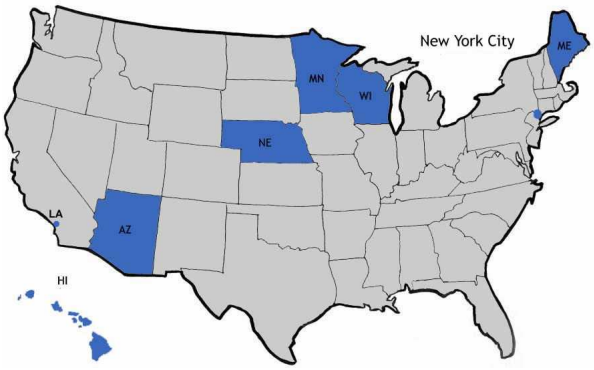
Maine Data

Maine Totals

Maine House 2006	Maine Senate 2006
Maine House 2004	Maine Senate 2004
Maine House 2002	Maine Senate 2002
Maine House 2000	Maine Senate 2000
Maine House 1998	Maine Senate 1998
Maine House 1996	Maine Senate 1996
Maine House 1994	Maine Senate 1994
Maine House 1992	Maine Senate 1992
Maine House 1990	Maine Senate 1990



Maine

Maine Legislature
House of Representatives: 151 members, elected every two years
Senate: 35 members, elected every two years

General Campaign Finance Law in Maine
The Maine Revised Statutes Annotated (MRSA) (Section 21A-1001) defines an election as “any primary, general or special election for state, county or municipal offices…”

Donation limits to candidates for the State House and State Senate are:
- $250 for individuals, corporations, PACs, and unions per election.
- $5,000 for political parties per election.
- No limit for self or spouse per election.

No person can make political contributions in aggregate greater than $25,000 per calendar year, except for a candidate or spouse when contributing to that candidate's campaign.

Contributions to a state political party are unlimited.

Anonymous contributions greater than $10 are prohibited.

Political Action Committees are limited to expenditures of $5,000 per candidate or political committee per election.

Any person, party committee, political committee or political action committee that makes an independent expenditure (i.e. expenditures aggregating in excess of $50 in an election that expressly advocates the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate other than through the candidate's committee) must file a report with the commission.

For candidates who voluntarily agree to limit campaign expenditures or who are certified as candidates under the Maine Clean Election Act (MCEA), the total expenditure limit in any election is $25,000 for State Senator and $5,000 for State Representative.

All information above adapted from: State of Ethics Commission Website (http://www.state.me.us/ethics/) and the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated (2002).

Public Financing — Maine Clean Election Act

During the 1995-1996 legislative session, groups agitating for campaign finance reform presented the Maine Legislature petitions bearing the signatures of 65,000 Maine residents who favored enacting public funding for and spending limits on candidates for Governor and the Legislature. The Legislature responded by designing the Maine Clean Elections Act (MECA); instead of passing legislation to establish MECA outright, the Legislature put forth the measure in a referendum in 1996. The referendum passed with slightly over 56 percent of the vote. Candidates for office first became eligible to participate under MECA, as it is described in the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated (MRSA) (Section 21A-1121), during the 2000 election.

Funding for MECA comes from the following sources:
- $2 million dollars deposited from the state general fund (raised through state sales and income taxes) each year.
- A voluntary state income tax check off of three dollars.
- Qualifying contributions from candidates certified as MECA candidates.
- Seed money contributions left unspent after a candidate is certified as a MECA candidate.

- Unspent funds returned from candidates who withdraw from or lose an election.
- Voluntary donations.
- Fines and penalties collected by the Ethics Commission.

Candidates seeking public funds must meet the following requirements:
- A candidate must file a declaration of intent prior to or during the qualifying period.
- Prior to certification as a MECA candidate, candidates can receive no more than the following seed money contribution amounts: $1,500 for the State Senate and $500 for the State House. Upon certification, the remaining seed money must be turned over to the MECA fund.
- A candidate for the State Senate needs a minimum of 150 verified registered voters from his/her district to support his candidacy by giving a qualifying campaign contribution of five dollars per election cycle.
- A candidate for the State House needs a minimum of 150 verified registered voters from his/her district to support his candidacy by giving a qualifying campaign contribution of five dollars per election cycle.

Candidates seeking public funds must obey the following restrictions:
- A candidate must adhere to the total expenditure limit for the election period.
- The use of public funds is limited to specific campaign goods and services, as determined by the Ethics Commission.
- Candidates who are certified as MCEA candidates are subject to a total expenditure limit in any election of $25,000 for State Senator and $5,000 for State Representative, which can be adjusted upward through a matching funds provision.
- Unused MECA funds must be returned when the candidate leaves the race or when the election is concluded.

The amount of funds distributed through MECA is determined as follows:
- For contested primaries, the amount distributed is the average expenditure amount of all candidates for seats in the same legislative chamber in the contested primaries from the preceding two election cycles. For uncontested primaries, the amount distributed is the average expenditure amount of all candidates for seats in the same legislative chamber in the uncontested primaries from the preceding two election cycles.
- For contested general elections, the amount distributed is the average expenditure amount of all candidates for seats in the same legislative chamber in the contested general election races from the preceding two election cycles. For uncontested general elections, the amount distributed equals 40 percent of the amount distributed to a MECA candidate in a contested general election.
- MECA also provides for a matching fund provision, so that when any MECA candidate's opponent's expenditures or funds raised/borrowed, whichever is greater, alone or in conjunction with independent expenditures is greater than the initial formula-based amount distributed to the MECA candidate, the commission issues immediately to the MECA candidate an additional amount equivalent to the difference. Total expenditure limits also adjust upward to match the increase in the distribution. Matching funds are limited to two times the amount initially distributed.

All information above adapted from: Maine Ethics Commission Website (http://www.state.me.us/ethics/ and the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated (2002).

Reapportionment/Redistricting

Maine is the only state the does not reapportion and redistrict during the first legislative session after the decennial federal census. Instead, Maine's reapportionment and redistricting occur during the '03-'04 time period each decade. The central responsibility for reapportionment and redistricting belongs to the Legislature. An advisory Legislative Apportionment Committee assists the Legislature, but the Legislature has the final say in the process.

Within three calendar days of the convening of the Legislature in '03 year, the Legislature must form the Apportionment Committee. The Committee consists of thirteen members. The majority and minority leaders of the State House select three each, the majority and minority leaders of the State Senate select two each, the leaders of Republican and Democratic Parties name one each, each party names one public member, and the two public members choose a third public member.

The Committee has 120 days from the start of the legislative session to draft and submit a proposal to the Legislature. The Legislature must then decide to accept the Committee's plan or enact a different plan within 30 days of receiving the Committee's proposal. Approval requires a two-thirds majority in each chamber. Should the Legislature fail to enact a plan by the end of this time period, the State Supreme Judicial Court assumes responsibility for redrawing the districts and has 60 days to do so.

Reapportionment/Redistricting Provisions

Article IV of the Maine Constitution requires legislative districts that are both functionally contiguous and compact as well as equal in population. The Constitution also requires that as few as possible local governments be split into multiple districts. The Maine Revised Statutes (Section 21, A-15) clarify the Constitution, stating that those engaged in reapportionment and redistricting "shall recognize that all political subdivision boundaries are not of equal importance and give weight to the interests of local communities when making district boundary decisions."

1993 Reapportionment/Redistricting

In 1993, since the Legislature proved unable to pass a reapportionment plan for the legislative districts, the State Supreme Judicial Court reapportioned all of the districts. The Court accepted submissions from the public, political parties, and Legislature and issued an initial plan that adhered to state constitutional requirements and respected municipal and county lines. The Court held a public hearing to discuss its plan as well as those submitted by others. During its review, the Court focused on meeting the constitutional standards while eliminating partisan elements found in its initial plan.

The Court issued its final order on June 29, 1993. The Court's final House plan "eliminated three potential primary contests between incumbent Democrats, converted one potential three-way Democratic primary into a two-way

Democratic primary and a potential general election contest between an incumbent Republican and an incumbent Democrat" (see In re 1993 Apportionment, No. SJC-93-229). The Court also reduced the total population deviation.

In the Senate, the Court adopted changes to its plan suggested by the Democratic Party. The Court found that the Democrats' suggestions resulted in more compact districts with a lower total population deviation.

Maine used this plan for all elections from 1994 through 2002.

2003 Reapportionment/Redistricting
Much like in 1993, in 2003, the Legislature failed to pass a reapportionment plan for the legislative districts. As a result, the State Supreme Judicial Court reapportioned all of the districts. Once again, the Court accepted submissions from the public, political parties, and Legislature and issued an initial plan following constitutional requirements. The Court held a public hearing to discuss its plan as well as those submitted by others. Unlike 1993, the revisions to the Court's initial plan appeared calculated to protect incumbents, with the notable exception of the sole member of the Legislature from the Green Party, whose Portland based district the Court eliminated.

The Court issued its final order on July 2, 2003. According to the Portland Press Herald, members of both major parties lauded the Court's ruling while the Green Party roundly denounced it. Given the disputes surrounding the final plan, the Court went so far as to say that as long as the plan meets the requirements of the Constitution and the statutes, it is not invalid if it also has political motivations such as protecting incumbents.

Maine intends to use this plan for all elections from 2004 through 2012.

2002 ELECTIONS
MAINE CLEAN ELECTION FUND
DISTRIBUTIONS FOR LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES

"By July 1, 1999 and at least every 4 years after that date, the Commission shall determine the amount of funds to be distributed to participating candidates based on the type of election and office…" MRSA (Section 21A-1125)

See Maine Clean Election Fund Data

(Click to view)

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