



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

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Legislative Document

No. 650

H.P. 418

House of Representatives, February 25, 2025

An Act to Support Municipal Public Health

Received by the Clerk of the House on February 20, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative GRAHAM of North Yarmouth.
Cosponsored by Representatives: MEYER of Eliot, SALISBURY of Westbrook, SHAGOURY of Hallowell, WEBB of Durham, ZAGER of Portland.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §453** is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

3 **§453. Local board of health**

4 **1. Membership; administration.** A municipality may appoint a local board of health
5 consisting of a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 7 members besides the local health officer
6 appointed pursuant to section 451, one of whom must be a physician if available in the
7 municipality and one a female. In making appointments to the local board of health, the
8 municipality shall make every effort to maximize gender representation and cultural
9 diversity. The designated female appointee may also serve as the designated physician
10 appointee. Appointees must have significant knowledge and experience in medicine or
11 public health, including but not limited to community mental health, public health nursing,
12 public and community health and education and communications. When first appointed,
13 members of the board must be appointed one for one year, one for 2 years and one for 3
14 years. Subsequent appointments must be for 3-year terms. The local health officer is
15 secretary ex officio of the local board of health and shall keep a record of all proceedings.
16 The local board of health constitutes an advisory body to the local health officer.

17 **2. Authorities of board.** A local board of health shall prioritize activities overseen by
18 the local health officer and may:

19 A. In consultation with the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, educate
20 the public about health issues as long as those educational activities do not conflict
21 with law, ordinance, bylaw or any fire, health or safety rule;

22 B. Propose ordinances to the local legislative body for the promotion of general health
23 as long as those ordinances do not conflict with other law, ordinance, bylaw or any fire,
24 health or safety rule;

25 C. Advise local select boards, council and staff on public health issues outside of the
26 expertise of the local health officer;

27 D. Advise other municipal departments, volunteer boards and commissions; and

28 E. Collaborate with nonprofit organizations, businesses and other entities to support
29 local public health work.

30 A local board of health may not direct the work of the local health officer or any other
31 employee or appointed official of the municipality.

32 **3. Funding.** A local board of health may request permission from the municipality to
33 apply for outside funding. All outside funding received by a local board of health is subject
34 to municipal financial processes and procedures.

35 **SUMMARY**

36 This bill amends the law governing local boards of health to clarify membership
37 requirements and the authority of a local board of health.