



Maine Bureau of
Highway Safety

THE MAINE LIAISON



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Supporting Traffic Safety by the Numbers

As we ring in 2026 and turn our focus to driving our roadway fatality rates toward zero, the Maine Bureau of Highway Safety is here to support that critical mission. During our grant application period for FY26, MeBHS has partnered with 59 Law Enforcement agencies across all 16 Counties. Many of these law enforcement partners will be utilizing multiple funding streams as listed below to encourage safe driving in all of our communities.

35 Impaired Driving Grants
30 Distracted Driving Grants
21 Occupant Protection Grants
43 Speed Grants
29 DRE-FP Grants
8 Pedestrian Grants

If your agency would like to apply for any of these funding streams or would just like more information, reach out to your LEL's anytime.

Your LEL Contacts:

James Willis

 James.K.Willis@Maine.gov

 207-460-6040

Patrick Hood

 Patrick.W.Hood@Maine.gov

 207-975-0423

THE MAINE LIAISON

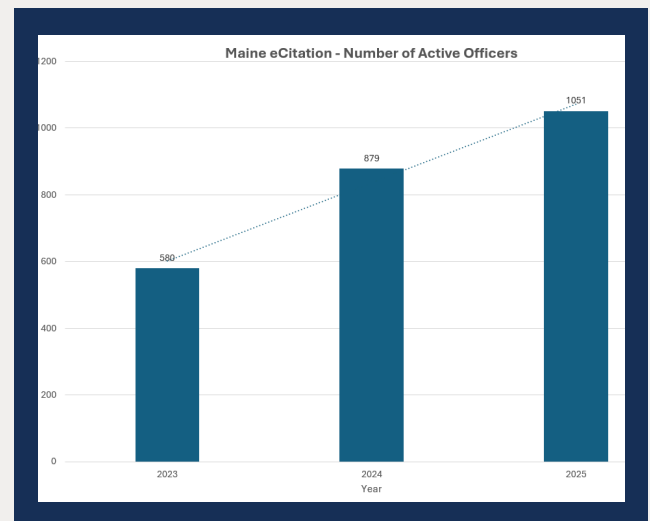
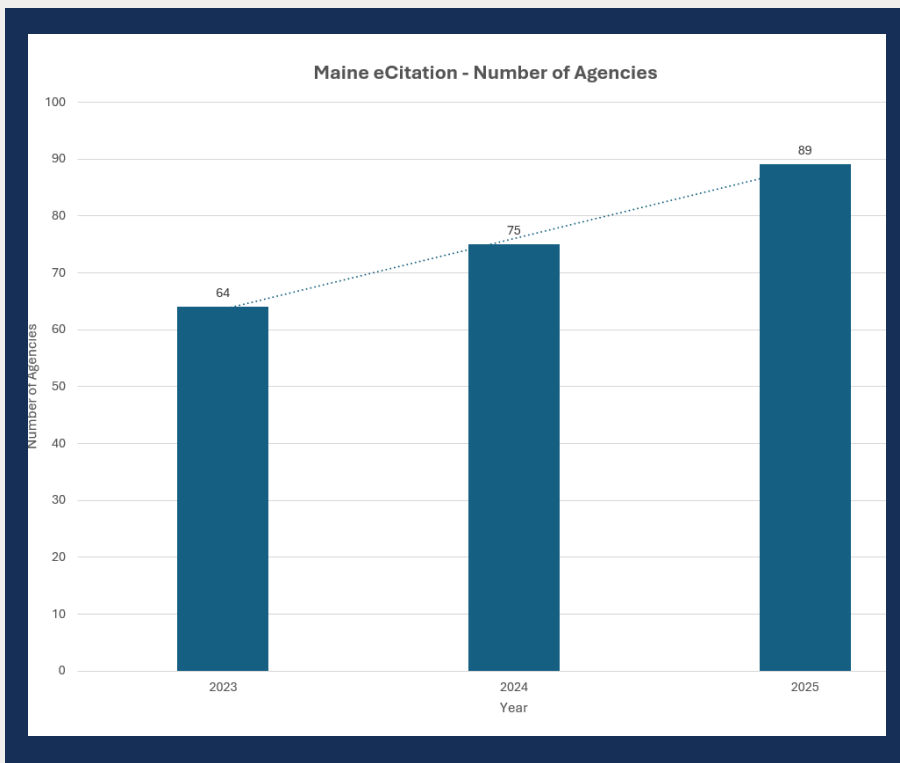
Welcome to 2026 and to winter once again! One of the goals we LEL's have been asked to focus on was to onboard as many law enforcement agencies into the eCitation program as possible. Considering our profession is not always excited about change, the transition from issuing paper VSACs to the new digital application has gone very well. The graphs below highlight the continued growth of the program over the past several years.

Similar to all software programs, eCitation has grown in functionality since its inception here in Maine. Areas such as demographic data collection, metro responses for both driver's licenses and registrations, a warning module, a robust statute search, and the elimination of digital certificates to modern MFA user credentials are designed for the law enforcement officer to quickly navigate the required data fields to issue either a summons or a warning from their MDT.

Although the eCitation program continues to be fully funded and supported by the Maine Bureau of Highway Safety, the printer required to issue a VSAC roadside remains a cost to each department. It's important to remember that once a printer is initially acquired, similar to radar units and cruiser cameras, they move as the fleet turns over to provide many years of service.

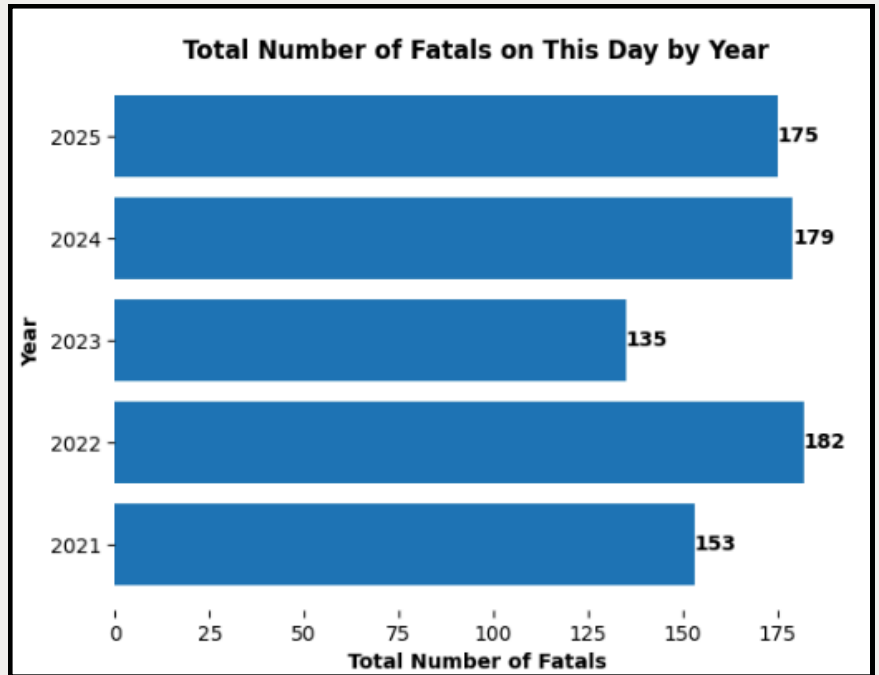
One of the best features eCitation offers is the elimination of mailing VSACs to the Violations Bureau within 5-days. Gone are the notices of VSAC dismissals due to missing the 5-day window!

If you would like a demonstration of how the eCitation program works, reach out to Jim Willis or Patrick Hood.



2025 Traffic Fatalities

The preliminary total fatality rate for 2025 is 175. As indicated by the graph, these numbers remain unacceptably high and have for the last several years. Looking closer at the 175 total lives lost last year, the majority occurred in a motor vehicle. Other fatal crashes included 24 motorcycle crashes, 26 pedestrian crashes, 4 bicycle crashes, 2 on-road ATV crashes, and 2 on-road snowmobile crashes. The facts and circumstances of each crash vary; however, in too many of these events, evidence of excessive speed, distraction, or alcohol and drug impairment, or some combination of all three was observed by law enforcement.



Much work needs to be done in order for us to save lives on our roadways. To that end, the Maine Bureau of Highway Safety is here to help.

The Maine OUI Guide (5th ed.)

September 2025



Original Version - July 2020
Edited, Annotated, and Researched by:

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Maine Bureau of Highway Safety

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RIGHT NOW 50 MILLION
VEHICLES ON THE ROAD HAVE OPEN SAFETY RECALLS

Is yours one of them?

CHECK TO PROTECT **DRIVE SAFE**

CheckToProtect.org for vehicle recalls

MaineDOT
Traffic Camera Link

The 5th edition of the Maine OUI Guide is now available. The "Guide" discusses commonly encountered situations in typical impaired driving scenarios and applies relevant case law, statutory law, law enforcement training material, and empirical data to assist practitioners. To access a digital copy, [use this link](#). Also available are the SFST pocket guides. These can be obtained from MCJA or your LEL's.

BUREAU OF HIGHWAY SAFETY

Coordinators Corner

Programmatic Updates

BHS media products have a new look. We've launched four PSAs with a focus on Distracted Driving, Unattended Passengers, Commercial Motor Vehicles, and Young Drivers. They can be viewed on our [YouTube Channel](#).

In addition, 4 new handouts were created and are up ready for download on [our website](#).

Reach out to Nicholas.Brown@maine.gov for any media questions.

Forensic Phlebotomy

Our most current on call list of trained FP professionals can be found [HERE](#).

For more information about the Forensic Phlebotomy program, please contact Kasey.Theriault@Maine.gov.



Traffic Safety Educator

For our Traffic Safety Education program, we partnered with Alliance Highway Safety. Their efforts focus on helping young drivers build safe habits before they become routine. By combining hands-on learning, real-world demonstrations, and community engagement, the program shows teens what can happen when they take risks behind the wheel and how simple choices can prevent tragedy. If you would like to book these services for your event, please e-mail info@alliancehighwaysafety.com.



We're here to help!

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BUREAU OF HIGHWAY SAFETY

Coordinators Corner



Maine Bureau of Highway Safety
**LAW ENFORCEMENT
BASIC CHILD PASSENGER
SAFETY AWARENESS TRAINING**

Basic CPS Awareness Training educates law enforcement officers on child passenger safety, including proper car seat installation and Maine child restraints laws.

JANUARY 29, 2026 9:00AM - 1:00PM

Freeport Fire Department, 4 Main St, Freeport, ME 04032

Maine Bureau of Highway Safety will provide each agency with two car seats for emergency child transportation, awarded upon full participation in the training.

If interested, please email:

erica.davis@maine.gov



**FREE
REGISTER**

<https://www.maine.gov/dps/bhs>

207-626-3840

This training is specifically for law enforcement agencies that are needing car seats to have on hand for emergency transportation needs. These seats are not to be given out to families in need, but rather for department use only. This training is recommended for non-CPSTs, and it is recommended, but not required, to have two officers in attendance from each agency (one day shift and one night shift). No more than two officers from one agency please. Maine Bureau of Highway Safety will provide each agency with two car seats (one convertible, one booster) for emergency child transportation, awarded upon full participation in the training.

For full details, please email erica.davis@maine.gov to receive the registration form and reserve your spot!



How To: Drive Safe on Snow and Ice

Take basic safety precautions to reduce the dangers of winter driving

Car Preparation

- Have your battery and electrical system tested. Most batteries have a life span of about three years and may not turn over in cold weather. AAA can check your battery before you hit the road. Schedule time for a AAA battery technician to come to your vehicle and test your battery, starter and alternator. We'll even deliver a new battery, install it and take away your old one.
- Check all fluid levels, including anti-freeze, transmission fluid, brake fluid, and engine oil.
- Make sure all lights operate properly.
- Inspect tires and brakes. Tires with less than 4/32" of tread will have reduced traction in wet and snowy conditions. Put a quarter in the tread. If you can see the top of George Washington's head, it's time to start thinking about replacing the tire. In addition, make sure tires are properly inflated, and check for signs of uneven wear.
- Check windshield wipers and washer fluid levels.
- Try to keep the fuel tank at least half full at all times, in case you get stuck or encounter long traffic delays.

AAA Tips for Slick or Icy Roadways

Slow down: Accelerate, turn, and brake gradually. Adjust your speed to the road conditions and leave yourself ample room to stop. Allow at least three times more space than usual between you and the car in front of you.

Don't tailgate: Normal following distances of three to four seconds on dry pavement should be extended to a minimum of eight to ten seconds when driving on slippery surfaces. The extra time will provide additional braking room should a sudden stop become necessary.

Watch the traffic ahead: Slow down immediately at the sight of brake lights, fishtailing cars, sideways skids, or emergency flashers ahead.

Avoid unnecessarily changing lanes: This increases the chance of hitting a patch of ice between lanes that could cause loss of vehicle control.

Use extreme caution on bridges and overpasses: Black ice typically forms first in shaded areas of the roadway and on bridges and overpasses that freeze first and melt last. Although the road leading up to a bridge may be fine, the bridge itself could be a sheet of ice.

Move over: Move over one lane for any stationary vehicle with its hazards flashing. If you can't move over, slow down.

Don't power up hills. Applying extra gas on snow-covered roads just starts your wheels spinning. Try to get a little inertia going before you reach the hill and let that inertia carry you to the top. As you reach the crest of the hill, reduce your speed and proceed down hill as slowly as possible.

Don't stop going up a hill. There's nothing worse than trying to get moving up a hill on an icy road.

AAA Tips for Braking on Ice

Minimize the need to brake on ice: If you're approaching a stop sign, traffic light, or other area where ice often forms, brake early on clear pavement to reduce speed. Maintaining control of your vehicle is much more difficult when braking on ice-covered roadways.

Control the skid: In the event of a skid, ease off the accelerator and steer in the direction you want the front of the car to go.

If your car has an anti-lock braking system (ABS): Do not remove your foot from the brake during a skid. When you apply the brakes hard enough to make the wheels lock momentarily, you will typically feel the brake pedal vibrate and pulsate back against your foot. This is normal and the system is working as designed. Do not release pressure on the pedal or attempt to "pump" the brakes.

If your car does not have an anti-lock braking system: Keep the heel of your foot on the floor and use the ball of your foot to modulate the pressure applied to the brake pedal so the brakes are at the "threshold" of lockup but still rotating.



Mandatory Reporting of Impaired Driver Arrests to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles

By: Scot Mattox, TSRP Maine

The Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) administrative suspension process is a powerful tool for quickly removing dangerous drivers from Maine's roads. But it only works when everyone involved does their part. This article highlights a gap in the process and offers practical steps to improve it.

Background

Keeping Maine's highways safe from impaired drivers requires teamwork among multiple agencies. The process usually starts when law enforcement arrests a suspected impaired driver. Officers gather evidence, which state labs may analyze, and prosecutors use this evidence to build a court case. Because the court process takes time, Maine law allows for an administrative license suspension through the BMV. This suspension occurs before trial and is intended to keep suspected impaired drivers off the road while their case moves through the court system.

Administrative suspensions are common across the U.S. They provide a swift, certain, and serious consequence for impaired driving, deterring offenders and protecting the public. Maine law also encourages drivers to take chemical tests by imposing harsher penalties for refusal, if they are convicted of the underlying offense.

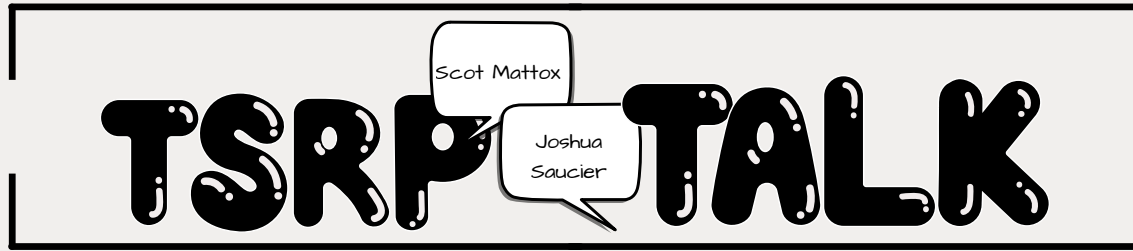
Under Title 29-A M.R.S., the Secretary of State can immediately suspend a license if a driver is found to have an excessive alcohol level (§ 2453) or is under the influence of drugs (§ 2453-A). Refusing a chemical test results in a 275-day suspension for the first offense, with longer penalties for repeat refusals (§ 2521).

The Issue

Law enforcement officers are the gatekeepers of this process. The BMV cannot act on its own—it needs an affidavit from the arresting officer (commonly called the Blue or Green form) stating probable cause for impairment or refusal of a chemical test.

The law is clear: officers must report OUI arrests to the BMV within 72 hours (excluding weekends and holidays), even if the report is late (§ 2481).

Despite these requirements, some agencies fail to submit OUI arrest reports to the BMV. This gap often stems from a lack of awareness of the mandatory reporting law.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Why is this a Problem?

1. Data collection about the real number of impaired driving arrests occurring in Maine is skewed.
2. Law enforcement ignores a statutory obligation, which could create liability and raise ethical concerns, especially if that driver were to be involved in a casualty crash after having been arrested for OUI but still having an active license.
3. The state misses the chance to suspend licenses quickly, reducing deterrence and potentially risking lives.
4. The lack of an administrative suspension - when there should be one in place - makes the case more challenging for the prosecutor.

A Solution

The simplest fix: education and compliance. Law enforcement agencies should ensure that officers understand and comply with the mandatory reporting requirements under 29-A M.R.S. § 2481. Doing so benefits everyone:

- **Public Safety:** Immediate suspensions deter impaired driving and keep roads safer.
- **Efficiency:** Drivers already under suspension are more likely to accept plea deals, reducing court backlog.
- **Data Accuracy:** Reporting helps the state track OUI trends and allocate resources effectively.
- **Professional Development:** BMV hearings offer valuable testimony practice for officers, especially in a post-COVID era when there are fewer court appearances.

Some officers worry about BMV hearings, citing a lack of prosecutor presence or broad questioning by defense attorneys. While these concerns are valid, hearings can also be opportunities for discovery and skill-building. Defense strategies revealed during hearings may help officers and prosecutors prepare for trial. And in the post-COVID world of fewer trials, a BMV administrative hearing may be one of the best opportunities for officers to get real-world experience testifying under oath.

In Closing

The goal is simple: use the BMV's administrative suspension process to remove suspected impaired drivers from the road before their court case concludes. This system only works if all stakeholders—especially law enforcement—do their part. Compliance with § 2481 isn't just a legal requirement; it's a practical step toward safer roads and a more effective justice system.



DIRIGO SAFETY, LLC

PUBLIC SAFETY ADVOCATES



Dirigo Safety's newsletter titled "What's New at Dirigo Safety" can be found [here!](#)

Interview and Interrogation Techniques

January 26&27, 2026 0800-1600
Skowhegan Police Department

Participants will gain practical tools to conduct more effective interviews and interrogations across a range of investigative scenarios.

Price: \$500

Artificial Intelligence Basics

February 24, 2026
0900-1300

Dirigo Safety, LLC 95 Main Street,
Auburn, ME

Price: \$179.00

Green Lab: Cannabis Impairment Detection Training

March 12, 2026 0800-1700
Dirigo Safety, Auburn ME

Price: FREE for Maine LEO's - Sponsored by OCP.
\$600 for Non-Maine LEO's
Lunch will be provided, limited seats available!

Welcome to Dirigo Safety, LLC's blog and news page!

[Here](#), you'll find the latest updates and information relevant to law enforcement in Maine and New England. We cover various topics, including mental health, trends, and best practices in the field.



Updates From

Impaired Driving Enforcement Training Unit



An ARIDE class was conducted at Dirigo Safety in Auburn in December, where 21 officers were successfully trained. Additional ARIDE classes are being planned (dates and locations TBD).

Our 2026 DRE class has been selected and approved by Commissioner Sauschuck; they'll begin the classroom portion of their training next month, followed by field certification training in both Maine and Florida during March.

For more information about Maine DRE's program, contact Don Finnegan Edwin.D.Finnegan@maine.gov.

Traffic Safety Marketing

Powered by NHTSA




NHTSA Campaigns Happening Now & Upcoming

Traffic Safety Marketing powered by NHTSA is a free resource for social media content that can be plug and play for current and upcoming NHTSA campaigns. These are just a few examples of current content that are ready for you. simply click on any image to redirect you to the TSM webpage.


Nov 17 2025	-	Feb 28 2026	HAPPENING NOW	Winter Driving Tips Vehicle Safety	
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UPCOMING




Super Bowl | Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk
Drunk Driving
Feb 2, 2026 - Feb 8, 2026

UPCOMING



Vehicle Safety Recalls Week
Vehicle Safety
Mar 2, 2026 - Mar 8, 2026

UPCOMING



St. Patrick's Day | Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving
Drunk Driving
Mar 9, 2026 - Mar 17, 2026

CHEMIST CORNER

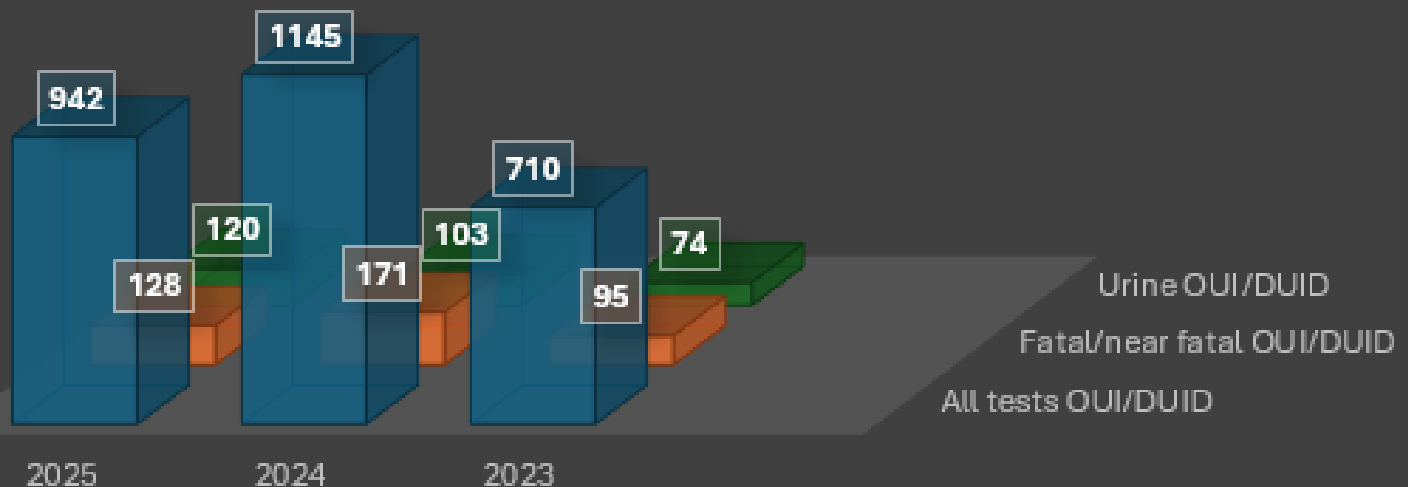
Maine CDC-DHHS:
Health & Environmental Testing Laboratory:
Forensic Chemistry Section: Toxicology

Intoxilyzer 9000 update:

To date, there are Intoxilyzer 9000 breath alcohol testing instruments at 52 law enforcement agencies in Maine, with agencies in Districts 6,7, & 8 scheduled to receive new instruments in 2026. If your agency needs training on the Intoxilyzer 9000, reach out to James.A.Lyman@maine.gov.

2025 LAB TESTING AT A GLANCE

■ All tests OUI/DUID ■ Fatal/near fatal OUI/DUID ■ Urine OUI/DUID



New Law Update

The Bureau of Motor Vehicles has asked us to share an update on the requirement to register a slide-in camper. The below statute language no longer requires a slide-in camper to be registered. This change was made in 2017. If this violation is listed in the eCitation statute library, we LEL's will ask to have it removed to avoid any confusion about the law.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

TWO THOUSAND AND SEVENTEEN

S.P. 273 - L.D. 827

An Act To Repeal the Laws Governing Truck Camper Registration

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

Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §409, sub-§§1 to 3, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and affected by Pt. B, §5, are amended to read:

1. Collection of tax. The Secretary of State shall act at the time and place of registration on behalf of the State Tax Assessor to collect the sales or use tax due under Title 36, Part 3 for a vehicle ~~or truck camper~~ for which an original registration is required.

2. Documentation; payment of tax. Registration may not be issued, unless in addition to meeting the other registration requirements of this Title, the applicant has:

A. Submitted a dealer's certificate in a form prescribed by the State Tax Assessor, showing either that:

- (1) The sales tax due has been collected by the dealer; or
- (2) The sale of the vehicle ~~or truck camper~~ is not subject to tax; or

B. Properly signed a use tax certificate in a form prescribed by the State Tax Assessor and:

- (1) Paid the amount of tax due; or
- (2) Shown that the sale or use of the vehicle ~~or truck camper~~ is not subject to tax.

3. Collection fee. Each official shall retain from the use taxes collected a fee of \$1.25 for each vehicle ~~or truck camper~~, even if a certificate indicates that no use tax is due.

Retained fees must be transmitted to the Treasurer of State and credited to the Highway Fund.

Taxes collected must be transmitted to the Treasurer of State and credited to the General Fund.

Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA §409, sub-§5, as amended by PL 2011, c. 240, §1, is further amended to read:

5. Other taxes. A motor vehicle, mobile home, or camp trailer ~~or truck camper~~ may not be registered until the excise tax or personal property tax or real estate tax has been paid in accordance with Title 36, sections 551, 602, 1482 and 1484. The Secretary of State may provide municipal excise tax collectors with a standard vehicle registration form for the collection of excise tax.

Sec. 3. 29-A MRSA §502, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and affected by Pt. B, §5, is amended to read:

1. Transferring registration. A person who transfers the ownership or discontinues the use of a registered motor vehicle, trailer or semitrailer and applies for registration of another motor vehicle, trailer or semitrailer in the same registration year may use the same number plates on payment of a transfer fee of \$8, as long as the registration fee is the same as that of the former vehicle. If the fee for the vehicle to be registered is greater than the fee for the vehicle first registered, that person must also pay the difference. If application is made for a ~~truck camper or a trailer~~ with a gross weight of 2,000 pounds or less, the transfer fee is \$5.

Sec. 4. 29-A MRSA §503, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and affected by Pt. B, §5, is amended to read:

1. Replacements. Replacement registration plates are furnished to replace lost or mutilated plates or plates assigned to the registrant that have not been expired for more than 8 months. The fee for each plate is \$5.

Replacement registration validation devices for number plates ~~or truck campers~~ are furnished for 50¢ each.

Sec. 5. 29-A MRSA §508, as amended by PL 1999, c. 790, Pt. C, §10 and affected by §19, is repealed.

Community Resource Page



A Solution to Help Young Children Shine



Help Me Grow is a central access point designed to connect families to information and services about child development and community resources.

In partnership with 211 Maine caregivers and providers can contact Help Me Grow for additional support. Help Me Grow will listen, link families to services, and provide follow-up to both caregivers and referral sources.

How It Works:

Eligibility

We are available at no cost to all Maine children, birth to eight, and their families/caregivers. Parents can also call for assistance during pregnancy.

Centralized Access Point

We assist caregivers and child health providers in connecting children to the grid of existing community and State resources that can help them thrive, through a "warm hand-off" from families to resources.

Resources

We help support a network of connected service providers, that can effectively serve families in Maine who have a variety of needs.

Developmental Screening

We promote working with families to recognize developmental milestones and utilize the Ages & Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ) to assess development. If concerns are identified in the screening process, we work with families to connect to early intervention professionals for further assessment.

Consider Referring A Family When:

- You are unsure what services a family might be eligible for, but know they need support.
- A family needs additional support navigating next steps in accessing resources (CDS, WIC, etc.).
- A screening needs to be completed, or family needs support completing an online ASQ®.



Scan QR Code to the right to learn more



Discrimination Notice

Department of Health and Human Services does not discriminate.

CHOICES MATTER



Hillari Morgan

Director of Youth Programs | CHOICES MATTER

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www.choicesmatter.com

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