

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Allow Community Service in Lieu of Fines

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

Sec. 1. 17-A MRSA §1304, sub-§3, ¶A, as enacted by PL 1999, c. 367, §5, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

A. Unless the offender shows by a preponderance of the evidence that the default was not attributable to an intentional or knowing refusal to obey the court's order or to a failure on the offender's part to make a good faith effort to obtain the funds required for the payment, the court shall find that the default was unexcused and may:

(1) Commit the offender to the custody of the sheriff until all or a specified part of the fine is paid. The length of confinement in a county jail for unexcused default must be specified in the court's order and may not exceed one day for every \$5 of unpaid fine or 6 months, whichever is shorter. An offender committed for nonpayment of a fine is given credit toward the payment of the fine for each day of confinement that the offender is in custody, at the rate specified in the court's order. The offender is also given credit for each day that the offender is detained as the result of an arrest warrant issued pursuant to this section. An offender is responsible for paying any fine remaining after receiving credit for confinement and detention. A default on the remaining fine is also governed by this section; or

(2) If the unexcused default relates to a fine imposed for a Class D or Class E crime, as authorized by chapter 53, order the offender to perform community service work until all or a specified part of the fine is paid. The number of hours of community service work must be specified in the court's order and may not exceed 8 hours for every \$25 of unpaid fine or one hundred 8-hour days, whichever is shorter. An offender ordered to perform community service work pursuant to this subparagraph is given credit toward the payment of the fine for each 8-hour day of community service work performed at the rate specified in the court's order. The offender is also given credit toward the payment of the fine for each day that the offender is detained as a result of an arrest warrant issued pursuant to this section at a rate specified in the court's order that is not less than \$5 of unpaid fine per day of confinement. An offender is responsible for paying any fine remaining after receiving credit for any detention and for community service work performed. A default on the remaining fine is also governed by this section.

Sec. 2. 17-A MRSA §1304, sub-§3, ¶C, as enacted by PL 1999, c. 367, §5, is amended to read:

C. If the court commits a person to the custody of the sheriff for nonpayment of a fine pursuant to subsection 3, paragraph A, subparagraph (1), the court may authorize, at the time of its order only, participation of the person in a project under Title 30-A, section 1606 with the agreement of the sheriff of the county jail where the person is committed. The person must be given credit according to Title 30-A, section 1606, subsection 2.

Sec. 3. 17-A MRSA §1304, sub-§3, ¶D, as enacted by PL 1999, c. 367, §5, is amended to read:

D. The confinement ordered under this subsection 3, paragraph A, subparagraph (1) must be nonconcurrent with any judgment of conviction involving a term of imprisonment.

Sec. 4. 17-A MRSA §1304, sub-§4, as repealed and replaced by PL 1999, c. 367, §5, is amended to read:

4. Upon any default, execution may be levied and other measures authorized for the collection of unpaid civil judgments may be taken to collect the unpaid fine. A levy of execution does not discharge an offender confined to a county jail or performing community service work under subsection 3 for unexcused default until the full amount of the fine has been collected.

Effective June 30, 2008