

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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LAWS
OF THE
STATE OF MAINE

AS PASSED BY THE

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION
December 2, 2020 to March 30, 2021

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION
April 28, 2021 to July 19, 2021

THE GENERAL EFFECTIVE DATE FOR
FIRST REGULAR SESSION
NON-EMERGENCY LAWS IS
JUNE 29, 2021

THE GENERAL EFFECTIVE DATE FOR
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION
NON-EMERGENCY LAWS IS
OCTOBER 18, 2021

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

Augusta, Maine
2021

Initiative: Provides base allocations to authorize the expenditure of funds received from federal sources for the repayment of student loans for eligible health care providers.

FEDERAL EXPENDITURES FUND	2021-22	2022-23
All Other	\$500	\$500
FEDERAL EXPENDITURES FUND TOTAL	\$500	\$500
FINANCE AUTHORITY OF MAINE		
DEPARTMENT TOTALS	2021-22	2022-23
FEDERAL EXPENDITURES FUND	\$500	\$500
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	\$500	\$500
DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	\$1,000	\$1,000

See title page for effective date.

**CHAPTER 347
H.P. 980 - L.D. 1328**

**An Act To Protect Maine
Electricity Customers from
Threats of Disconnection in the
Wintertime**

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

Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §717 is enacted to read:

§717. Winter terminations

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

A. "Disconnection prohibition period" means any time between November 15th and April 15th, or during any other period when, pursuant to rules adopted under section 704, the commission has prohibited a transmission and distribution utility from disconnecting residential customers or prohibited such disconnections without the permission from the consumer assistance and safety division.

B. "Residential customer" includes any customer account to which electric service is provided for residential purposes, regardless of whether the electricity received under that account is also used for business purposes.

2. Notice of winter disconnection. During a disconnection prohibition period, a transmission and distribution utility may not send or deliver, orally, on paper

or electronically, to any residential customer of the utility any notice or communication that:

A. Provides for disconnection of the customer's electric service on a specified date or within a specified interval of time during a disconnection prohibition period, unless the utility has received the prior permission of the consumer assistance and safety division to make the disconnection on the specified date or within the specified interval of time; or

B. Makes any reference to disconnection or involuntary termination of the customer's electric service during a disconnection prohibition period, unless the notice or communication includes a prominent statement that disconnection of a residential customer's electric service during the disconnection prohibition period cannot take place without the advance permission of the consumer assistance and safety division, that the customer will be notified of any request for such permission and that the customer will have the opportunity to be heard by the consumer assistance and safety division.

3. Past due accounts; assistance programs. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the notice permitted under subsection 2 to a residential customer from a transmission and distribution utility is deemed a notice of disconnection for the purpose of establishing eligibility for certain emergency assistance programs, including, but not limited to, the emergency general assistance described in Title 22, chapter 1161 and the fuel assistance described in Title 30-A, chapter 201, subchapter 13.

4. Violation; penalties. A transmission and distribution utility that violates this section is subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$2,500, payable to the customer to whom the prohibited communication is sent. This penalty is recoverable in a civil action and is in addition to any other remedies to which the customer may be entitled.

See title page for effective date.

**CHAPTER 348
H.P. 987 - L.D. 1336**

**An Act To Discontinue the Use
of the Terms "Handicap,"
"Handicapped" and "Hearing
Impaired" in State Laws, Rules
and Official Documents**

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

Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §782, as amended by PL 1985, c. 388, §1, is further amended to read: