

§4314. Cooperation in administration of general assistance

1. State departments. Upon the request of any municipal official charged with the responsibility of administering general assistance, the Department of Health and Human Services and any other department of the State having information which has a bearing on the eligibility of any person applying for general assistance shall release that information. The information shall be restricted to those facts necessary for the official to make a determination of eligibility for general assistance.

[PL 1983, c. 577, §1 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 689, Pt. B, §6 (REV).]

2. Financial institutions. An officer of any bank, federally or state-chartered credit union, trust company, benefit association, insurance company, safe deposit company or any corporation or association receiving deposits of money shall, upon receipt of a written release signed by a depositor and a written request signed by the overseer of any municipality or its agents, or by the Commissioner of Health and Human Services or the commissioner's agents or by the Commissioner of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management or the commissioner's agents, disclose to that overseer or the Department of Health and Human Services or the Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services the amount deposited in the corporation or association to the credit of the named depositor granting the release, who is a charge upon the municipality or the State, or who has applied for support to the municipality or the State. When the named depositor who is a charge upon the municipality is deceased and the municipality or its agents are acting in accordance with section 4313, subsection 2, the officer shall disclose the amount deposited in the corporation or association upon receipt of a written request from the municipality or its agents and a notarized affidavit signed by the overseer of the municipality or its agents stating that the named depositor is deceased.

[PL 2017, c. 28, §1 (AMD); PL 2019, c. 377, §6 (REV).]

3. Verification of employment. The applicant has responsibility for providing documentary verification of benefits received during the period for which assistance is requested, or in the month immediately prior to the application for assistance when those wages and benefits are expected to be the same during the period for which assistance is requested.

The overseer shall give the applicant written notice that if the applicant does not provide the documentary verification within one week of the application, the employer will be contacted.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, every employer shall, upon written request of the overseer, release information regarding any wages or other financial benefits paid to the applicant or a member of the applicant's household. No employer may discharge or otherwise adversely affect an employee because of any request for information pursuant to this section.

[PL 1983, c. 577, §1 (NEW).]

4. Confidentiality. Any person who seeks and obtains information under this section is subject to the same rules of confidentiality as the person who is caretaker of the information which is by law confidential.

[PL 1983, c. 577, §1 (NEW).]

5. Refusal. Any person who refuses to provide any information to an overseer who requests it in accordance with this section shall state in writing the reasons for the refusal within 3 days of receiving the request.

[PL 1983, c. 577, §1 (NEW).]

6. Refusal; penalty. A person who refuses upon request to provide information under this section without just cause commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$25 and not more than \$100 may be adjudged.

[PL 2003, c. 452, Pt. K, §25 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 452, Pt. X, §2 (AFF).]

7. False information; penalty. A person who intentionally or knowingly renders false information under this section to an administrator commits a Class E crime.

[PL 2003, c. 452, Pt. K, §26 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 452, Pt. X, §2 (AFF).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1983, c. 577, §1 (NEW). PL 1991, c. 626, §4 (AMD). PL 1995, c. 86, §2 (AMD). PL 1997, c. 455, §§8,32 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 452, §§K25,26 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 452, §X2 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 689, §§B6,7 (REV). PL 2017, c. 28, §1 (AMD). PL 2019, c. 377, §6 (REV).

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