

STATE OF MAINE

—  
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
TWO THOUSAND AND SIXTEEN

—  
H.P. 1095 - L.D. 1607

**An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Maine Affordable  
Housing Working Group**

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

**Sec. 1. 30-A MRSA §4753, sub-§3** is enacted to read:

**3. Universal application and waiting list.** The Maine State Housing Authority and municipal housing authorities shall establish a single, streamlined application for tenant-based rental assistance under the United States Housing Act of 1937, Public Law 412, Section 8 by which families may apply for housing assistance in any geographic area of the State and shall also establish a statewide, centralized waiting list for that tenant-based rental assistance. The Maine State Housing Authority and municipal housing authorities shall establish a method for individuals or families to submit applications and to update applications for rental assistance by electronic means.

The Maine State Housing Authority and the Department of Health and Human Services shall ensure that an application or an addendum to an application submitted pursuant to this subsection may also be used by individuals and families who choose to apply for the Bridging Rental Assistance Program established in Title 34-B, section 3011 and a federal shelter plus care program authorized by the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Public Law 100-77 (1987) as amended by the federal Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009, Public Law 111-22, Division B (2009).

**Sec. 2. Examination of options to increase access to affordable housing for families with incomes at or below 30% of the area median income.** To the extent funds become available, the Maine State Housing Authority shall examine strategies to increase access to affordable housing for persons with incomes at or below 30% of the area median income, including, but not limited to, increasing the accessibility of new housing units built with support from the federal low-income housing tax credit program for households with incomes at or below 30% of the area median income.

The Maine State Housing Authority shall provide a preliminary report by February 1, 2017 and a final report by January 15, 2019 on its progress in increasing access to affordable housing pursuant to this section to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over labor, commerce, research and economic development matters.

**Sec. 3. Rental assistance pilot program.** The Maine State Housing Authority shall work with municipal housing authorities to identify unused vouchers under the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's Housing Choice Voucher Program and use these vouchers to establish a rental assistance pilot program. The Maine State Housing Authority shall design and implement the program based on best practices and evidence-based research to provide a comprehensive approach to prevent homelessness and promote housing stability, family well-being and self-sufficiency for families at risk of homelessness.

The Maine State Housing Authority shall collect and maintain data sufficient to evaluate the extent to which the pilot program achieves success in meeting its goals and provide a preliminary report by February 1, 2017 and a final report by January 15, 2019 to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over labor, commerce, research and economic development matters.