

STATE OF MAINE

—  
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-TWO

—  
S.P. 702 - L.D. 1966

**An Act To Facilitate Access to Heating Assistance**

**Emergency preamble.** Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

**Whereas,** COVID-19 has decreased in-person access to community action agencies that administer fuel assistance; and

**Whereas,** individuals must apply annually for fuel assistance; and

**Whereas,** there is currently no online application for fuel assistance; and

**Whereas,** this legislation requires the Maine State Housing Authority to adopt rules requiring that online applications for fuel assistance be accepted beginning no later than the next winter season; and

**Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

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

**Sec. 1. 30-A MRSA §4992, sub-§4,** as enacted by PL 1991, c. 622, Pt. J, §23 and affected by §25, is amended to read:

**4. Availability standards.** Standards requiring local program operators and administrators to be available to the general public for a minimum specified period of time each week; ~~and~~

**Sec. 2. 30-A MRSA §4992, sub-§5,** as enacted by PL 1991, c. 622, Pt. J, §23 and affected by §25, is amended to read:

**5. Expedient provision of assistance standards.** Standards that ensure that qualified program recipients are expeditiously provided with assistance by the local program operator or administrator; ~~and~~

**Sec. 3. 30-A MRSA §4992, sub-§6** is enacted to read:

**6. Application.** Standards that, beginning no later than the 2022-23 winter season, require local program operators and administrators to accept online applications for the fuel assistance program. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

**Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.