

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

in work, schooling, recreation, health care or religious worship outside of the State's time zone; major elements of the State's economy; and any current federal, state or local plans for economic development.

Funding for the study must be through private donations to the University of Maine System and the University of Maine System is not required under this resolve to undertake work for which it does not have or has not received sufficient resources.

Sec. 2. Report. Resolved: That, by February 15, 2022, the University of Maine System shall submit a report, including suggested legislation, based on its study and analysis in section 1 to the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government. The committee is authorized to submit legislation related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 130th Legislature.

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 87

H.P. 961 - L.D. 1305

**Resolve, To Increase
Collaboration between the
Maine State Housing Authority
and the Department of Health
and Human Services**

Preamble. Whereas, over 19,000 Maine households with extremely low incomes are severely rent burdened, meaning they pay more than 50% of their income toward rent, because they lack access to either the income or rental assistance to afford rent; and

Whereas, due to the number of households struggling to make housing payments, over 5,000 households face eviction every year in the District Court; and

Whereas, the Maine State Housing Authority engages, directly or through grantees, with thousands of households every year who need assistance with rent, utilities or supportive services to find and keep housing and prevent homelessness; and

Whereas, there are over 350,000 families receiving direct financial assistance, food assistance or medical insurance assistance from the Department of Health and Human Services, through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the MaineCare program and other related programs; and

Whereas, the Department of Health and Human Services engages with families on a regular basis to determine eligibility for these assistance programs through the department's office for family independence and also interacts with numerous other families through the Office of Child and Family Services; and

Whereas, coordination between the Maine State Housing Authority and the Department of Health and Human Services will help meet the needs of families for supports with housing and income in a more simplified and holistic manner; and

Whereas, the Maine State Housing Authority is currently administering an emergency rental assistance program through community action agencies for which a person is automatically eligible if the person receives benefits through any assistance programs administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, which provides an opportunity for simplified verification; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1. Collaboration between Maine State Housing Authority and Department of Health and Human Services. Resolved:

That the Maine State Housing Authority, referred to in this resolve as "the authority," shall collaborate with the Department of Health and Human Services, referred to in this resolve as "the department," to seek, identify and implement initiatives to maximize access to housing assistance for recipients of services from the department and maximize access to assistance programs administered by the department for recipients of housing assistance, including students, from the authority or its grantees. Specifically, the authority and the department shall:

1. Consider mechanisms, including direct telephone outreach, program staff training, mailings, website links and telephone queue recordings, that provide opportunities to increase enrollment in housing assistance programs among department clients and increase enrollment in department assistance programs among housing assistance recipients;
2. Evaluate the extent of increased enrollment in programs administered by the department or the authority that can be reasonably attributed to increased coordination pursuant to this resolve;
3. Consider the capacity of the department's and the authority's computer systems to work together in a manner that most effectively facilitates access to additional services for recipients of services provided by the department or the authority, including the potential for applicants applying for assistance from the department to use the same portal to apply for rental assistance, with applicant information sent to the authority to process and finalize, using preverified data from the department, as appropriate;
4. Identify barriers to collaboration between the department and the authority and possible solutions and resources, financial or otherwise, necessary to overcome these barriers and implement the identified solutions; and
5. Identify any costs, including but not limited to personnel costs and those associated with technology changes, considered necessary to substantially improve coordination between the department and the authority.

Sec. 2. Report. Resolved: That the department shall submit a report, including any recommended legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services and to the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing no later than January 15, 2022 describing how the department and the authority have worked together to maximize access to housing and income assistance, including the ways in which the technology currently used and designed by the department and the authority can work together to facilitate access, and plans and recommendations for future coordination between the department and the authority. The joint standing committees may submit legislation related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 130th Legislature.

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 88

H.P. 1031 - L.D. 1397

Resolve, Directing the Maine State Housing Authority To Assist the City of Lewiston with its Rental Registration Program

Sec. 1. Maine State Housing Authority to assist City of Lewiston with rental registration program. Resolved: That the Maine State Housing Authority shall provide administrative resources to assist the City of Lewiston with its rental registration program as a pilot project to serve as a model for developing a similar program for public housing authorities statewide. The pilot project may register and collect information on only multifamily housing units with 3 or more units. The information collected by the pilot project must include, but is not limited to, data on ownership, management, occupancy status, condition, code violation history, lead abatement status and inspection history of multifamily housing included in the pilot project. The information must be made available on a publicly accessible website.

Sec. 2. Report. Resolved: That the Maine State Housing Authority shall submit a report with its recommendations for a registration program for all public housing authorities statewide to the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing no later than January 15, 2022. The report must contain recommendations and best practices for outreach to rental property owners and managers and for data collection. The joint standing committee may report out a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 130th Legislature.

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 89
H.P. 470 - L.D. 639

Resolve, Directing the Department of Education To Develop Training for School Counselors and Review Limitations on Autism Spectrum Disorder Course Work for Special Education Certification

Sec. 1. Department of Education to develop and provide professional development on family or intimate partner violence. Resolved: That the Department of Education shall, in consultation with a statewide coalition to end domestic violence, develop and provide professional development at no cost to school counselors and other school employees, as appropriate, on family or intimate partner violence. The professional development must address screening, the impact of the violence on children and referral and intervention strategies. No later than January 15, 2022, the Department of Education shall report to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs on the professional development, the number of professional development opportunities offered and the number and type of participants participating in the professional development opportunities.

Sec. 2. Department of Education to review required autism spectrum disorders course work requirements for special education certification. Resolved: That the Department of Education, when conducting any review or revision of teacher certification rules, shall review the requirements for special education certification related to course limitations on autism spectrum disorders with a focus on increasing the flexibility of courses that may count towards special education teacher certification and report to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs no later than January 15, 2022 on that review, including any recommendations for special education certification as it relates to course work on autism spectrum disorders.

See title page for effective date.
