

§6026-A. Municipal intervention to provide for basic necessities

In accordance with the procedures provided in this section, the municipal officers of any town or city or their designee may provide for basic necessities and any repair activities to ensure the continued habitability of any premises leased for human habitation. For the purposes of this section, "basic necessities" means those services, including but not limited to maintenance, repairs and provision of heat or utilities, that a landlord is otherwise responsible to provide under the terms of a lease, a tenancy at will agreement or applicable law. [PL 2009, c. 566, §15 (AMD).]

1. Imminent threat to habitability of leased premises exists. The leased premises must be in need of basic necessities such that the municipal officers or their designee can make a finding that an imminent threat to the continued habitability of the premises exists. [PL 2009, c. 566, §15 (AMD).]

2. Attempt to contact landlord. The municipal officers or their designee must document a good faith attempt to contact the landlord of the premises under subsection 1 regarding:

- A. The municipality's determination of the threat to habitability; [PL 2009, c. 135, §1 (NEW).]
- B. The municipality's intention to provide for basic necessities; [PL 2009, c. 566, §15 (AMD).]
- C. The municipality's intention to subsequently recover the municipality's direct and administrative costs from the landlord; and [PL 2009, c. 135, §1 (NEW).]
- D. The landlord's ability to avert the municipality's actions by causing the provision of basic necessities by a time certain. [PL 2009, c. 566, §15 (AMD).]

This communication to the landlord must be either in person, by telephone or by certified mail as may be warranted considering the degree or imminence of the threat. [PL 2009, c. 566, §15 (AMD).]

3. Municipality may provide for basic necessities. If the landlord cannot be contacted in a timely manner or if the landlord does not cause the provision of basic necessities by a deadline identified by the municipal officers or their designee, the municipality may provide for basic necessities and whatever attendant activities may be necessary to ensure the proper functioning of the leased premises. [PL 2009, c. 566, §15 (AMD).]

4. Lien. The municipality has a lien against the landlord of the leased premises for the amount of money spent by the municipality to provide for basic necessities and attendant activities pursuant to this section, as well as all reasonably related administrative costs pursuant to subsection 5. [PL 2009, c. 566, §15 (AMD).]

5. Filing of notice of lien; interest; costs. The municipal officers or their designee shall file a notice of the lien under subsection 4 with the register of deeds of the county in which the property is located within 30 days of providing for basic necessities. That filing secures the municipality's lien interest for an amount equal to the costs recoverable pursuant to this section. Not less than 10 days prior to the filing, the municipal officers or their designee shall send notification of the proposed action by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the owner of the real estate and any record holder of the mortgage. The lien notification must contain the title, address and telephone number of the municipal officer or officers who authorized the provision of basic necessities, an itemized list of the costs to be recovered by lien and the provisions of this subsection regarding interest rates and costs. The lien is effective until enforced by an action for equitable relief or until discharged. Interest on the amount of money secured by the lien may be charged by the municipality at a rate determined by the municipal officers but in no event may the rate exceed the maximum rate of interest allowed by the Treasurer of State pursuant to Title 36, section 186. Interest accrues from and including the date the lien is filed. The costs of securing and enforcing the lien are recoverable upon enforcement. [PL 2009, c. 566, §15 (AMD).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2009, c. 135, §1 (NEW). PL 2009, c. 566, §15 (AMD).

The State of Maine claims a copyright in its codified statutes. If you intend to republish this material, we require that you include the following disclaimer in your publication:

All copyrights and other rights to statutory text are reserved by the State of Maine. The text included in this publication reflects changes made through the First Regular and First Special Session of the 131st Maine Legislature and is current through November 1, 2023. The text is subject to change without notice. It is a version that has not been officially certified by the Secretary of State. Refer to the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated and supplements for certified text.

The Office of the Revisor of Statutes also requests that you send us one copy of any statutory publication you may produce. Our goal is not to restrict publishing activity, but to keep track of who is publishing what, to identify any needless duplication and to preserve the State's copyright rights.

PLEASE NOTE: The Revisor's Office cannot perform research for or provide legal advice or interpretation of Maine law to the public. If you need legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.