

# 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.**

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**Augusta, Maine**  
**2024**

(1) All of the energy is used on the site where the property is located;

(2) The equipment is collocated with a net energy billing customer that is or net energy billing customers that are subscribed to at least 50% of the facility's output; or

(3) All of the energy is transmitted through the facilities of a transmission and distribution utility and a utility customer or customers receive a utility bill credit for the energy generated by the equipment pursuant to Title 35-A, section 3209-A or 3209-B and the generator of electricity entered into a fully executed interconnection agreement with a transmission and distribution utility prior to June 1, 2024.

On or before April 1st of the first property tax year for which a taxpayer claims an exemption under this paragraph, the taxpayer claiming the exemption shall file a report with the assessor. The report must identify the property for which the exemption is claimed and must be made on a form prescribed by the State Tax Assessor or a substitute form approved by the State Tax Assessor. The State Tax Assessor shall furnish copies of the form to each municipality in the State and make the forms available to taxpayers.

**Sec. 4. 36 MRSA §656, sub-§1, ¶K,** as amended by PL 2021, c. 181, Pt. C, §3, is further amended to read:

K. Solar and wind energy equipment that generates heat or electricity if all of the energy is:

(1) Used on the site where the property is located; or

(2) Transmitted through the facilities of a transmission and distribution utility, and a utility customer or customers receive a utility bill credit for the energy generated by the equipment pursuant to Title 35-A.

On or before April 1st of the first property tax year for which a taxpayer claims an exemption under this paragraph, the taxpayer claiming the exemption shall file a report with the assessor. The report must identify the property for which the exemption is claimed and must be made on a form prescribed by the State Tax Assessor or a substitute form approved by the State Tax Assessor. The State Tax Assessor shall furnish copies of the form to each municipality in the State and make the forms available to taxpayers.

This paragraph applies to solar energy equipment for property tax years beginning before April 1, 2025.

**Sec. 5. 36 MRSA §656, sub-§1, ¶L** is enacted to read:

L. For property tax years beginning on or after April 1, 2025, solar energy equipment that generates heat or electricity if:

(1) All of the energy is used on the site where the property is located;

(2) The equipment is collocated with a net energy billing customer that is or net energy billing customers that are subscribed to at least 50% of the facility's output; or

(3) All of the energy is transmitted through the facilities of a transmission and distribution utility and a utility customer or customers receive a utility bill credit for the energy generated by the equipment pursuant to Title 35-A, section 3209-A or 3209-B and the generator of electricity entered into a fully executed interconnection agreement with a transmission and distribution utility prior to June 1, 2024.

On or before April 1st of the first property tax year for which a taxpayer claims an exemption under this paragraph, the taxpayer claiming the exemption shall file a report with the assessor. The report must identify the property for which the exemption is claimed and must be made on a form prescribed by the State Tax Assessor or a substitute form approved by the State Tax Assessor. The State Tax Assessor shall furnish copies of the form to each municipality in the State and make the forms available to taxpayers.

**Sec. 6. State Tax Assessor duties.** By January 1, 2025, the State Tax Assessor shall update the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of Revenue Services' solar energy equipment exemption information bulletin to reflect any changes made to relevant laws after December 31, 2023. The assessor shall also establish a general method of valuation for commercial solar arrays similar to the general method of valuation for residential solar arrays and include information about the method of valuation in the bulletin. To update the bulletin, the assessor shall consult with municipal assessors, members of the solar industry and representatives of State Government.

See title page for effective date.

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**CHAPTER 683**

**H.P. 972 - L.D. 1517**

**An Act to Establish the Social Equity Program**

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

**PART A**

Sec. A-1. 5 MRSA §12004-I, sub-§6-K is enacted to read:

**6-K.**

Economic	Social Equity	Not	5 MRSA
Development	Program	Authorized	§13302
	Advisory		
	Committee		

Sec. A-2. 5 MRSA c. 395 is enacted to read:

**CHAPTER 395**

**SOCIAL EQUITY PROGRAM**

**§13301. Social equity program established**

In accordance with the provisions of this chapter, the Department of Economic and Community Development, referred to in this chapter as "the department," shall establish and administer a social equity program, referred to in this chapter as "the program," to increase workforce development programs and provide support to individuals who are members of impacted communities and businesses that are owned by members of impacted communities. For purposes of this chapter, "impacted community" means a racial, ethnic or tribal population that has experienced incarceration at rates disproportionate to the racial, ethnic or tribal population's rate of criminality starting in or about the year 1971 and as a result the racial, ethnic or tribal population has experienced direct or indirect discrimination in access to housing, employment and education. The department may employ consultants, contract for services or enter into agreements with private and public entities, such as other state agencies, as necessary for the establishment and implementation of the program as long as costs associated with the program do not exceed \$300,000 per biennium.

**§13302. Social Equity Program Advisory Committee**

The Social Equity Program Advisory Committee, established by section 12004-I, subsection 6-K and referred to in this chapter as "the advisory committee," serves to advise the department on the development and implementation of the program. The advisory committee has 5 members who are members of impacted communities. Two members of the advisory committee are appointed by the President of the Senate and 3 members are appointed by the Speaker of the House. The first-named member appointed by the Speaker of the House is the chair of the advisory committee. The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development, or the commissioner's designee, shall convene the advisory committee as necessary to carry out its advisory duties.

**§13303. Report**

By December 15, 2026, and biennially thereafter, the department shall file a report with the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over economic and community development matters and the

joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over cannabis matters detailing the components of the program, the progress and impact of the program and its components and the activities of the advisory committee. Each joint standing committee may report out legislation in the regular or special session of the Legislature in which the report was filed.

Sec. A-3. 28-B MRSA §1101, sub-§2, ¶C-1 is enacted to read:

C-1. Money credited to the fund may be expended by the department or transferred by the department to other state agencies to fund the social equity program established in Title 5, chapter 395.

Sec. A-4. 28-B MRSA §1101, sub-§2, ¶D, as enacted by PL 2023, c. 444, §1, is amended to read:

D. Any funds remaining in the fund after expenditures made in accordance with paragraphs A to C-C-1 must be used to fund:

(1) The cost of the tax deductions for business expenses related to carrying on a business as a cannabis establishment or a testing facility provided pursuant to Title 36, section 5122, subsection 2, paragraph PP and Title 36, section 5200-A, subsection 2, paragraph BB. By June 1st annually, the State Tax Assessor shall determine the cost of those deductions during the prior calendar year and report that amount to the State Controller, who shall transfer that amount from the remaining funds in the fund to the General Fund; and

(2) The cost of the position in the Bureau of Revenue Services within the department to administer the tax deductions provided pursuant to Title 36, section 5122, subsection 2, paragraph PP and Title 36, section 5200-A, subsection 2, paragraph BB. By June 1st annually, the commissioner shall determine the cost of the position in the bureau to administer those deductions during the prior calendar year and report that amount to the State Controller, who shall transfer that amount from the remaining funds in the fund to the General Fund.

**PART B**

**Sec. B-1. Department of Labor; apprenticeship navigator.** The Department of Labor shall establish a 2-year apprenticeship navigator position with the responsibility of increasing access to workforce development opportunities for impacted communities, including, but not limited to, apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs. For purposes of this Part, "impacted community" means a racial, ethnic or tribal population that has experienced incarceration at rates disproportionate to the racial, ethnic or tribal population's rate of criminality starting in or about the year

1971 and as a result the racial, ethnic or tribal population has experienced direct or indirect discrimination in access to housing, employment and education.

**Sec. B-2. Department of Economic and Community Development; business support services; seed funds.** The Department of Economic and Community Development shall increase access to business support services to impacted communities by:

1. Providing outreach to impacted communities to support business development by and business success of members of impacted communities;
2. Providing technical assistance to support business development by and business success of members of impacted communities;
3. Providing funds to members of impacted communities starting, maintaining or expanding a business; and
4. Providing education and counseling about available tax credits to members of impacted communities.

**Sec. B-3. Cannabis business advocate.** The Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services shall hire a cannabis business advocate as an employee of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services for a period of up to 2 years. The cannabis business advocate may be physically located within or near the office of cannabis policy, referred to in this section as "the office," but is not an employee of the office. The duties of the cannabis business advocate include:

1. Assisting licensees under the Cannabis Legalization Act and registrants under the Maine Medical Use of Cannabis Act, referred to in this section collectively as "participants," in navigating the regulatory process and resolving problems with the office;
2. Identifying areas in which participants have problems in dealings with the office;
3. Receiving complaints from participants, mediating conflicts between participants and the office and, when appropriate, making recommendations to the director of the office with respect to these complaints. Within 3 months of receiving recommendations, the director of the office shall provide a formal response to the cannabis business advocate on all recommendations submitted;
4. Proposing changes in the administrative practices of the office to mitigate problems identified under subsections 1, 2 and 3; and
5. Maintaining a record of the volume, nature and resolution status of complaints received from participants and providing the director of the office with this information by November 1st of each year.

**Sec. B-4. Reports; authority to report out legislation.** By December 15, 2026, the Department of Labor, the Department of Economic and Community

Development and the Department of Administrative and Financial Services shall separately file a report with the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over labor matters, the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over economic and community development matters and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over cannabis matters. The departments must include in their reports details on the activities and impact of their efforts required under this Part. The Department of Administrative and Financial Services shall also include in its report the volume, nature and resolution of complaints received by the cannabis business advocate established in section 3 of this Part.

**Sec. B-5. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and allocations are made.

**ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF**

**Adult Use Cannabis Public Health and Safety Fund and Municipal Opt-In Fund Z263**

Initiative: Establishes one limited-period Public Service Coordinator II position for a cannabis business advocate effective August 1, 2024 through July 31, 2026 and provides funding for related All Other costs.

<b>OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>
Personal Services	\$0	\$118,854
All Other	\$0	\$9,453
<b>OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$128,307</b>

**ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF DEPARTMENT TOTALS**

<b>OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>
	\$0	\$128,307
<b>DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$128,307</b>

**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF**

**Social Equity Program N495**

Initiative: Allocates ongoing funds for the costs to implement and administer a social equity program to increase workforce development programs and provide support to individuals who are members of impacted communities and businesses that are owned by members of impacted communities.

<b>OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>
All Other	\$0	\$300,000

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE	\$0	\$300,000
FUNDS TOTAL		

<b>ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF DEPARTMENT TOTALS</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	\$0	\$300,000
DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	\$0	\$300,000

**LABOR, DEPARTMENT OF**

**Maine Apprenticeship Program Z375**

Initiative: Establishes one limited-period CareerCenter Consultant position effective August 1, 2024 through July 31, 2026 to increase access to workforce development opportunities for impacted communities and provides funding for related All Other costs.

<b>OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>
Personal Services	\$0	\$79,335
All Other	\$0	\$9,500

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	\$0	\$88,835
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<b>LABOR, DEPARTMENT OF DEPARTMENT TOTALS</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>
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OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	\$0	\$88,835
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DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	\$0	\$88,835
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<b>SECTION TOTALS</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>
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OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	\$0	\$517,142
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SECTION TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	\$0	\$517,142
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See title page for effective date.

**§1610-Q. Additional securities; judicial branch facilities in Androscoggin, Hancock and Somerset counties**

Notwithstanding any limitation on the amount of securities that may be issued pursuant to section 1606, subsection 2, the authority may issue additional securities from time to time in an aggregate amount not to exceed \$205,000,000 outstanding at any one time for the purposes of paying the costs associated with the planning, purchasing, financing, acquiring, constructing, renovating, furnishing, equipping, improving, extending, enlarging and consolidating new and existing facilities and projects relating to the judicial branch in the counties of Androscoggin, Hancock and Somerset and planning for other court facilities.

See title page for effective date.

**CHAPTER 684**

**S.P. 883 - L.D. 2090**

**An Act to Modernize and Consolidate Certain Court Facilities**

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

**Sec. 1. 4 MRSA §1610-Q** is enacted to read: