

## STATE OF MAINE

—  
 IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
 TWO THOUSAND AND EIGHTEEN

—  
 H.P. 1167 - L.D. 1679

**An Act Regarding the Registry of Deeds in Oxford County**

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

**Whereas,** this legislation affects the position of register of deeds for Oxford County and eliminates the position of western district register of deeds in Oxford County; and

**Whereas,** it is necessary that certain provisions of this legislation take effect immediately to ensure the Oxford County general elections in November 2018, and the associated June 2018 primary elections, are conducted in accordance with elimination of the western district register of deeds effective December 31, 2018; 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.** 33 MRSA §702 is amended to read:

**§702. Western district office in Oxford County**

The Towns of Hiram, Porter, Brownfield, Denmark, Fryeburg, Sweden, Lovell, Stoneham and ~~Støwe~~ Stow, in the County of Oxford, compose the western registry district of Oxford County and the register shall keep ~~his~~ the register's office at Fryeburg.

This section is repealed December 31, 2018.

**Sec. 2. Register of deeds in Oxford County; November 2018 election.** Notwithstanding the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 33, section 602, at the November 2018 general election, the legally qualified voters of Oxford County shall elect a single register of deeds for Oxford County to a 4-year term, and there may not be an election for a

register of deeds for the western registry district of Oxford County described in Title 33, section 702.

**Sec. 3. Western registry district transition; western subregistry.** The register of deeds of the western registry district of Oxford County and the western district office in the Town of Fryeburg shall continue to operate and function as provided in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 33, section 702 until December 31, 2018. Effective January 1, 2019, the Oxford County register of deeds shall maintain a western subregistry of deeds that maintains all records of the former western registry district. Except as provided in section 4 of this Act, the Oxford County register of deeds shall operate a western subregistry office in the Town of Fryeburg at the same location as the former western registry district office and the office must be open for recording and research activities during normal business hours.

**Sec. 4. Conditions for closure of Oxford County western subregistry.** The Oxford County Commissioners may close the western subregistry office in the Town of Fryeburg only if the commissioners have completed the following:

1. Conducted at least 2 public hearings in the area covered by the towns of Hiram, Porter, Brownfield, Denmark, Fryeburg, Sweden, Lovell, Stoneham and Stow; these hearings must be conducted at least 90 days prior to the vote conducted pursuant to subsection 2;

2. Voted to close the western subregistry office in Fryeburg on a date certain;

3. Duplicated all historical maps and plot plans on display or available at the western subregistry office and offered and provided copies of those maps and plot plans to member towns for display or for the towns to make them available at their town offices;

4. Made provisions for the preservation of, and public access to, the record books of the western subregistry of deeds;

5. Provided online access to all files and documents of the Oxford County registry of deeds and the western subregistry of deeds;

6. Made available electronic recording of documents in the Oxford County registry of deeds and the western subregistry of deeds; and

7. Provided electronic recording of documents at no additional cost or surcharge to the municipal governments in Oxford County.

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