

STATE OF MAINE

—
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-THREE

—
S.P. 744 - L.D. 1828

An Act Regarding Enhanced 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Points

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, an existing public safety answering point has indicated that as of July 1, 2023, it will no longer provide E-9-1-1 call answering to municipalities in Kennebec County; and

Whereas, it is not sufficiently clear that the Public Utilities Commission has authority to create a new public safety answering point; and

Whereas, it may be necessary to create as soon as possible a new public safety answering point in order to ensure all people in the State have efficient and reliable access to E-9-1-1 services; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

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

Sec. 1. 25 MRSA §2923-B is enacted to read:

§2923-B. Notice of service discontinuation

1. Notice. A public safety answering point shall provide notice to the bureau prior to discontinuing service to a municipality. A public safety answering point may not provide the notice under this subsection less than one year prior to the date that the public safety answering point discontinues service, unless the bureau finds reasonable grounds to authorize a shorter period of time for the notification. If appropriate, the bureau shall notify the department of the notice of discontinuing service received by the bureau from a public safety answering point.

2. Penalty. A public safety answering point that violates subsection 1 commits a civil violation for which a fine of up to \$50 may be adjudged for each day that the notice

provided prior to the discontinuance of service to the municipality by the public safety answering point is less than one year. The maximum fine under this subsection is \$18,250.

Sec. 2. 25 MRSA §2926, sub-§2-B is enacted to read:

2-B. Exceptions. Notwithstanding subsection 2-A, the bureau may authorize the establishment of a public safety answering point on a determination that a public safety answering point is necessary to ensure public safety and access to E-9-1-1 services.

Sec. 3. Study; oversight of public safety answering points. The Public Utilities Commission, Emergency Services Communication Bureau shall conduct a study assessing whether public safety answering points can be more efficiently managed to ensure stability of the system. The study must include but is not limited to the following:

1. The use of incentives or subsidies provided from the E-9-1-1 surcharge set out in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 25, section 2927 that are tied to performance metrics for public safety answering point services in order to stabilize the relationships between public safety answering points and municipalities;

2. The current level of state oversight of public safety answering points and whether this level is sufficient to ensure the efficient management of public safety answering points;

3. The effectiveness of making the Department of Public Safety the default entity responsible for providing E-9-1-1 services when there is a change in a public safety answering point's service area; and

4. The challenges faced by public safety answering points with hiring and retaining employees and what methods could be employed to assist public safety answering points with staffing obstacles.

No later than February 1, 2024, the Public Utilities Commission shall report the results of the study, along with any recommended legislation, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy, utilities and technology matters. The joint standing committee may report out related legislation to the 131st Legislature in 2024.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.