

CHAPTER 361

H.P. 510 - L.D. 715

An Act To Provide Support for Legal Services for Low-income Mainers

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

Sec. 1. 4 MRSA §18-A, sub-§1, ¶B, as amended by PL 1997, c. 173, §1, is further amended to read:

B. Except as provided in paragraph C, money in the fund must be disbursed to legal ~~service~~ services providers to support the provision of free civil legal services to low-income or needy people or the needy elderly in this State. Money disbursed from the fund may not be used by a recipient to support lobbying as defined in Title 3, section 312-A, subsection 9~~7~~ unless the recipient is responding to a request by a Legislator or a member of the Executive Department. Only the following legal ~~service~~ services providers may receive disbursement to provide free civil legal services:

(1) Nonprofit organizations whose missions ~~are to provide~~ include the provision of free civil legal services and who have at least one year of experience providing free civil legal services;

(2) Legal aid clinics of accredited law schools operating exclusively in Maine; and

(3) Programs whose primary mission is to coordinate pro bono legal services for low-income people in this State.

Sec. 2. 4 MRSA §18-A, sub-§3-A, ¶A, as enacted by PL 1997, c. 173, §5, is repealed and the following is enacted in its place:

A. For all fees collected by the Judicial Department after July 1, 2005, 7% must be deposited in the fund. This paragraph does not apply to fees dedicated under section 17-A or section 18-B, subsection 8.

Sec. 3. 4 MRSA §18-A, sub-§3-A, ¶B, as enacted by PL 1997, c. 173, §5, is amended to read:

B. A surcharge of ~~\$5~~ \$10 must be imposed by a court on each civil fine, penalty or forfeiture imposed by the court and deposited in the fund.