

Annual List of Rulemaking Activity
Rules Adopted January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021
Prepared by the Secretary of State pursuant to 5 MRS §8053-A sub-§5

Agency name: **ConnectME Authority**
Umbrella-Unit: **99-639**
Statutory authority: 35-A MRS ch. 93
Chapter number/title: **Ch. 101**, ConnectMaine Authority
Filing number: **2021-053**
Effective date: 3/8/2021
Type of rule: Routine Technical
Emergency rule: No

Principal reason or purpose for rule:

The rule implements recent changes in statute in PL 2019 ch. 625.

Basis statement:

This rule implements the changes in law in PL 2019 ch. 625 that changes the requirements for data reporting from internet service provider to the ConnectMaine authority. The statute makes the information designated as confidential and not a public record under Title 1 section 402 sub-section 3. This includes new reporting info.

The rule also changes the name of the ConnectME Authority to the ConnectMaine Authority, makes minor changes in the planning grant portion of the rule and updates some of the definitions used in the rule.

Fiscal impact of rule:

None.

Annual List of Rulemaking Activity
Rules Adopted January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021
Prepared by the Secretary of State pursuant to 5 MRS §8053-A sub-§5

Agency name: **ConnectME Authority**
Umbrella-Unit: **99-639**
Statutory authority: 35-A MRS ch. 93
Chapter number/title: **Ch. 101**, ConnectMaine Authority
Filing number: **2021-261**
Effective date: 1/2/2022
Type of rule: Routine Technical
Emergency rule: No

Principal reason or purpose for rule:

Recent changes in the law impacting the assessment fee, and needed changes to infrastructure and planning grants to reflect current needs and federal funding.

Basis statement:

The posted rule makes the required changes to implement PL 2021 ch. 398, section AA, which expands the 10 cents per line surcharge to additional phone lines.

It includes in the required data reporting section, data that will be needed to use new federal funding to determine eligibility for grants.

The rule also changes the definition of underserved to reflect the recent changes in ConnectMaine's unserved definition.

It makes changes in the infrastructure grants program to reflect the input ConnectMaine has received as a result of public outreach, and the increase in federal funds coming for broadband. These changes will allow ConnectMaine greater flexibility in developing and evaluating applications. It also updates to the required reporting for grantees.

It simplifies the community broadband planning grants process for communities.

The adoption of this rule will clarify certain provisions of the grant making process, allowing the Authority to provide greater support for projects that provide the greatest relative improvement of service. The rule will allow for flexibility in the evaluation process to address state policy goals, and to reflect the changes in the use of broadband service as a result of the pandemic response. It also will allow for more community engagement in the grant process.

Fiscal impact of rule:

Increase in assessment fees (other special revenue) by an estimated \$1,000,000 annually. This will have no fiscal impact on the state budget.