

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

An Act Regarding the Formula for the General Assistance Program

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

Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §4311, sub-§1, as amended by PL 1993, c. 410, Pt. AAA, §7 and PL 2003, c. 689, Pt. B, §6, is further amended to read:

1. Departmental reimbursement. When a municipality incurs net general assistance costs in any fiscal year in excess of .0003 of that municipality's most recent state valuation relative to the state fiscal year for which reimbursement is being issued, as determined by the State Tax Assessor in the statement filed as provided in Title 36, section 381, the ~~Department of Health and Human Services~~department shall reimburse the municipality for 90% of the amount in excess of these expenditures ~~whenif~~ the department finds that the municipality has been in compliance with all requirements of this chapter. If a municipality elects to determine need without consideration of funds distributed from any municipally-controlled trust fund that must otherwise be considered for purposes of this chapter, the department shall reimburse the municipality for 66 2/3% of the amount in excess of such expenditures when the department finds that the municipality has otherwise been in compliance with all requirements of this chapter. If the unemployment rate for a municipality for the previous 3 months exceeds the average of the statewide unemployment rate for the comparable calendar quarters for the previous 5 years, the department shall pay 90% of the general assistance granted by that municipality if the department finds that the municipality has been in compliance with all requirements of this chapter. The department shall pay an increase in departmental reimbursement under this subsection until the condition requiring that increase returns to the level at which the increase is not required.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services to reimburse a municipality 90% of the municipality's general assistance costs if the unemployment rate of the municipality for the previous 3 months exceeds the average of the statewide unemployment rate for the comparable calendar quarters for the previous 5 years. This bill also requires the department to pay a statutorily increased reimbursement of general assistance costs for certain economic conditions as long as those conditions exist.