination based upon race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, any previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A or any previous actions that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter V-B; or

(5) Establish, announce or follow a policy of denying or limiting, through a quota system or otherwise, employment or membership opportunities of any group because of the race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, the previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A or because of previous actions that are protected under Title 26, chapter 7, subchapter V-B, of that group; or

Sec. 11. 5 MRSA §4573, as amended by PL 1995, c. 393, §§15 to 20, is further amended by adding at the end a new paragraph to read:

The provisions of this subchapter relating to sexual orientation do not require or prohibit the provision of employee benefits to an individual for the benefit of that individual's partner.

Sec. 12. 5 MRSA §4573-A, sub-§2, as enacted by PL 1995, c. 393, §21, is amended to read:

2. Religious defenses. This subchapter does not prohibit a religious corporation, association, educational institution or society from giving preference in employment to ~~individuals~~ an individual of its same religion to perform work connected with the carrying on by the corporation, association, educational institution or society of its activities. Under this subchapter, a religious organization may require that all applicants and employees conform to the religious tenets of that organization.

Sec. 13. 5 MRSA §4581, first ¶, as amended by PL 1991, c. 99, §12, is further amended to read:

The opportunity for an individual to secure decent housing in accordance with the individual's ability to pay, and without discrimination because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin or familial status is hereby recognized as and declared to be a civil right.

Sec. 14. 5 MRSA §4582, 2nd, 3rd and 4th ¶¶, as amended by PL 1991, c. 99, §14, are further amended to read:

For any owner, lessee, sublessee, managing agent or other person having the right to sell, rent, lease or manage a housing accommodation, or any agent of these to make or cause to be made any written or oral inquiry concerning the race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin or familial status of any prospective purchaser, occupant or tenant of the housing accommodation; or to refuse to show or refuse to sell, rent, lease, let or otherwise deny to or withhold from any individual housing accommodation because of the race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin or familial status of the individual; or to issue any advertisement relating to the sale, rental or lease of the housing accommodation ~~which that~~ indicates any preference, limitation, specification or discrimination based upon race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin or familial status; or to discriminate against any individual because of race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin or familial status in the price, terms, conditions or privileges of the sale, rental or lease of any housing accommodations or in the furnishing of facilities or services in connection with any housing accommodations; or to evict or attempt to evict any tenant of any housing accommodation because of the race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin or familial status of the tenant;

For any real estate broker or real estate sales person, or agent of one of them, to fail or refuse to show any applicant for a housing accommodation any accommodation listed for sale, lease or rental, because of the race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin or familial status of the applicant or of any intended occupant of the accommodation, or to misrepresent, for the purpose of discriminating because of the race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin or familial status of the applicant or intended occupant, the availability or asking price of a housing accommodation listed for sale, lease or rental; or for any reason to fail to communicate to the person having the right to sell or lease the housing accommodation any offer for the same made by any applicant; or in any other manner to discriminate against any applicant for housing because of race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin or familial status of the applicant or of any intended occupant of the housing accommodation, or to make or cause to be made any written or oral inquiry or record concerning the race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin or familial status of

any applicant or intended occupant, or to accept for listing any housing accommodation when the person having the right to sell or lease the same has directly or indirectly indicated an intention of discriminating among prospective tenants or purchasers on the ground of their race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin or familial status, or when the broker knows or has reason to know that the person having the right to sell or lease the housing accommodation has made a practice of discrimination since July 1, 1972;

For any person to whom application is made for a loan or other form of financial assistance for the acquisition, construction, rehabilitation, repair or maintenance of any housing accommodation, whether secured or unsecured, or agent of the person, to make or cause to be made any oral or written inquiry concerning the race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin or familial status of any individual seeking financial assistance, or of existing or prospective occupants or tenants of housing accommodations; or to discriminate in the granting of financial assistance, or in the terms, conditions or privileges relating to the obtaining or use of any financial assistance, against any applicant because of the race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin or familial status of the applicant or of the existing or prospective occupants or tenants;

Sec. 15. 5 MRSA §4583, as amended by PL 1991, c. 99, §19, is further amended to read:

§4583. Application

Nothing in this Act may be construed to prohibit or limit the exercise of the privilege of every person and the agent of any person having the right to sell, rent, lease or manage a housing accommodation to set up and enforce specifications in the selling, renting, leasing or letting or in the furnishings of facilities or services in connection with the facilities ~~which that~~ are not based on the race, color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, country of ancestral origin, familial status or the receipt of public assistance payments of any prospective or actual purchaser, lessee, tenant or occupant. Nothing in this Act may be construed to prohibit or limit the exercise of the privilege of every person and the agent of any person making loans for or offering financial assistance in the acquisition, construction, rehabilitation, repair or maintenance of housing accommodations, to set standards and preferences, terms, conditions, limitations or specifications for the granting of loans or financial assistance ~~which that~~ are not based on the race, color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, country of ancestral origin, familial

status or the receipt of public assistance payments of the applicant for a loan or financial assistance or, of any existing or prospective owner, lessee, tenant or occupant of housing accommodation.

Sec. 16. 5 MRSA §4591, as amended by PL 1991, c. 99, §20, is further amended to read:

§4591. Equal access to public accommodations

The opportunity for every individual to have equal access to places of public accommodation without discrimination because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry or national origin is recognized as and declared to be a civil right.

Sec. 17. 5 MRSA §4592, sub-§§1 and 2, as amended by PL 1995, c. 393, §22, are further amended to read:

1. Denial of public accommodations. For any public accommodation or any person who is the owner, lessor, lessee, proprietor, operator, manager, superintendent, agent or employee of any place of public accommodation to directly or indirectly refuse, discriminate against or in any manner withhold from or deny the full and equal enjoyment to any person, on account of race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry or national origin, any of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, goods, services or privileges of public accommodation, or in any manner discriminate against any person in the price, terms or conditions upon which access to accommodation, advantages, facilities, goods, services and privileges may depend.

For purposes of this subsection, unlawful discrimination also includes, but is not limited to:

A. The imposition or application of eligibility criteria that screen out or tend to screen out an individual with a disability or any class of individuals with disabilities from fully and equally enjoying any goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations, unless the criteria can be shown to be necessary for the provision of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations being offered;

B. A failure to make reasonable modifications in policies, practices or procedures, when modifications are necessary to afford the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations to individuals with disabilities, unless, in the case of a private entity, the private entity can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations;

C. A failure to take steps that may be necessary to ensure that no individual with a disability is excluded, denied services, segregated or otherwise treated differently than other individuals because of the absence of auxiliary aids and services, unless, in the case of a private entity, the private entity can demonstrate that taking those steps would fundamentally alter the nature of the good, service, facility, privilege, advantage or accommodation being offered or would result in an undue burden;

D. A private entity's failure to remove architectural barriers and communication barriers that are structural in nature in existing facilities and transportation barriers in existing vehicles and rail passenger cars used by an establishment for transporting individuals, not including barriers that can be removed only through the retrofitting of vehicles or rail passenger cars by the installation of a hydraulic or other lift, where the removal is readily achievable;

When the entity can demonstrate that the removal of a barrier under this paragraph is not readily achievable, a failure to make the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations available through alternative methods if alternative methods are readily achievable; and

E. A qualified individual with a disability, by reason of that disability, being excluded from participation in or being denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of a public entity, or being subjected to discrimination by any such entity;

2. Communication, notice or advertisement.

For any person to directly or indirectly publish, display or communicate any notice or advertisement to the effect that any of the accommodations, advantages, facilities and privileges of any place of public accommodation are refused, withheld from or denied to any person on account of race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry or national origin, or that the patronage or custom of any person belonging to or purporting to be of any particular race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry or national origin is unwelcome, objectionable or not acceptable, desired or solicited, or that the clientele is restricted to any particular race or color, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry or national origin. The production of any communication, notice or advertisement purporting to relate to any place of accommodation is presumptive evidence in any action that the action was authorized by its owner, manager or proprietor;

Sec. 18. 5 MRSA §4595, as repealed and replaced by PL 1975, c. 770, §40, is amended to read:

§4595. Right to freedom from discrimination solely on the basis of age, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, ancestry, religion or national origin in any credit transaction

The opportunity for every individual to be extended credit without discrimination solely because of any one or more of the following factors: ~~Age~~ age; race; color; sex; sexual orientation; marital status; ancestry; religion or national origin is recognized as and declared to be a civil right.

Sec. 19. 5 MRSA §4596, as repealed and replaced by PL 1975, c. 770, §41, is amended to read:

§4596. Unlawful credit extension discrimination

It shall be unlawful credit discrimination for any creditor to refuse the extension of credit to any person solely on the basis of any one or more of the following factors: ~~Age~~ age; race; color; sex; sexual orientation; marital status; ancestry; religion or national origin in any credit transaction. It ~~shall~~ is not be unlawful credit discrimination to comply with the terms and conditions of any bona fide group credit life, accident and health insurance plan, for a financial institution extending credit to a married person to require both the husband and the wife to sign a note and a mortgage and to deny credit to persons under the age of 18 or to consider a person's age in determining the terms upon which credit will be extended.

Sec. 20. 5 MRSA §4612, sub-§4, ¶A, as amended by PL 1993, c. 303, §2, is further amended to read:

A. If the commission finds reasonable grounds to believe that unlawful discrimination has occurred, and further believes that irreparable injury or great inconvenience will be caused the victim of such discrimination or to members of a racial, color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religious, nationality group or age group if relief is not immediately granted, or if conciliation efforts under subsection 3 have not succeeded, the commission may file in the Superior Court a civil action seeking such relief as is appropriate, including temporary restraining orders.

Sec. 21. Statutory referendum procedure; submission at general election; form of question; effective date. This Act must be submitted to the legal voters of the State of Maine at the next general election in the month of November following passage of this Act. The municipal officers of this State shall notify the inhabitants of their

respective cities, towns and plantations to meet, in the manner prescribed by law for holding a statewide election, to vote on the acceptance or rejection of this Act by voting on the following question:

"Do you favor ratifying the action of the 119th Legislature whereby it passed an act extending to all citizens regardless of their sexual orientation the same basic rights to protection against discrimination now guaranteed to citizens on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin in the areas of employment, housing, public accommodation and credit and where the act expressly states that nothing in the act confers legislative approval of, or special rights to, any person or group of persons?"

The legal voters of each city, town and plantation shall vote by ballot on this question and shall designate their choice by a cross or check mark placed within a corresponding square below the word "Yes" or "No." The ballots must be received, sorted, counted and declared in open ward, town and plantation meetings and returns made to the Secretary of State in the same manner as votes for members of the Legislature. The Governor shall review the returns and, if it appears that a majority of the legal votes are cast in favor of the Act, the Governor shall proclaim that fact without delay, and the Act takes effect 30 days after the date of the proclamation.

The Secretary of State shall prepare and furnish to each city, town and plantation all ballots, returns and copies of this Act necessary to carry out the purpose of this referendum.

Effective pending referendum.

CHAPTER 630

S.P. 215 - L.D. 637

**An Act to Amend the Law
Enforcement Officer Certification
Standards**

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

Sec. 1. 25 MRSA §2803-A, sub-§1, as amended by PL 1997, c. 395, Pt. O, §2, is further amended to read:

1. Training and certification of all law enforcement officers in State. In accordance with this chapter, to establish training and certification standards for all law enforcement officers, set requirements for board-approved courses, prescribe curriculum and certify both graduates of board-approved courses and persons for whom the board has