

STATE OF MAINE

—  
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN

—  
H.P. 520 - L.D. 767

**An Act To Create Jobs in Aroostook and Washington Counties**

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

**Sec. 1. 30-A MRSA §5250-I, sub-§5-B** is enacted to read:

**5-B. Call center.** "Call center" means a business enterprise that employs 50 or more full-time employees for the purpose of customer service.

**Sec. 2. 30-A MRSA §5250-I, sub-§18**, as amended by PL 2005, c. 351, §4 and affected by §26, is further amended to read:

**18. Qualified Pine Tree Development Zone employees.** ~~"Qualified~~ Except for employees in call centers in Aroostook and Washington counties, "qualified Pine Tree Development Zone employees" means new, full-time employees hired in this State by a qualified Pine Tree Development Zone business for work directly in one or more qualified business activities for whom a retirement program subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, 29 United States Code, Sections 101 to 1461, as amended, and group health insurance are provided and whose income derived from employment within the Pine Tree Development Zone, calculated on a calendar year basis, is greater than the most recent annual per capita personal income in the county in which the qualified employee is employed. "Qualified Pine Tree Development Zone employees" does not include employees shifted to a qualified business activity from a nonqualified activity of the qualified Pine Tree Development Zone business or an affiliated business. The commissioner shall determine whether a shifting of employees has occurred.

For employees in call centers in Aroostook and Washington counties, "qualified Pine Tree Development Zone employees" means new, full-time employees hired in this State by a qualified Pine Tree Development Zone business for work directly in one or more qualified business activities for whom a retirement program subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, 29 United States Code, Sections 101 to 1461, as amended, and group health insurance are provided and whose income derived from employment within the Pine Tree Development Zone, calculated on a weekly basis, is greater than the average weekly wage for the most recent available calendar year as

derived from the quarterly census of employment and wages and provided annually by the Department of Labor. The calculation of the average weekly wage must include data from the counties of Androscoggin, Aroostook, Franklin, Hancock, Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln, Oxford, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Sagadahoc, Somerset, Waldo and Washington. Notwithstanding this subsection, with respect to employees in call centers in Aroostook and Washington counties, in a county in which the average annual unemployment rate at the time of certification for the most recent calendar year is greater than the state average for the same year, the wage threshold is 90% of the average weekly wage as derived from the quarterly census of employment and wages. Notwithstanding this subsection, with respect to a call center in Aroostook or Washington county and upon approval of the commissioner, a qualified business located in a county in which the average annual unemployment rate at the time of certification for the most recent calendar year is greater than the state average for that same year qualifies for a phase-in of salary threshold requirements. A qualified business under this provision must meet 70% of the average weekly wage as derived from the quarterly census of employment and wages in the first year of certification, 80% of the average weekly wage as derived from the quarterly census of employment and wages in the 2nd year of certification and 90% of the average weekly wage as derived from the quarterly census of employment and wages in all following years of certification. Failure to meet any of these requirements results in automatic revocation of certification. "Qualified Pine Tree Development Zone employees" does not include employees shifted to a qualified business activity from a nonqualified activity of the qualified Pine Tree Development Zone business or an affiliated business. The commissioner shall determine whether a shifting of employees has occurred.

**Sec. 3. 30-A MRSA §5250-I, sub-§18-A** is enacted to read:

**18-A. Quarterly census of employment and wages.** "Quarterly census of employment and wages" means the comprehensive tabulation of employment and wage information for workers produced by the quarterly census of employment and wages program, a cooperative program involving the federal Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and the state employment security agencies.

**Sec. 4. 36 MRSA §6753, sub-§5-A** is enacted to read:

**5-A. Call center.** "Call center" means a business enterprise that employs 50 or more full-time employees for the purpose of customer service.

**Sec. 5. 36 MRSA §6753, sub-§12,** as amended by PL 2009, c. 434, §82, is further amended to read:

**12. Qualified employee.** "Qualified Except for an employee in a call center in Aroostook County or Washington County, "qualified employee" means a new, full-time employee hired in this State by a qualified business, for whom a retirement program subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, 29 United States Code, Chapter 18 and group health insurance are provided, and whose income derived from employment with the applicant, calculated on a calendar year basis, is greater than the most recent annual per capita personal income in the county in which the qualified employee is employed, as long as Maine income tax withholding attributed to the

qualified employee is subject to reimbursement to the qualified business under this chapter. "Qualified employee" does not include an employee who is shifted to a qualified business from an affiliated business. The commissioner shall determine whether a shifting of employees has occurred.

For an employee in a call center in Aroostook County or Washington County, "qualified employee" means a new, full-time employee hired in this State by a qualified business, for whom a retirement program subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, 29 United States Code, Chapter 18 and group health insurance are provided, and whose income derived from employment with the applicant, calculated on a weekly basis, is greater than the average weekly wage for the most recent available calendar year as derived from the quarterly census of employment and wages and provided annually by the Department of Labor, as long as Maine income tax withholding attributed to the qualified employee is subject to reimbursement to the qualified business under this chapter. "Qualified employee" does not include an employee who is shifted to a qualified business from an affiliated business. The commissioner shall determine whether a shifting of employees has occurred. The calculation of the average weekly wage must include data from the counties of Androscoggin, Aroostook, Franklin, Hancock, Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln, Oxford, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Sagadahoc, Somerset, Waldo and Washington. Notwithstanding this subsection, with respect to a call center in Aroostook or Washington county, in a county in which the average annual unemployment rate at the time of certification for the most recent calendar year is greater than the state average for the same year, the wage threshold is 90% of the average weekly wage as derived from the quarterly census of employment and wages. Notwithstanding this subsection, with respect to a call center in Aroostook or Washington county and upon approval of the commissioner, a qualified business located in a county in which the average annual unemployment rate at the time of certification for the most recent calendar year is greater than the state average for that same year qualifies for a phase-in of salary threshold requirements. A qualified business under this provision must meet 70% of the average weekly wage as derived from the quarterly census of employment and wages in the first year of certification, 80% of the average weekly wage as derived from the quarterly census of employment and wages in the 2nd year of certification and 90% of the average weekly wage as derived from the quarterly census of employment and wages in all following years of certification. Failure to meet any of these requirements results in automatic revocation of certification.

**Sec. 6. 36 MRSA §6753, sub-§12-A** is enacted to read:

**12-A. Quarterly census of employment and wages.** "Quarterly census of employment and wages" means the comprehensive tabulation of employment and wage information for workers produced by the quarterly census of employment and wages program, a cooperative program involving the federal Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and the state employment security agencies.