

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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LAWS
OF THE
STATE OF MAINE

AS PASSED BY THE

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION
January 3, 2024 to May 10, 2024

THE GENERAL EFFECTIVE DATE FOR
SECOND REGULAR SESSION
NON-EMERGENCY LAWS IS
AUGUST 9, 2024

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

Augusta, Maine
2024

(2) Aggravated cultivating of marijuana under Title 17-A, section 1105-D, subsection 1, paragraph A, subparagraph (4);

(3) Aggravated cultivating of marijuana under Title 17-A, section 1105-D, subsection 1, paragraph B-1, subparagraph (4);

(4) Aggravated cultivating of marijuana under Title 17-A, section 1105-D, subsection 1, paragraph D, subparagraph (4); and

(5) Unlawful possession of a scheduled drug under Title 17-A, former section 1107 when that drug was marijuana and the underlying crime was a Class D crime.

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 640

H.P. 1452 - L.D. 2262

**An Act to Amend the Process
for the Sale of Foreclosed
Properties Due to Nonpayment
of Taxes**

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

Sec. 1. 14 MRSA §4422, sub-§1, ¶C, as amended by PL 2021, c. 382, §2, is further amended to read:

C. That portion of the proceeds from any sale of property or any money returned to the former owner of property, pursuant to the provisions of Title 36, section 943-C, that is exempt under this section is exempt for a period of 12 months from the date of receipt of such proceeds for purposes of re-investing in a residence within that period.

Sec. 2. 36 MRSA §943, 6th ¶, as amended by PL 2017, c. 288, Pt. A, §41, is further amended to read:

Beginning with taxes that are assessed after April 1, 1985, the notice of impending automatic foreclosure must be substantially in the following form:

STATE OF MAINE

NOTICE OF IMPENDING AUTOMATIC FORECLOSURE

Title 36, M.R.S.A. Section 943

IMPORTANT: DO NOT DISREGARD THIS NOTICE. YOU WILL LOSE YOUR PROPERTY UNLESS YOU PAY YOUR 20__ PROPERTY TAXES, INTEREST AND COSTS.

TO:

You are the party named on a tax lien certificate filed on _____, 20__, and recorded in Book _____, Page _____ in the County Registry of Deeds. This filing has created a tax lien mortgage on the real estate described therein.

On _____, 20__, the tax lien mortgage will be foreclosed and your right to recover your property by paying the taxes, interest and costs that are owed will expire.

IF THE TAX LIEN FORECLOSES, THE MUNICIPALITY WILL OWN YOUR PROPERTY AND MAY SELL IT AND RETURN EXCESS SALE PROCEEDS TO YOU, IF ANY, PURSUANT TO THE MAINE REVISED STATUTES, TITLE 36, SECTION 943-C.

If you cannot pay the property taxes you owe please contact me to discuss this notice.

Municipal Treasurer

Sec. 3. 36 MRSA §943-C, as amended by PL 2023, c. 523, Pt. A, §8, is further amended to read:

§943-C. Sale of foreclosed properties

Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, after the foreclosure process under sections 942 and 943 or sections 1281 and 1282 is completed and the right of redemption has expired, if a municipality chooses to sell to someone other than the former owner, the municipal officers or their designee shall ~~notify the former owner of the right to require the municipality to use the sale process under subsection 3. For the purpose of this section, "former owner" means the owner or owners of record at the time of foreclosure or, if deceased, the former owner's heirs, devisees or personal representatives. The notice must be sent by United States Postal Service certified mail, return receipt requested, and first class mail to the last known address of the former owner and "tax-acquired property" means real property taken by a municipality for nonpayment of property taxes.~~ If the municipality agrees to sell the property back to the former owner, the alternative sale process under this section does not apply. If the sale to the former owner is not completed, the requirements of this section are reinstated.

1-A. Subject property. This section governs the sale of all tax-acquired property through the tax lien mortgage foreclosure process under sections 942 and 943 or sections 1281 and 1282.

2. Notification; appeal. At least 90 days prior to listing property for sale, the municipal officers or their designee shall send a written notice to the last known address of the former owner, by United States Postal Service certified mail, return receipt requested, and

first-class mail, of ~~the right to require~~ the sale process described in subsection 3. The State Tax Assessor shall prepare notices that must be used by municipalities to inform former owners of ~~their right to apply for~~ the sale process provided under subsection 3.

3. Sale process requirements. ~~If the former owner submits a written demand within 90 days after the notification in subsection 2 that the sale process of this subsection be used~~ When selling a tax-acquired property, the municipal officers or their designee shall:

A. List the property for sale at the highest reasonable price at which the property is anticipated to sell with a real estate broker or agent licensed under Title 32, chapter 114 who does not hold an elected or appointed office in the municipality and is not employed by the municipality;

B. ~~Sell~~ Convey the property via quitclaim deed to the successful buyer at the highest price at which the property is able to sell, ~~or the price at which the property is anticipated by the real estate broker to sell within 6 12 months after listing; and~~

C. Pay to the former owner any sale proceeds in excess of:

- (1) The sum of all taxes owed on the property;
- (2) ~~Property~~ The sum of all taxes that would have been assessed on the property during the period following foreclosure when the property is owned by the municipality;
- (3) All accrued interest;
- (4) Fees, including advertising, mailing, recording, property listing and real estate broker's or agent's fees, to the extent that those fees are not included in the broker or agent fee agreement;
- (5) Any other expenses incurred by the municipality in selling ~~or~~, maintaining or improving the property, including, but not limited to, an administrative fee equal to 10% of the property taxes owed documented administrative costs and reasonable attorney's fees;
- (6) The cost to the municipality of the lien and foreclosure process, including, but not limited to, reasonable attorney's fees; and
- (7) Unpaid sewer, water or other utility charges and reasonable fees imposed by the municipality; ~~and~~

D. Provide to the former owner a written accounting of the amount of excess sale proceeds itemizing any deductions made pursuant to paragraph C, subparagraphs (1) to (7) at the former owner's request.

~~If the municipal officers are unable to list or sell the property under the requirements of paragraphs A and B, or if the property tax payer does not request that the~~

~~property be sold according to the sale process in this subsection, the municipal officers may sell the property in any manner authorized by the municipality's legislative body, if the municipal officers pay the former owner any excess sale proceeds as calculated in paragraph C.~~

4-A. Effect of inability to contract or sell property. If, after 3 attempts, a municipality is unable to contract with a real estate broker or agent for the sale of the property as described in subsection 3 or the broker or agent is unable to sell the property within 12 months after listing, the municipal officers may sell the property in any manner authorized by the municipality's legislative body, as long as the municipality pays the former owner any excess sale proceeds as calculated in subsection 3, paragraph C.

5. Property in the unorganized territory. With regard to the sale of property acquired by the State through tax lien foreclosure in the unorganized territory, the State Tax Assessor has the obligations of a municipality under this section.

6. ~~Quitclaim deed and waiver~~ Waiver of former owner. As a condition of disbursement of excess sale proceeds to the former owner under subsection 3, paragraph C, the municipal officers may require the former owner to execute a quitclaim deed without covenant conveying any interest of the former owner in the property to the municipality and to deliver that deed before conveyance by the municipality to the buyer. Receipt of such excess sale proceeds by the former owner pursuant to this section is deemed to be a waiver of any right of the former owner to commence any action pursuant to section 946-B. Failure of a municipality to file the notice required by subsection 11 does not nullify or otherwise affect the validity of the waiver under this subsection. This subsection may not be construed to prevent the former owner from commencing an action for damages relating to the effective conveyance of excess sale proceeds or the amount of excess sale proceeds.

7. Retention of tax-acquired property. If a municipality chooses to retain a tax-acquired property for municipal use, the municipality shall procure an appraisal report from an appraiser licensed to provide real estate appraisals in this State showing the value of the tax-acquired property being retained. The appraiser may not hold an elected or appointed office in the municipality or be otherwise employed by the municipality. The municipal officers, after providing the notice required by subsection 8, shall pay the former owner any excess sale proceeds as calculated in subsection 3, paragraph C, substituting the value of the tax-acquired property as shown in the appraisal report, which must be prepared within 120 days before the time the excess sale proceeds are paid, for the selling price of the tax-acquired property.

8. Notice of intent to pay excess sale proceeds. If after the sale of a tax-acquired property there exist any excess sale proceeds as described in subsection 3, paragraph C, at least 30 days prior to disbursement of those excess sale proceeds to the former owner the municipal officers shall send written notice of the municipality's intent to pay the former owner the excess sale proceeds. The notice must be sent by first-class mail and certified mail, return receipt requested, to the last known address of the former owner and the last known address of each record holder of an interest in the tax-acquired property. This notice does not limit the right of a lienholder to pursue any claims to the excess sale proceeds against the former owner otherwise available by law.

9. Notice by publication. If the municipality is unable, after reasonable diligence, to locate the former owner of a tax-acquired property in order to send the notice required in subsection 8, the municipality, once a week for 3 consecutive weeks, shall place a notice in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the tax-acquired property is located. The notice must include the name of the former owner, a description of the tax-acquired property that was sold, the amount of the excess sale proceeds and the date by which the excess sale proceeds must be claimed.

10. Transfer of proceeds. If, after provision of notice under subsection 9, a former owner fails to claim the excess sale proceeds within 30 days of the final published notice, the municipality shall transfer the excess sale proceeds to the Unclaimed Property Fund under Title 33, section 2141.

11. Notice of payment of proceeds. A municipality, within 10 days of payment of any excess sale proceeds to the former owner under this section, shall record in the registry of deeds of the county or registry district where the tax-acquired property is located a notice signed by the municipal officers. The notice must include the name of the former owner to whom the excess sale proceeds were paid, the amount of the excess sale proceeds, the date on which the excess sale proceeds were paid to the former owner, a description of the tax-acquired property that was sold and a statement that receipt of the excess sale proceeds by the former owner is deemed to be a waiver of the former owner's right to commence any action challenging the taking pursuant to section 946-B.

The State Tax Assessor shall prescribe the form of the notice to be used by municipalities under this subsection.

See title page for effective date.

**CHAPTER 641
H.P. 1371 - L.D. 2147**

An Act to Change the Requirement for Edible Cannabis Products to Be Stamped or Embossed on Each Serving with a Universal Symbol

Emergency preamble. **Whereas,** acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, current law requires edible cannabis products to be labeled with a universal symbol in order to be sold or offered for sale; and

Whereas, this legislation proposes to change the requirement for edible cannabis products to be embossed or stamped with a universal symbol in order to be sold or offered for sale; and

Whereas, this legislation needs to take effect as soon as possible since new guidance from the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, office of cannabis policy is affecting businesses currently operating; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

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

Sec. 1. 28-B MRSA §703, sub-§1, ¶D, as amended by PL 2019, c. 491, §5, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

D. Unless determined impracticable by the department by rule, must be stamped or embossed with a universal symbol on each serving of the edible cannabis product or each serving must be individually wrapped or blister packaged with a universal symbol clearly included on the wrapping or packaging. In the event the department determines by rule that stamping, embossing, individual wrapping or blister packaging for a particular type of edible cannabis product is impracticable, each serving of the product must be packaged together and the universal symbol affixed to the packaging. For purposes of this chapter, edible cannabis products that are determined impracticable to stamp, emboss, individually wrap or blister package include but are not limited to:

- (1) Potato or corn chips;
- (2) Popcorn;