

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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LAWS
OF THE
STATE OF MAINE

AS PASSED BY THE

ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION
December 1, 2004 to March 30, 2005

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION
April 4, 2005 to June 18, 2005

THE GENERAL EFFECTIVE DATE FOR
FIRST REGULAR SESSION
NON-EMERGENCY LAWS IS
JUNE 29, 2005

THE GENERAL EFFECTIVE DATE FOR
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION
NON-EMERGENCY LAWS IS
SEPTEMBER 17, 2005

PUBLISHED BY THE REVISOR OF STATUTES
IN ACCORDANCE WITH MAINE REVISED STATUTES ANNOTATED,
TITLE 3, SECTION 163-A, SUBSECTION 4.

Penmor Lithographers
Lewiston, Maine
2005

Sec. 59. 21-A MRSA §760-A, sub-§3, ¶B, as enacted by PL 1995, c. 459, §82, is amended to read:

B. In a municipality that has an island voting district, the municipal clerk may communicate the information required to process the absentee ballots by telephone to the island warden and notify the island warden of the names of the absentee voters so that the incoming voting list may be marked in accordance with this subchapter.

Sec. 60. 21-A MRSA §778, sub-§1, as amended by PL 2003, c. 407, §29, is further amended to read:

1. Member specially designated. The registrar shall ~~place designate a uniformed service voter in the central voter registration system with the letter "S" on the voting list beside the name of each uniformed service voter registered under this section.~~

Sec. 61. 21-A MRSA §778, sub-§2, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 407, §29, is amended to read:

2. Overseas voter specially designated. The registrar shall ~~place designate an overseas voter in the central voter registration system with the letter "O" on the voting list beside the name of each overseas voter registered under this section.~~

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 454

H.P. 233 - L.D. 309

An Act To Amend the Sunset on Part-time Unemployment Insurance Benefits

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

Sec. 1. 26 MRSA §1192, sub-§3, ¶A, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 458, §1, is amended to read:

A. Notwithstanding this subsection, beginning January 1, 2004, an individual who is not available for full-time work as required in this subsection is not disqualified from receiving benefits if:

- (1) The individual worked less than full time for a majority of the weeks during that individual's base period and the individual is able and available for and actively seeking part-time work for at least the number of hours in a week comparable to those

customarily worked in part-time employment during that individual's base period; or

- (2) The individual worked full time for a majority of the weeks during that individual's base period, but is able and available for and actively seeking only part-time work because of the illness or disability of an immediate family member or because of limitations necessary for the safety or protection of the individual or individual's immediate family member.

This paragraph does not apply to a person who applies for benefits after September 30, ~~2005~~ 2008. This paragraph continues to apply to a person who applies for benefits on or before September 30, ~~2005~~ 2008 until that person has exhausted benefits payable under that application.

Sec. 2. Education and training pilot program. By October 1, 2005, the Department of Labor shall develop within its existing resources an education and training pilot program, referred to in this section as "the program," for unemployed part-time workers as described in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 26, section 1192, subsection 3, paragraph A that is designed to enhance the employability and economic security of those workers.

1. Design of program. In designing the program, the department shall:

- A. Develop methods to facilitate the participants' efficient transition from receiving compensation under the unemployment compensation insurance system to obtaining new job placements;
- B. Minimize the impact on the Unemployment Trust Fund from extending unemployment compensation benefits to unemployed part-time workers and explore methods to stabilize the fund;
- C. Maximize the use of its existing resources in order to deliver the education and training services and ensure that necessary support services are made available to participants in the program; and
- D. Operate the program through the career center network in partnership with community-based education programs, including local adult education programs, the Maine Community College System and the University of Maine System.

2. Report. The department shall report on the results of the program to the Joint Standing Committee on Labor by January 15, 2006, together with recommendations on making permanent such an education

and training program, any necessary implementing legislation and any additional recommendations that would increase the availability of skilled workers for Maine's businesses. After receipt and review of the report and recommendations, the Joint Standing Committee on Labor shall report out legislation to make permanent an education and training program for unemployed part-time workers.

Sec. 3. Appropriations and allocations.

The following appropriations and allocations are made.

LABOR, DEPARTMENT OF

Unemployment Compensation Benefit Account 0245

Initiative: Allocates funds for the additional cost of providing unemployment benefits to persons who are unavailable for full-time work under certain circumstances.

EMPLOYMENT SECURITY TRUST

FUND	2005-06	2006-07
All Other	\$2,016,000	\$3,326,000
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EMPLOYMENT SECURITY TRUST		
FUND TOTAL	\$2,016,000	\$3,326,000

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 455

S.P. 361 - L.D. 1044

An Act To Care for Families

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

Sec. 1. 26 MRSA §636 is enacted to read:

§636. Family sick leave

1. Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Employer" means a public or private employer with 25 or more employees.

B. "Immediate family member" means an employee's child, spouse or parent.

C. "Paid leave" means time away from work by an employee for which the employee receives compensation, and is limited to sick time, vacation time, compensatory time and leave that is provided as an aggregate amount for use at the discretion of the employee for any of these same purposes. "Paid leave" does not include paid short-term or long-term disability, catastrophic leave or similar types of benefits.

2. Use of paid leave. If an employer, under the terms of a collective bargaining agreement or employment policy, provides paid leave, then the employer shall allow an employee to use the paid leave for the care of an immediate family member who is ill as provided in this section.

3. Election of time; amount; process. An employer may adopt a policy limiting the number of hours of paid leave taken under this section, but in no case may the number of hours allowed be fewer than 40 hours for a 12-month period. An employee is not entitled under this section to use paid leave until that leave has been earned. An employee who receives more than one type of paid leave may elect which type and the amount of each of those types of paid leave to use, except that the employee's election may be limited by a bona fide employment policy as long as the policy is uniformly applied to all employees at that workplace. An employer may require notice or verification of illness for leave taken pursuant to this section if such notice or verification is required when an employee takes leave because of the employee's own illness. An employer may require an employee to specify that leave is taken pursuant to this section.

4. Relationship to collective bargaining. This section applies to employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement unless the agreement provides paid leave benefits that are equal to or greater than those provided in this section.

5. Prohibited actions by employer. An employer may not discharge, demote, suspend, discipline or otherwise discriminate against an employee or threaten to take any of these actions against an employee who exercises rights granted under this section or who files a complaint or testifies or assists in an action brought against the employer for a violation of this section. Nothing in this section prohibits an employer from taking employment action against an employee for taking leave that is not protected by this section or other applicable law.

6. Application of family medical leave requirements. For purposes of applying family medical leave requirements, the employer shall treat leave under this section in the same manner as the employer treats leave for a sick employee.

7. Enforcement; rules. The Department of Labor shall adopt rules to implement and enforce the provisions of this section, including rules regarding the receipt, investigation and prosecution of complaints brought under this section. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

See title page for effective date.
