

The Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature begins January 3, 2024. Statutory adjournment is April 17, 2024.

REVISED: 5/8/24

USEFUL LINKS

- Maine Legislature Homepage: <http://legislature.maine.gov/>
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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: **BOLD text = UPDATE;** 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)	Signed by the Governor - will become Public Law	The bill, as Amended & Enacted , provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$13.5 M in one-time funding 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 winter warming shelters, legal services and other wraparound settlement supports intended to help individuals integrate into Maine's workforce and communities. • \$2.5 M in funds to privately operated low-barrier shelters to be distributed in fiscal year 2024-25 through fiscal year 2026-27. • \$10 M in one-time funding for new housing units through the authority's Affordable Homeownership Program to expand affordable, energy-efficient housing options that are affordable to workers and support state workforce needs. • \$20 M in one-time funding to expand affordable rental and ownership housing options through the Rural Affordable Rental Housing Program and the federal Low-income Housing Tax Credit Program. • \$2 M in one-time funding for housing subsidies for homeless students in elementary school and secondary school. • \$18 M in one-time funds for a pilot program to provide support for eviction prevention (rent relief program). • \$10 M in additional one-time funding in tandem with programmatic reforms in order to support the substantial new demand for the General Assistance - Reimbursement to Cities and Towns program

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1,168,299 to strengthen mental health crisis intervention mobile response services in order to provide services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week beginning January 1, 2025. This funding must provide funding for mobile outreach peer support specialists (Part DDDD). And funding for Crisis receiving centers (Part EEEE). • Establishes the Office of New Americans
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HOMELESSNESS BILLS

Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
LD 2136 ★	Rep A Mastraccio	An Act to Provide Financial Support for Shelters for Unhoused Individuals	Passed to be Enacted in the House on 3/28/24 and the Senate on 4/1/24 and placed on the Special Appropriations Table pending Passage to be Enacted	This bill, as amended by the Committee: This amendment increases the ongoing appropriation to support emergency shelter operations in the bill from \$10,000,000 to \$12,500,000 and requires the Maine State Housing Authority to reserve \$2,500,000 annually exclusively for distribution to low barrier emergency shelters. The amendment requires the Statewide Homeless Council to convene a stakeholder group to develop a 10-year plan to address the root causes of homelessness. The stakeholder group is required to notify the Joint Select Committee on Housing of all meetings of the stakeholder group. The stakeholder group is required to hold at least 4 meetings prior to the council's submitting a report to the Joint Select Committee on Housing by November 6, 2024. The amendment also requires the Maine State Housing Authority to amend its rules to ensure that \$2,500,000, or an equivalent percentage of the funds appropriated for the shelter operation subsidy, is reserved exclusively for distribution to low-barrier shelters.
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.
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.

SERVICE BILLS

Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
LD 2237	Speaker R Talbot Ross	An Act to Strengthen Public Safety, Health and Well-being by Expanding Services and Coordinating Violence Prevention Resources	Passed to be Enacted, in the House and Senate on 3/21/24 and placed on the Special Appropriations Table pending Passage to be Enacted	<p>This bill includes parts A-F. Click here for the full bill text. Relevant parts are below.</p> <p>This bill enacts provisions to improve mental health crisis response services and to reduce violence, including gun violence.</p> <p>Part A provides funding to strengthen and expand mental health crisis intervention mobile response services in order to provide services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It requires the Department of Health and Human Services to provide for the incorporation of specific types of mental health and crisis intervention experts into the existing crisis services response system. It also provides funding for ancillary services for mobile response services, including necessary travel and telephone conferences with clients. Part A also requires the Department of Health and Human Services, by January 30, 2025, in coordination with the Department of Public Safety, to ensure the coordination of services under the State's E-9-1-1 system and the State's 9-8-8 mobile crisis services system. By January 30, 2026, the Department of Health and Human Services must submit a status report related to the coordination of services, including suggested legislation, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services matters, and the joint standing committee may submit a bill relating to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.</p> <p>Part B directs the Department of Health and Human Services to establish crisis receiving centers across the State to support individuals dealing with behavioral health, mental health or substance use issues. At a minimum, a crisis receiving center must be established in Androscoggin, Aroostook, Oxford, Penobscot, Washington and York counties. Crisis receiving centers must provide culturally sensitive trauma-informed care. Part B also provides funding to establish 6 crisis receiving centers.</p> <p>Part D provides funding to reduce waiting lists for and expand access to medication management services, including telehealth services and employee recruitment and retention incentives, provided by the Office of Behavioral Health that are similar to the services provided under Department of Health and Human Services rule Chapter 101: MaineCare Benefits Manual, Chapter II, Section 65, Behavioral Health Services, to meet the timely access requirements under the consent decree referenced in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 34-B, section 1217.</p>

LD 1975	Rep. Lydia Crafts	An Act to Implement a Statewide Public Health Response to Substance Use and Amend the Laws Governing Scheduled Drugs	Passed to be Enacted in the House on 4/10/24 - Placed on the Special Study Table pending final Passage.	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.
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HOUSING/RENTAL ASSISTANCE BILLS

Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
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	Passed to be Enacted in the House on 3/19/24 and the Senate on 3/20/24 and Placed on the Special Study Table pending final Passage.	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	Passed to be Engrossed as Amended by Committee Amendment A in the Senate on 3/12/24 and the House on 3/13/24 - the bill now faces votes for enactment	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 changes in the bill apply to tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2024.
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 4/25/23 - AFA Committee	\$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.

GENERAL ASSISTANCE & SAFETY NET BILLS

Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
LD 1732	Rep. Michele Meyer	An Act to Expand the General Assistance Program	Became law without the Governor's signature on 3/27/24	<p>This bill as Enacted as Public Law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires overseers and designated or appointed municipal officials administering the program to complete training within 120 days of election or appointment. Adds the delivery of trauma-informed services and culturally and linguistically appropriate services to the training requirements for overseers and municipal officials. Requires municipalities to provide general assistance with trauma-informed services and culturally and linguistically appropriate services. Requires municipalities to accept applications for general assistance during regular business hours. 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 other institution. Requires DHHS to report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over general assistance matters no later than January 30, 2026 and no later than January 30th of each odd-numbered calendar year thereafter. The initial report must include recommendations regarding a potential extension of the general assistance eligibility period beyond the 30-day limit.

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.
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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.