

USEFUL LINKS

- Maine Legislature Homepage: <http://legislature.maine.gov/>
- Sign up to Testify and/or submit testimony here: <https://www.mainelegislature.org/testimony/>

Common Acronyms: AFA = Appropriations and Financial Affairs. HHS = Health and Human Services. OTP = Ought to Pass. OTP-AM = Ought to Pass as Amended. ONTP = Ought Not to Pass.


Color code: Orange font = Budget bill; Black font = Homelessness related bill; Blue font = Service related; Green font = Housing/Rental Assistance related; Purple font = General Assistance & Safety Net related bills; Pink font = Food security related bills; highlighted in yellow = passed the House and/or Senate; highlighted in green = signed by the Governor and will become Public Law; Red text = the bill is now dead.

BUDGET BILLS

Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
LD 2214	Governor’s Bill	An Act Making Unified Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds, and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025 (aka Supplemental Budget)	Public Hearing 2/23/24 - Part GG and Part HH - AFA Committee Public Hearing 2/26/24 - Part OO Work Session 3/7/24	The Governor released her Supplemental Budget. Part A ; Part B ; General Fund Bill Language . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PART FF: establishes the Office of New Americans within the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future and also establishes an advisory council to the Office of New Americans • PART GG: Transfers \$10,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Maine State Housing Authority for new housing units through the Affordable Homeownership program • PART HH: \$16 million for the Emergency Housing Relief Fund (one-time funding): Emergency Housing Relief Fund Program, Other Special Revenue Funds account to supplement or establish programs addressing the needs of people experiencing homelessness or facing other immediate housing needs, and support other uses that address housing emergencies in the State, such as through privately-operated low barrier shelter, winter warming shelters, legal services, and other wraparound settlement supports intended to help individuals integrate into Maine’s workforce and communities to ensure that winter warming shelters, lower barrier shelters, longer term shelters and transitional housing programs can remain open, operating, and supporting the emergency housing needs of Maine people. -Part A specifies this is one-time funding. • Part OO: This Part requires the transfer of \$5,000,000 on or before June 30, 2025 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human

Services, General Assistance – Reimbursement to Cities and Towns program, Other Special Revenue Funds account for funding General Assistance payments to cities and towns.

HOMELESSNESS BILLS

Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
LD 1422	Rep. Michael Brennan	An Act to End Homelessness and Assist Students Who Are Homeless by Establishing a Housing Voucher Program and Providing Site-based Housing Services	Passed to be Enacted, placed on the Special Appropriations Table pending Passage to be Enacted – CARRIED OVER	This bill establishes a housing voucher program for homeless students under the authority of the Maine State Housing Authority and appropriates one-time funding of \$2 million in fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25. The bill directs the Maine State Housing Authority to identify 3 sites in Maine to be used for a site-based housing program and appropriates one-time funding of \$3.5 million in fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25 to the DHHS to support the program.
LD 2136 	Rep A Mastraccio	An Act to Provide Financial Support for Shelters for Unhoused Individuals	Public Hearing, Tuesday 1/23/24; Work Session 1/30/24 and 2/20/24 – Housing Committee – OTP-AM unanimous of all present	This bill, as amended by the Committee, provides ongoing funds for homeless shelters – allocating \$10 million beginning next fiscal year, and \$2.5 million for low-barrier shelters. The Committee amendment makes the bill an emergency and adds a Legislative Study.
LD 2146	Rep. G Lookner	An Act to Prohibit Certain Municipalities from Adopting Moratoria on Emergency Shelters	House Passed to be Engrossed by Committee Amendment A on 2/22; the Senate accepted the Minority Ought Not to Pass Report - sent back to the House.	This bill prohibits municipalities with populations exceeding 30,000 people from adopting moratoria on the establishment of emergency shelters that provide temporary shelter for persons experiencing homelessness.

SERVICE BILLS

Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
LD 1975	Rep. Lydia Crafts	An Act to Implement a Statewide Public Health Response to Substance Use and Amend the Laws Governing Scheduled Drugs	Public hearing held 1/17/24; Work Session 3/6/24	This bill establishes the Substance Use, Health and Safety Fund in the Department of Health and Human Services. Money deposited in the fund must be used by the department to oversee, approve and provide grants and funding to agencies, organizations and service providers, including the federally recognized Indian tribes in this State and service providers that are affiliated with federally recognized Indian tribes in this State, to increase voluntary access to community care for persons who need services related to substance use, as set forth in the bill. By June 30, 2024, and annually thereafter, the Legislature must appropriate to the fund an amount sufficient to fully fund the services as set forth in the bill. The bill repeals the laws that make possession of a schedule W, X, Y or Z drug

				and use of drug paraphernalia a crime. It also repeals the laws governing the civil violation of use of drug paraphernalia and possession with intent to use drug paraphernalia.
HOUSING/RENTAL ASSISTANCE BILLS				
Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
LD 1074 ★	Sen. Matthea Daughtry	An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund New Affordable Housing for Low-Income Households	Public Hearing on 4/25 - AFA Committee – Carried Over	\$100,000,000 bond issue to build new affordable housing for low-income households.
LD 226 ★	Rep. Rebecca Millett	An Act to Address Maine’s Affordable Housing Crisis	Passed to be Enacted, placed on the Special Appropriations Table pending Passage to be Enacted – Carried over	This bill provides one-time funds to MaineHousing in the amount of \$100,000,000 in fiscal year 2023-24 and in fiscal year 2024-25 (only these FYs) to increase affordable housing stock in the State.
LD 1540	Rep. Rebecca Millett	An Act to Create the Stable Home Fund Program	Emergency bill requiring 2/3’s majority vote – failed 2/3’s majority vote in the House but Passed in the Senate to be Placed on the Special Appropriations Table on 6/21. Sent back to the House for concurrence where it failed 2/3’s needed for final passage – Carried over	This bill, which includes an emergency preamble and emergency clause, creates the Stable Home Fund and the Stable Home Fund Program within MaineHousing. The purpose of the program is to provide persons earning up to 60% of the median income for an area as defined by HUD with \$300 per month in rental assistance paid directly to the landlord for up to 24 months or until those persons secure housing by means of a housing voucher program administered by HUD under the United States Housing Act of 1937, Public Law 75-412, 50 Stat. 888, Section 8, as amended, or secure a subsidized housing unit. The bill directs MaineHousing to administer the program except that MaineHousing may delegate the administration of the program and provide appropriate funding from the fund to a municipal housing authority with respect to eligible persons located within the municipal housing authority’s jurisdiction.
LD 1710	Rep. Cheryl Golek	An Act to Establish the Maine Rental Assistance and Guarantee Program and Amend the Laws Regarding Tenants and the Municipal General Assistance Program	Public Hearing on 5/12; Work Session 5/26; Work Session 5/30; Work Session 2/13/24 – Housing Committee – OTP-AM	Sponsor Amendment amends the bill as follows: This amendment replaces the bill. This amendment requires the Maine State Housing Authority to establish and administer the Maine Rental Assistance and Guarantee Program. The program must include a rental assistance component to assist individuals with the cost of rent and a rental guarantee component to encourage landlords to work with the program and other rental assistance programs in the State. The amendment also creates the Maine Rental Assistance and Guarantee Program Fund under the Maine State Housing Authority to carry out the program. The bill appropriates \$16,000,000 of ongoing funds annually. The amendment makes it an unfair trade practice for a landlord to refuse to participate in a federal, state or local tenant-based rental assistance program.
LD 2106 ★	Sen. M Rotundo	An Act to Accelerate the Production of Housing and Strengthen the Maine Historic Property Rehabilitation Tax Credit	Public Hearing 1/24/24; Work Session 2/13 – Taxation	This bill increases the maximum tax credit allowed for certified historic property rehabilitation projects. It also allows nonprofit organizations that claim the historic preservation tax credit or the affordable housing tax credit to file their refund claims on a calendar year basis. The

Committee – Divided Report

changes in the bill apply to tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2024.

GENERAL ASSISTANCE & SAFETY NET BILLS

Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
LD 1664	Sen. Marianne Moore	An Act to Increase Reimbursement Under the General Assistance Program	Passed to be Enacted, placed on the Special Appropriations Table pending Passage to be Enacted – Carried over	This bill increases, from 70% to 90%, the amount of state reimbursement for the costs of general assistance incurred by each municipality and Indian tribe.
LD 1732	Rep. Michele Meyer	An Act to Expand the General Assistance Program	1/30/24 Work Session – HHS Committee – Voted OTP-AM	This bill changes the municipal general assistance program in the following ways: 1. It requires overseers and designated or appointed municipal officials administering the program to complete training within 120 days of election or appointment; 2. It requires municipalities to accept applications for general assistance during regular business hours; 3. It amends provisions governing the municipality of responsibility to increase the provision of assistance from 30 days to 6 months when a municipality assists an applicant in relocating to another community and from 6 months to 12 months when an applicant is residing in a group home, shelter, rehabilitation center, nursing home or hospital or in a hotel, motel or other temporary housing; 4. It increases, from 70% to 90%, the amount of state reimbursement for the costs of general assistance incurred by each municipality and Indian tribe. It also provides that, if a municipality elects to determine need without consideration of funds from a municipally controlled trust, the State is required to reimburse the municipality for 66 2/3% of the amount in excess of expenditures; 5. It provides state reimbursement for additional program costs, including emergency general assistance, temporary housing, interpreter services and administrative expenses; and 6. It requires the Department of Health and Human Services to provide the services necessary to support municipalities, including education and training for certain state employees the delivery of trauma-informed and culturally and linguistically appropriate services, written decisions and a database.

FOOD SECURITY BILLS

Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
LD 568	Rep. Matthew Pouliot	An Act to Provide Funding for the State Fund to Address Food Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives	Passed to be Enacted in the House and Senate. Placed on the Special Appropriations Table – Carried over	This bill provides ongoing General Fund appropriations of \$600,000 to the Fund To Address Food Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. The bill also removes the \$50,000 limit on matching contributions from the fund criteria.

BILLS THAT ARE NOW DEAD

Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
--------	---------	-------	--------------------	-------

LD 2138	Rep C Madigan	An Act to Improve Funding for Homeless Shelters	This bill is now DEAD (instead incorporated in LD 2136 above)	This resolve, as amended by the Sponsor, provides ongoing funds for low-barrier homeless shelters – allocating \$2.5 million beginning next fiscal year.
LD 1426	Rep. Kristi Mathieson	An Act to Secure Housing for the Most Vulnerable Maine Residents by Amending the Laws Governing Municipal General Assistance	This bill is now DEAD	<p>This bill:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Requires an overseer, no later than the 120th day following appointment or election, to complete training on the requirements of the municipal GA program; 2. Replaces, for determining the maximum level of assistance, the fair market value determination with setting the assistance at the equivalent amount of rental assistance provided for tenant-based housing choice vouchers under Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 except that the benefit level may not be less than the difference between the applicant's income and 110% of the area's fair market rent; 3. Provides that if general assistance is being used to pay rent for an applicant whose rent is subject to a lease an overseer may redetermine the applicant's eligibility annually; 4. Increases from 70% to 90% the amount of state reimbursement for the costs of GA incurred by a municipality and each Indian tribe; 5. Directs DHHS to reimburse each municipality for 5% of the direct costs of paying benefits incurred through GA program; 6. Directs DHHS to establish and provide overseers with access to a statewide database for tracking applicants for the GA program and expenses relating to the program; and 7. Requires DHHS to provide assistance to municipalities with regard to processing applications for the GA program and directs the department to establish a hotline that is available 24 hours per day in order to provide consistent, accurate advice to overseers. It also requires the department to respond to requests for assistance within 24 hours
LD 1675	Rep. Michael Brennan	An Act to Amend the Laws Governing the General Assistance Program Regarding Eligibility, Housing Assistance and State Reimbursement and to Establish a Working Group	This bill is now DEAD	This bill amends the law governing the General Assistance (GA) program to provide that a municipality must calculate housing assistance equivalent to the amount of rental assistance provided for tenant-based housing choice vouchers under Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937. The bill extends the period of eligibility from one month to 6 months. Beginning July 1, 2023, when a municipality incurs net general assistance costs in excess of 0.008% of that municipality's most recent state valuation relative to the state fiscal year for which reimbursement is being issued, DHHS must reimburse the municipality for 90% of the amount in excess of these expenditures. The bill also directs the department to establish a working group to study and make recommendations related to a uniform intake process and the conversion of the GA program into a housing assistance program.