

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FOURTH REVISION.

THE  
REVISED STATUTES

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

PASSED AUGUST 29, 1883, AND TAKING EFFECT JANUARY 1, 1884.

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BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE LEGISLATURE.



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## CHAP. 21.

## CHAPTER 21.

## WORK-HOUSES.

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Towns may provide work-house.—persons liable to commitment. R. S., c. 21, § 1. See c. 24, § 27. 11 Me., 210. 65 Me., 121.

SEC. 1. Any town may erect or provide a work-house for the employment and support of persons of the following description: all poor and indigent persons, maintained by or receiving alms from the town; all able-bodied persons not having estate or means otherwise to maintain themselves, who refuse or neglect to work; all who live a dissolute and vagrant life and exercise no ordinary calling or lawful business sufficient to gain an honest livelihood; and all such persons, as spend their time and property in public houses, to the neglect of their proper business, or by otherwise mis-spending what they earn, to the impoverishment of themselves and their families, are likely to become paupers.

Towns may choose overseers of such houses. R. S., c. 21, § 2.

SEC. 2. Every town having a work-house, may, at its annual meeting, choose three, five, seven, or more overseers thereof, who shall have the inspection and government thereof, with power to appoint a master and needful assistants for the more immediate care and superintendence of the persons received or employed therein.

Duties of such overseers. R. S., c. 21, § 3.

SEC. 3. The overseers, as occasion requires, shall hold meetings on the business of their office; and make needful orders and regulations for such house, to be binding until the next town meeting, when they shall be submitted to the consideration of the inhabitants; and such as are approved at said meeting shall remain in force until revoked by the town.

Contiguous towns may build one work-house. R. S., c. 21, § 4.

SEC. 4. Any two or more contiguous towns, at their joint charge and for their common benefit, may erect or provide such a work-house and may purchase land for the use thereof.

Joint board of overseers, and their powers.

SEC. 5. The authority to order, govern, and repair such work-house, to appoint a master and necessary assistants, and to remove them from office for sufficient cause, is vested in a joint board of overseers, three of

whom shall be chosen by each of said towns at its annual meeting, unless all said towns agree on a different number. Vacancies may be supplied by the town in which they happen, at any legal meeting. The members appointed by any one or more of said towns have power to proceed in all affairs of said house, notwithstanding any one or more of the towns interested have neglected to furnish its proportion of members.

SEC. 6. There shall be stated quarterly meetings of all said overseers on the first Tuesdays of January, April, July and October, at the work-house, to inspect the management and direct the business thereof; other meetings may be called at the work-house, by the overseers of any town concerned, by giving notice of the time and occasion thereof to the other members of the board as agreed upon at any stated meeting.

SEC. 7. The joint board when assembled, may choose a moderator. At their first general meeting after their election, they shall appoint a clerk who shall be sworn, and shall record all votes and orders of the board.

SEC. 8. Said board, at any general quarterly meeting composed of at least one half of their whole number, may make all reasonable by-laws and orders, not repugnant to law, respecting the affairs of such work-house; agree with the master and assistants, and order proper allowance for their care and services; but all other matters relating to said work-house, may be acted upon at any other meeting duly notified, if one third of the board are present.

SEC. 9. The yearly compensation of the master and assistants in any joint work-house, in addition to the allowance aforesaid, and the expense of keeping the house in repair, shall be paid by the several towns interested, in proportion to the state tax last assessed upon them when the expense was incurred; or in such other proportion, as all the towns interested agree upon.

SEC. 10. If any town refuses or neglects to advance or re-imburse its proportion of such allowance or other charges, after they have been stated and adjusted by the joint board of overseers, it may be recovered of such delinquent town in an action brought in the name of any person or persons whom the overseers in writing appoint for that purpose.

SEC. 11. No greater number of persons belonging to a town shall be received into a joint work-house, than its proportion thereof can accommodate, when the receiving of them will exclude or incommode those belonging to the other towns.

SEC. 12. When any person, not having a legal settlement in any town in the state, becomes idle or indigent, he may be committed to the work-house provided for the town in which he resides, to be employed, if able to labor, in the same manner, and to be subject to the same rules as the other persons thereto committed.

SEC. 13. If any town jointly interested in any work-house refuses or neglects to provide its proportion of the necessary expenses thereof, or of the materials, implements or other means for carrying on the work there required, according to its agreement, or the proper direction of the overseers, it shall be deprived of the privilege of sending any person there, until it complies with such agreement or direction.

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R.S., c. 21, § 13.  
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Delinquent town may be deprived of the right to occupy the house.  
R.S., c. 21, § 14.

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Either town may furnish additional materials for labor.  
R.S., c. 21, § 15.

SEC. 14. In addition to the expenses and other things to be furnished jointly, each of such towns may furnish such other materials, implements and means of work as its overseers determine, for the employment of any person by them committed to such house; and the master shall receive such materials, implements, and means of work, and keep them separate from those of other towns; and shall be accountable to such town for the cost, and for all profits and earnings acquired by the labor of the persons under his care belonging to such town.

Master to keep a registry.  
R.S., c. 21, § 16.

SEC. 15. The master of such work-house shall keep a register of the names of the persons committed, and of the towns to which they belong, with the time of their commitment and discharge, and the amount of their earnings; and the same shall be open to the inspection of the overseers.

Controversy between master and overseers, how determined.  
R.S., c. 21, § 17.  
Each town liable for its own commitments.—discharges.  
R.S., c. 21, § 18.

SEC. 16. All controversies between the master of such house and the overseers of any town, relating to his official transactions, may be determined by the joint board of overseers at a general or quarterly meeting.

SEC. 17. No town shall be chargeable for the expenses of any person not committed to said house by its overseers, nor shall any person duly committed be discharged except by written order of the overseers of his town, by vote of the joint board at a quarterly meeting, or by the supreme judicial or superior court held in the same county upon application for that purpose.

Persons committed to be kept employed.  
R.S., c. 21, § 19.

SEC. 18. Every person committed to such work-house, if able to work, shall be kept diligently employed during the term of his commitment. For idleness, obstinacy, or disorderly conduct, he may be punished as provided by the lawful regulations of the house.

Work-houses discontinued.  
R.S., c. 21, § 20.

SEC. 19. Any work-house may be discontinued, or applied to any other use, when the town or towns concerned agree so to do.

## CHAPTER 22.

## FENCES, COMMON FIELDS AND DRAINAGE OF SALT MARSHES.

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