

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 Protect Tenants from Sexual Harassment

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

Sec. 1. 14 MRSA §6000, sub-§2-A is enacted to read:

2-A. Sexual harassment. "Sexual harassment" means verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed at a specific person, including, but not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances; sexually suggestive remarks or actions; unwanted hugs, touches or kisses; and requests for sexual favors.

Sec. 2. 14 MRSA §6001, sub-§3, ¶E, as amended by PL 2015, c. 293, §3, is further amended to read:

E. Prior to being served with an eviction notice, filed, in good faith, a fair housing complaint for which there is a reasonable basis with the Maine Human Rights Commission or filed, in good faith, a fair housing complaint for which there is a reasonable basis with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development concerning acts affecting that individual's tenancy; or

Sec. 3. 14 MRSA §6001, sub-§3, ¶F, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 293, §4, is amended to read:

F. Prior to being served with an eviction notice, provided the landlord or the landlord's agent with notice that the tenant or tenant's minor child is a victim; or

Sec. 4. 14 MRSA §6001, sub-§3, ¶G is enacted to read:

G. Complained in writing to the landlord or the landlord's agent of an act of sexual harassment by the landlord or landlord's agent against the tenant or a family or household member of the tenant.

Sec. 5. 14 MRSA §6016-A is enacted to read:

§ 6016-A. Maine Human Rights Act

Nothing in this subchapter limits the application of the Maine Human Rights Act.

SUMMARY

This bill creates a rebuttable presumption that a forcible entry and detainer action was commenced in retaliation against a tenant if the tenant had made a complaint of an act of sexual harassment by the landlord or landlord's agent. The bill defines "sexual harassment."