

§998. Process for review of tax expenditures

1. Assignment of review categories. By October 1, 2015, the committee, in consultation with the policy committee, shall assign each tax expenditure to one of the following review categories:

- A. Full evaluation for tax expenditures that are intended to provide an incentive for specific behaviors, that provide a benefit to a specific group of beneficiaries or for which measurable goals can be identified;
- B. Expedited review for tax expenditures that are intended to implement broad tax policy goals that cannot be reasonably measured; and
- C. No review for tax expenditures with an impact on state revenue of less than \$50,000 or that otherwise do not warrant either a full evaluation or expedited review.

2. Schedule. The committee, in consultation with the policy committee, shall establish a prioritized schedule of ongoing review of the tax expenditures assigned to the full evaluation and expedited review categories pursuant to subsection 1, paragraphs A and B. To the extent practicable, the committee shall group the review of tax expenditures with similar goals together.

3. Annual review of assignments and schedule. By October 1st of each year, beginning in 2016, the committee, in consultation with the policy committee, shall review and make any necessary adjustments to the review category assignments and schedule pursuant to subsections 1 and 2, including adjustments needed to incorporate tax expenditures enacted, amended or repealed during the preceding year.

4. Office responsibilities. The office shall maintain a current record of the review category assignments and the schedule under this section.

§999. Full evaluation of tax expenditures

1. Evaluation process. Beginning January 1, 2016, the office shall evaluate each tax expenditure identified under section 998, subsection 1, paragraph A in accordance with the schedule established in section 998, subsection 2.

A. Prior to the beginning of each evaluation, the committee, after consideration of recommendations from the office, shall approve the following for each tax expenditure subject to full evaluation:

- (1) The purposes, intent or goals of the tax expenditure, as informed by original legislative intent as well as subsequent legislative and policy developments and changes in the state economy and fiscal condition;
- (2) The intended beneficiaries of the tax expenditure;
- (3) The evaluation objectives, which may include an assessment of:
 - (a) The fiscal impact of the tax expenditure, including past and estimated future impacts;
 - (b) The extent to which the design of the tax expenditure is effective in accomplishing the tax expenditure's purposes, intent or goals and consistent with best practices;
 - (c) The extent to which the tax expenditure is achieving its purposes, intent or goals, taking into consideration the economic context, market conditions and indirect benefits;
 - (d) The extent to which those actually benefiting from the tax expenditure are the intended beneficiaries;
 - (e) The extent to which it is likely that the desired behavior might have occurred without the tax expenditure, taking into consideration similar tax expenditures offered by other states;

- (f) The extent to which the State's administration of the tax expenditure, including enforcement efforts, is efficient and effective;
 - (g) The extent to which there are other state or federal tax expenditures, direct expenditures or other programs that have similar purposes, intent or goals as the tax expenditure, and the extent to which such similar initiatives are coordinated, complementary or duplicative;
 - (h) The extent to which the tax expenditure is a cost-effective use of resources compared to other options for using the same resources or addressing the same purposes, intent or goals; and
 - (i) Any opportunities to improve the effectiveness of the tax expenditure in meeting its purposes, intent or goals; and
- (4) The performance measures appropriate for analyzing the evaluation objectives. Performance measures must be clear and relevant to the specific tax expenditure and the approved evaluation objectives.

B. Before final approval pursuant to paragraph A, the committee shall seek and consider input from the policy committee and stakeholders and may seek input from experts.

2. Action by office; report. The office shall submit a report on the results of each evaluation to the committee and the policy committee. The office shall seek stakeholder input as part of the report. For each tax expenditure evaluated, the report must include conclusions regarding the extent to which the tax expenditure is meeting its purposes, intent or goals and may include recommendations for continuation or repeal of the tax expenditure or modification of the tax expenditure to improve its performance.

3. Action by committee. The committee shall review the report submitted by the office under subsection 2, assess the report's objectivity and credibility and vote whether to endorse the report. The committee shall submit a record of the vote on any reports submitted by the office and any comments of or actions recommended by the committee to the policy committee for its review and consideration.

4. Action by policy committee. The policy committee shall review the results of the tax expenditure evaluations and of the committee's review based on materials submitted under subsections 2 and 3. The policy committee shall submit to the Legislature by the later of 90 days after receipt of materials submitted under subsections 2 and 3 and the adjournment sine die of the regular session during which the materials were received, if applicable, a report documenting its activities under this chapter and any recommendations resulting from its review of the materials submitted under subsections 2 and 3. The policy committee may submit a bill to the Legislature to implement the policy committee's recommendations.

§1000. Expedited review of tax expenditures

1. Expedited review process. Beginning July 1, 2016, the policy committee shall conduct expedited reviews of tax expenditures and the associated tax policies identified under section 998, subsection 1, paragraph B, in accordance with the schedule established in section 998, subsection 2.

A. For each tax policy subject to review, the policy committee shall assess the continued relevance of, or need for adjustments to, the policy, considering:

- (1) The reasons the tax policy was adopted;
- (2) The extent to which the reasons for the adoption still remain or whether the tax policy should be reconsidered;
- (3) The extent to which the tax policy is consistent or inconsistent with other state goals; and
- (4) The fiscal impact of the tax policy, including past and estimated future impacts.

B. For each tax expenditure related to the tax policy under review, the policy committee shall assess the continued relevance of, or need for adjustments to, the expenditure, considering:

- (1) The fiscal impact of the tax expenditure, including past and estimated future impacts;
- (2) The administrative costs and burdens associated with the tax expenditure;
- (3) The extent to which the tax expenditure is consistent with the broad tax policy and with the other tax expenditures established in connection with the policy;
- (4) The extent to which the design of the tax expenditure is effective in accomplishing its tax policy purpose;
- (5) The extent to which there are adequate mechanisms, including enforcement efforts, to ensure that only intended beneficiaries are receiving benefits and that beneficiaries are compliant with any requirements;
- (6) The extent to which the reasons for establishing the tax expenditure remain or whether the need for it should be reconsidered; and
- (7) Any other reasons to discontinue or amend the tax expenditure.

2. Action by the office. By July 1st in 2016 to 2018 and by December 15th of each year beginning in 2019 the office shall collect, prepare and submit to the policy committee the following information to support the expedited reviews under subsection 1:

- A. A description of the tax policy under review;
- B. Summary information on each tax expenditure associated with the tax policy under review, including:
 - (1) A description of the tax expenditure and the mechanism through which the tax benefit is distributed;
 - (2) The intended beneficiaries of the tax expenditure; and
 - (3) A legislative history of the tax expenditure; and
- C. The fiscal impact of the tax policy and each related tax expenditure, including past and estimated future impacts.

3. Report by policy committee; legislation. By March 1st of each year, beginning in 2020, the policy committee shall submit to the Legislature a report on the results of the expedited reviews conducted pursuant to subsection 1 that year. The policy committee may submit a bill related to the report to the Legislature to implement the policy committee's recommendations.

§1001. Tax expenditure evaluation process details

1. Information requests; confidentiality; reporting. The following provisions apply to the performance of duties under sections 999 and 1000. These powers are in addition to the powers granted to the office and committee under this chapter.

- A. The office may request confidential information from the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Maine Revenue Services or other state agencies as necessary to address the evaluation objectives and performance measures approved under section 999, subsection 1. The office shall request any confidential information in accordance with section 997, subsection 4. The office shall request that confidential tax information, other than beneficiary contact information, be made accessible to the office as de-identified tax data. If Maine Revenue Services is unable to provide such data, the office and representatives of Maine Revenue Services shall determine appropriate methods for the office to access the requested information.

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April 9, 2021

B. Upon request of the office and in accordance with section 997, subsection 4, the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Maine Revenue Services or other state agencies shall provide confidential information to the office. The office shall maintain the confidentiality of the information provided, in accordance with section 997, subsections 3 and 4. This paragraph does not apply to federal tax information that is confidential under Title 36, section 191, subsection 3.

C. The office, the committee or the policy committee may consult with governmental agencies, other entities and experts, including members of the Consensus Economic Forecasting Commission under Title 5, section 1710.

D. The office may contract with other entities for the purpose of obtaining assistance in the review of tax expenditures. The office shall require a nondisclosure agreement as part of any contract entered into pursuant to this paragraph. The office may not disclose confidential taxpayer information to a contractor, except for:

- (1) Contact information for specific beneficiaries of tax expenditures for the purpose of conducting interviews, surveys or other data collection; and
- (2) Statistics classified so as to prevent the identification of specific taxpayers or the reports, returns or items of specific taxpayers.

The contractor shall retain physical control of any information obtained pursuant to this paragraph until the conclusion of the review for which the information was provided, after which the information must be immediately destroyed.

E. The office may report confidential information obtained under this section to Legislators, legislative committees, state agencies and the public only in the form of statistics classified so as to prevent the identification of specific taxpayers or the reports, returns or items of specific taxpayers.

F. Prior to the submission of a tax expenditure evaluation report under section 999, subsection 2, the office shall provide the State Tax Assessor an opportunity to review a draft of the report in accordance with the provisions of section 997, subsection 1. The State Tax Assessor may advise the office on compliance with paragraph E.

G. For purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

- (1) "Beneficiary contact information" means the following information listed on a tax return or included in a tax return: the name, address, zip code, e-mail address and telephone number of the taxpayer, and of any related entity, officers, attorneys, personal representatives and other agents, tax preparers and shareholders of, partners of or members of the taxpayer or of a listed related entity.
- (2) "De-identified tax data" means tax returns and other confidential tax information that are redacted or otherwise modified or restricted by Maine Revenue Services so as to exclude the following:
 - (a) Beneficiary contact information;
 - (b) Identification numbers including federal or state employer identification numbers, social security numbers and registration numbers; and
 - (c) Other information from which the State Tax Assessor determines that the identity of the taxpayer could reasonably be inferred.

2. Legislation. The committee may submit to the Legislature any legislation it considers necessary to improve the process or availability of data for the review of tax expenditures.