An Act To Expand Access to Certified Substance Use Disorder Recovery Residence Services

Reference to the Committee on Health and Human Services suggested and ordered printed.

Presented by Representative FECTEAU of Augusta.
Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1.  5 MRSA c. 521, sub-c. 3-A is enacted to read:

SUBCHAPTER 3-A

RECOVERY

§20057. Certified recovery residences

Recovery residences must be certified pursuant to the requirements established in section 20005, subsection 22, to receive:

1.  Contracts. Any department contract for a recovery residence or services related to the recovery residence; or

2.  Housing assistance. Any housing assistance or voucher provided by the department, the Maine State Housing Authority or a municipality provided to or for the person recovering from substance use disorder.

Sec. 2.  22 MRSA §4301, sub-§14 is enacted to read:

14. Recovery residence. "Recovery residence" has the same meaning as in Title 5, section 20003, subsection 19-D.

Sec. 3.  22 MRSA §4305, sub-§3-E is enacted to read:

3-E. Recovery residence. Municipalities may not deny general assistance to a person for the sole reason that the person is residing in a recovery residence. Notwithstanding subsection 3-A, municipalities shall establish the maximum levels of assistance for a person residing in a recovery residence in the same manner as for any other person seeking assistance. Maximum levels for housing assistance for the costs of the recovery residence apply in the same manner as maximum levels of housing assistance established in this section as long as the recovery residence has been certified in accordance with Title 5, section 20005, subsection 22. A municipality may not provide housing assistance to a person in a recovery residence that has not been certified, but the person may remain eligible to receive general assistance for other basic necessities that are included in the municipal ordinance.

SUMMARY

This bill requires recovery residences to be certified according to the standards set by a nationally recognized organization that supports persons recovering from substance use disorder in order to receive contracts from the department or receive housing vouchers or municipal general assistance housing assistance from a person living in a recovery residence. The bill also prevents an applicant for general assistance from being denied general assistance for the sole reason that the person is living in a recovery residence. The bill requires the costs of living in a recovery residence to be calculated in the same manner as for other housing assistance when maximum amounts of general assistance under the municipal ordinance and the amount of general assistance granted to the applicant are established.