

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 Expand Skill Development Opportunities for Maine Youth**

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

**Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §253, sub-§10** is enacted to read:

**10. Internship program.** The commissioner shall administer an internship program that may be implemented by educational entities governed by state law, including, but not limited to, school administrative units, public charter schools, private schools, career and technical education centers, adult education programs, Jobs for Maine's Graduates under chapter 226, the Maine Community College System and the University of Maine System.

**Sec. 2. 26 MRSA §664, sub-§1-A** is enacted to read:

**1-A. Internship participants.** Notwithstanding subsection 1, beginning August 1, 2020, an employer who is a participant in an internship program under Title 20-A, section 253, subsection 10 may pay a person who has not attained 24 years of age and is that employer's intern under the internship program set forth in Title 20-A, section 253, subsection 10 a minimum hourly training wage that is no less than the federal minimum wage.

**Sec. 3. Development of internship program.** The Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Labor, shall develop an internship program for students who have not attained 24 years of age that may be implemented by an educational entity governed by state law, referred to in this section as "a local authority," including, but not limited to, a school administrative unit, a public charter school, a private school, a career and technical education center, an adult education program, Jobs for Maine's Graduates under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, chapter 226, the Maine Community College System and the University of Maine System.

**1. Program.** The internship program developed by the department must:

- A. Include provisions for students who have learning barriers, who are at risk, who are disadvantaged or who are determined by the local authority to have a demonstrated need for mentoring;
- B. Require that each local authority's program have clearly defined, measurable and substantial educational and skill outcome goals for each contract between a student and an internship sponsor;
- C. Establish guidelines for internships, including oversight of programs, individual contracts and internship sponsors;
- D. Require the inclusion in individual contracts of the number of hours per week or month that the student will be interning;
- E. Include compensation options, in combination with a variable hourly wage that is equal to or greater than the federal minimum wage, that may include:
  - (1) Academic credits;

- (2) Credentials of value;
  - (3) Stackable credentials; and
  - (4) Merit or skills achievement badges, as part of an existing recognized program or as defined by the local authority;
- F. Include compensation guidelines that allow flexibility for regional variations, internship sponsor distinctions and student baseline capabilities;
- G. Require local authorities to notify the department of the intent to participate in the internship program;
- H. Require local authorities to maintain records of participation by students and internship sponsors and copies of individual contracts; and
- I. Require local authorities to make individual contracts available for inspection by or submission to the department or the Department of Labor, if requested.

**2. Report; Department of Education.** The Department of Education shall submit a report outlining the internship program developed in accordance with this section, together with any necessary implementing legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by December 4, 2019. Upon receipt and review of the report, the committee may report out a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 129th Legislature.

**3. Report; Department of Labor.** In order to facilitate participation in the Maine Apprenticeship Program under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 26, section 3202, the Department of Labor shall calculate the amount of funding and the number of positions it would require in order to establish an apprenticeship coordinator at each career and technical education center in the State and shall report this information to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by December 4, 2019. Upon receipt and review of the report, the committee may report out a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 129th Legislature.

## SUMMARY

This bill directs the Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Labor, to develop an internship program for students who are 23 years of age or younger. The internship program developed by the department would authorize participants to receive compensation options, in combination with a variable hourly wage that is equal to or greater than the federal minimum wage, that may include academic credits, credentials of value and stackable credentials. The Department of Education is directed to submit a report outlining the internship program developed, together with any necessary implementing legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by December 4, 2019.

In addition, to facilitate participation in the Maine Apprenticeship Program established under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 26, section 3202, this bill directs the Department of Labor to calculate the amount of funding and the number of positions it would require in order to establish an apprenticeship coordinator at each career and technical education center in the State and report this information to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by December 4, 2019.