

Governor Mills' FY 2024-FY 2025 Supplemental General Fund Budgets

Just in time for a last-minute Valentine's Day treat, Governor Mills released her FY 2024-FY 2025 Supplemental General Fund budget. It is expected that the Appropriations & Finance Affairs Committee will begin the public hearing process the week of February 26. Of interest to municipalities, the supplemental budget bill:

Medication Assisted Treatment (Page A-29). Provides a one-time \$4 million appropriation to county jails for medication assisted treatment and medical care, which was recently mandated in Public Law 2021, chapter 732, Part C.

K-12 School Funding (Part C). Establishes the total cost of funding K-12 education as calculated by the Essential Programs & Service model to be \$2.622 billion and appropriates \$1.442 billion (55% of the total) as the state's share; appropriates \$272 million as the state's contribution of the unfunded actuarial liabilities of the Maine Public Employees Retirement System attributable to teachers and retired teacher health and life insurance; and sets the minimum mil rate expectation at 6.62.

Property Tax Stabilization (Part E). Transfers \$15 million from unappropriated General Fund surplus revenue to fulfill the state's commitment to reimburse municipalities for 100% of the property tax revenues lost due to the now repealed Property Tax Stabilization for Seniors law. This appropriation is also addressed in an [amended version](#) of LD 646, *An Act to Fully Reimburse Municipalities for Lost Revenue Under the Property Tax Stabilization for Senior Citizens Program*, which received unanimous support from the appropriations committee on February 13. If LD 646 is enacted, this transfer will not be needed.

Maine Mass Violence Care Fund (Part N). Creates the Mass Violence Care Fund, within the Office of the Attorney General (AG), to provide financial assistance for the unreimbursed portion of mass violence related physical and behavioral health care expenses; transfers \$5 million in unappropriated surplus revenue to capitalize the fund; and provides that only interest earnings and donations to the fund may be distributed to eligible victims. This section of the budget also creates a six-member working group, including the Senate President, Speaker of the House, AG, Health & Human Services Commissioner, State Treasurer, and the chair of the newly created Victims' Compensation Board, which is directed to identify the options and eligibility criteria for delivering the financial aid. The directive requires the submission of a report with recommendations to the board by December 3, 2024, and authorizes the joint standing committee over judiciary matters to report out related legislation in 2025.

Disaster Recovery Fund (Part Q). Increases from \$3 to \$15 million the funding held in the Disaster Recovery Fund and transfers \$15 million in unappropriated General Fund surplus revenue into the fund.

Child Development Services (Part W). In part, this section provides that as of July 1, 2028, all school administrative units (SAU) are responsible for ensuring a free, appropriate public education for children ages three to five with disabilities. Beginning on July 1, 2024, an SAU may be approved to pilot the implementation of the program and during the 2026 and 2027

school years additional SAUs will be approved to provide educational services to impacted students. Part W also provides that an SAU may elect to either provide the services or contract with public or private providers via a memorandum of understanding to do so. SAUs providing the services will be reimbursed for 100% of the costs as calculated by the Essential Programs & Services formula, which will be appropriated outside of the regular general-purpose aid for education funding. Finally, Part W establishes the Preschool Special Education Fund to assist SAUs that have voluntarily assumed providing services in advance of the 2028 mandate.

Maine Office of Community Affairs (Part DD). Establishes the Maine Office of Community Affairs (MOCA) within the Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF) and establishes a director for the office. The budget initiative further directs the MOCA to foster communications and partnership between the State and Maine town and cities, Tribal governments, and regional entities and to coordinate efforts, technical assistance, and financial support to better plan for challenges, pursue solutions and create stronger and more resilient communities.

Community Resilience Partnership (Part EE). Transfers \$5 million from unappropriated General Fund surplus revenue to the Community Resilience Partnership program to support grants and provide technical assistance to municipalities and tribes for climate planning, including adaptation and resilience projects, emissions reduction initiatives and energy efficiency projects.

Office of New Americans (Part FF). Establishes the Office of New Americans within GOPIF to improve the economic and civic integration of immigrants into the State’s workforce and communities and creates an advisory council to advise the office on its directives. This initiative mirrors that found in [LD 2167](#).

Affordable Homeownership (Part GG). Transfers \$10 million in unappropriated General Fund surplus revenue to MaineHousing via the Affordable Homeownership Program to expand affordable, energy-efficient housing options that support state workforce needs.

Emergency Housing Relief Fund (Part HH). Transfers \$16 million in unappropriated General Fund surplus revenue to MaineHousing to supplement or establish programs addressing the needs of people experiencing homelessness or facing other immediate housing needs and to support other uses that address related emergencies, such as through privately-operated low barrier shelters, winter warming shelters, legal services, and other wraparound settlement services intended to help individuals integrate into the workforce and communities.

Maximum Levels of General Assistance (Part II). Prohibits a municipality from exceeding maximum levels of assistance under the General Assistance (GA) program for more than 30 days in a 12-month period.

GA Reimbursement (Part OO). Transfers \$5 million in unappropriated General Fund surplus revenue to the Department of Health & Human Services to reimburse municipalities for direct aid provided under the GA program.

Crisis Receiving Center (Part KKK). Authorizes the Department of Health & Human Services to develop a plan for a network of community-based crisis receiving centers that provide immediate and short-term, walk-in access to an array of clinical and non-clinical mental health and substance use disorder stabilization services. The department is further directed to: (1) establish guidelines in consultation with law enforcement agencies, municipalities, public health experts, and behavioral health providers; (2) assess geographical locations for maximization of community impact; (3) provide technical assistance to places and providers interested in joining the network; (4) coordinate regular meetings with centers and provide technical assistance; and (5) engage in continual process improvement and planning updates.