

**Maine Revised Statutes**  
**Title 17-A: MAINE CRIMINAL CODE**  
**Chapter 51: SENTENCES OF IMPRISONMENT**

**§1252. IMPRISONMENT FOR CRIMES OTHER THAN MURDER**

1. In the case of a person convicted of a crime other than murder, the court may sentence to imprisonment for a definite term as provided for in this section, unless the statute which the person is convicted of violating expressly provides that the fine and imprisonment penalties it authorizes may not be suspended, in which case the convicted person shall be sentenced to imprisonment and required to pay the fine authorized therein. Except as provided in subsection 7, the place of imprisonment must be as follows.

A. For a Class D or Class E crime the court must specify a county jail as the place of imprisonment. [1989, c. 693, §5 (NEW).]

B. For a Class A, Class B or Class C crime the court must:

(1) Specify a county jail as the place of imprisonment if the term of imprisonment is 9 months or less; or

(2) Commit the person to the Department of Corrections if the term of imprisonment is more than 9 months. [1989, c. 693, §5 (NEW).]

C. [1995, c. 425, §2 (RP).]

[ 1995, c. 425, §2 (AMD) .]

2. The court shall set the term of imprisonment as follows:

A. In the case of a Class A crime, the court shall set a definite period not to exceed 30 years; [2003, c. 657, §10 (AMD).]

B. In the case of a Class B crime, the court shall set a definite period not to exceed 10 years; [1975, c. 499, §1 (NEW).]

C. In the case of a Class C crime, the court shall set a definite period not to exceed 5 years; [1975, c. 499, §1 (NEW).]

D. In the case of a Class D crime, the court shall set a definite period of less than one year; or [1975, c. 499, §1 (NEW).]

E. In the case of a Class E crime, the court shall set a definite period not to exceed 6 months. [1975, c. 499, §1 (NEW).]

[ 2003, c. 657, §10 (AMD) .]

**2-A.**

[ 1977, c. 510, §76 (RP) .]

3. The court may add to the sentence of imprisonment a restitution order as is provided for in chapter 49, section 1204, subsection 2-A, paragraph B. In such cases, it shall be the responsibility of the Department of Corrections to determine whether the order has been complied with and consideration shall be given in the department's administrative decisions concerning the imprisoned person as to whether the order has been complied with.

[ 1983, c. 816, Pt. A, §6 (AMD) .]

**3-A.** At the request of or with the consent of a convicted person, a sentence of imprisonment under this chapter in a county jail or a sentence of probation involving imprisonment in a county jail under chapter 49 may be ordered to be served intermittently.

[ 1977, c. 196, (NEW) . ]

**4.** If the State pleads and proves that a Class B, C, D or E crime was committed with the use of a dangerous weapon then the sentencing class for such crime is one class higher than it would otherwise be. In the case of a Class A crime committed with the use of a dangerous weapon, such use should be given serious consideration by the court in exercising its sentencing discretion. This subsection does not apply to a violation or an attempted violation of section 208, to any other offenses to which use of a dangerous weapon serves as an element or to any offense for which the sentencing class is otherwise increased because the actor or an accomplice to that actor's or accomplice's knowledge is armed with a firearm or other dangerous weapon.

[ 2005, c. 527, §17 (AMD) . ]

**4-A.** If the State pleads and proves that, at the time any crime, excluding murder, under chapter 9, 11, 12, 13, 27 or 35, excluding section 853-A; section 402-A, subsection 1, paragraph A; or section 752-A or 752-C was committed, or an attempt of any such crime was committed, the defendant had 2 or more prior convictions under chapter 9, 11, 12, 13, 27 or 35, excluding section 853-A; section 402-A, subsection 1, paragraph A; or section 752-A or 752-C, or for an attempt of any such crime, or for engaging in substantially similar conduct in another jurisdiction, the sentencing class for the crime is one class higher than it would otherwise be. In the case of a Class A crime, the sentencing class is not increased, but the prior record must be given serious consideration by the court when imposing a sentence. Section 9-A governs the use of prior convictions when determining a sentence, except that, for the purposes of this subsection, for violations under chapter 11, the dates of prior convictions may have occurred at any time. This subsection does not apply to section 210-A if the prior convictions have already served to enhance the sentencing class under section 210-A, subsection 1, paragraph C or any other offense in which prior convictions have already served to enhance the sentencing class.

[ 2017, c. 336, §1 (AMD) . ]

**4-B.** If the State pleads and proves that the defendant is a repeat sexual assault offender, the court, notwithstanding subsection 2, may set a definite period of imprisonment for any term of years.

A. As used in this section, "repeat sexual assault offender" means a person who commits a new gross sexual assault after having been convicted previously and sentenced for any of the following:

- (1) Gross sexual assault, formerly denominated as gross sexual misconduct;
- (2) Rape;
- (3) Attempted murder accompanied by sexual assault;
- (4) Murder accompanied by sexual assault; or
- (5) Conduct substantially similar to a crime listed in subparagraph (1), (2), (3) or (4) that is a crime under the laws of another jurisdiction.

The date of sentencing is the date of the oral pronouncement of the sentence by the trial court, even if an appeal is taken. [ 2007, c. 476, §46 (AMD) . ]

B. "Accompanied by sexual assault" as used with respect to attempted murder, murder and crimes involving substantially similar conduct in another jurisdiction is satisfied if it was definitionally an element of the crime or was pleaded and proved beyond a reasonable doubt at trial by the State or another jurisdiction. [ 2007, c. 476, §46 (AMD) . ]

[ 2007, c. 476, §46 (AMD) . ]

**4-C.** If the State pleads and proves that a Class A crime of gross sexual assault was committed by a person who had previously been convicted and sentenced for a Class B or Class C crime of unlawful sexual contact, or an essentially similar crime in another jurisdiction, that prior conviction must be given serious consideration by the court in exercising its sentencing discretion.

[ 2003, c. 711, Pt. B, §20 (NEW) . ]

**4-D.** If the State pleads and proves that a crime under section 282 was committed against a person who had not attained 12 years of age, the court, in exercising its sentencing discretion, shall give the age of the victim serious consideration.

[ 2005, c. 673, §3 (RPR) . ]

**4-E.** If the State pleads and proves that a crime under section 253 was committed against a person who had not yet attained 12 years of age, the court, notwithstanding subsection 2, shall impose a definite term of imprisonment for any term of years. In determining the basic term of imprisonment as the first step in the sentencing process, the court shall select a term of at least 20 years. The court shall also impose as part of the sentence a period of supervised release to immediately follow that definite term of imprisonment as mandated by section 1231.

[ 2015, c. 358, §7 (AMD) . ]

**5.** Notwithstanding any other provision of this code, except as provided in this subsection, if the State pleads and proves that a Class A, B or C crime was committed with the use of a firearm against a person, the minimum sentence of imprisonment, which may not be suspended, is as follows: When the sentencing class for the crime is Class A, the minimum term of imprisonment is 4 years; when the sentencing class for the crime is Class B, the minimum term of imprisonment is 2 years; and when the sentencing class for the crime is Class C, the minimum term of imprisonment is one year. For purposes of this subsection, the applicable sentencing class is determined in accordance with subsection 4. This subsection does not apply if the State pleads and proves criminal threatening or attempted criminal threatening, as defined in section 209, or terrorizing or attempted terrorizing, as defined in section 210, subsection 1, paragraph A.

[ 1995, c. 28, §1 (AMD) . ]

**5-A.** Notwithstanding any other provision of this Code, for a person convicted of violating section 1105-A, 1105-B, 1105-C, 1105-D or 1118-A:

A. Except as otherwise provided in paragraphs B and C, the minimum sentence of imprisonment, which may not be suspended, is as follows: When the sentencing class is Class A, the minimum term of imprisonment is 4 years; when the sentencing class is Class B, the minimum term of imprisonment is 2 years; and, with the exception of a conviction under section 1105-A, 1105-B, 1105-C or 1105-D when the drug that is the basis for the charge is marijuana, when the sentencing class is Class C, the minimum term of imprisonment is one year; [2001, c. 383, §151 (AMD); 2001, c. 383, §156 (AFF) . ]

B. The court may impose a sentence other than a minimum unsuspended term of imprisonment set forth in paragraph A, if:

(1) The court finds by substantial evidence that:

(a) Imposition of a minimum unsuspended term of imprisonment under paragraph A will result in substantial injustice to the defendant. In making this determination, the court shall consider, among other considerations, whether the defendant did not know and reasonably should not have known that the victim was less than 18 years of age;

(b) Failure to impose a minimum unsuspended term of imprisonment under paragraph A will not have an adverse effect on public safety; and

(c) Failure to impose a minimum unsuspended term of imprisonment under paragraph A will not appreciably impair the effect of paragraph A in deterring others from violating section 1105-A, 1105-B, 1105-C, 1105-D or 1118-A; and

(2) The court finds that:

(c) The defendant's background, attitude and prospects for rehabilitation and the nature of the victim and the offense indicate that imposition of a sentence under paragraph A would frustrate the general purposes of sentencing set forth in section 1151.

If the court imposes a sentence under this paragraph, the court shall state in writing its reasons for its findings and for imposing a sentence under this paragraph rather than under paragraph A; and [ 2015 , c. 485 , §5 (AMD) . ]

C. If the court imposes a sentence under paragraph B, the minimum sentence of imprisonment, which may not be suspended, is as follows: When the sentencing class is Class A, the minimum term of imprisonment is 9 months; when the sentencing is Class B, the minimum term of imprisonment is 6 months; and, with the exception of trafficking or furnishing marijuana under section 1105-A or 1105-C, when the sentencing class is Class C, the minimum term of imprisonment is 3 months. [ 2001 , c. 383 , §151 (AMD); 2001 , c. 383 , §156 (AFF) . ]

[ 2013 , c. 133 , §15 (AMD); 2015 , c. 485 , §5 (AMD) . ]

**5-B.** In using a sentencing alternative involving a term of imprisonment for a person convicted of the attempted murder, manslaughter, elevated aggravated assault or aggravated assault of a child who had not in fact attained the age of 6 years at the time the crime was committed, a court shall assign special weight to this objective fact in determining the basic term of imprisonment as the first step in the sentencing process. The court shall assign special weight to any subjective victim impact in determining the maximum period of incarceration in the 2nd step in the sentencing process. The court may not suspend that portion of the maximum term of imprisonment based on objective or subjective victim impact in arriving at the final sentence as the 3rd step in the sentencing process. Nothing in this subsection may be construed to restrict a court in setting a sentence from considering the age of the victim in other circumstances when relevant.

[ 1999 , c. 536 , §2 (NEW) . ]

**5-C.** In using a sentencing alternative involving a term of imprisonment for a person convicted of the attempted murder, manslaughter, elevated aggravated assault or aggravated assault of a woman that the convicted person knew or had reasonable cause to believe to be in fact pregnant at the time the crime was committed, a court shall assign special weight to this objective fact in determining the basic term of imprisonment as the first step in the sentencing process. The court shall assign special weight to any subjective victim impact in determining the maximum period of incarceration in the 2nd step in the sentencing process. The court may not suspend that portion of the maximum term of imprisonment based on objective or subjective victim impact in arriving at the final sentence as the 3rd step in the sentencing process. Nothing in this subsection may be construed to restrict a court in setting a sentence from considering the fact that the victim was pregnant in other circumstances when relevant.

[ 2005 , c. 88 , Pt. B , §2 (NEW) . ]

**5-D.** In using a sentencing alternative involving a term of imprisonment for a person convicted of a Class C or higher crime, the victim of which was at the time of the commission of the crime in fact being stalked by that person, a court shall assign special weight to this objective fact in determining the basic sentence in the first step of the sentencing process. The court shall assign special weight to any subjective victim impact caused by the stalking in determining the maximum period of incarceration in the 2nd step in the sentencing process.

[ 2007 , c. 685 , §2 (NEW) . ]

**6.**

[ 1989, c. 693, §6 (RP) .]

7. If a sentence to a term of imprisonment in a county jail is consecutive to or is to be followed by a sentence to a term of imprisonment in the custody of the Department of Corrections, the court imposing either sentence may order that both be served in the custody of the Department of Corrections. If a court imposes consecutive terms of imprisonment for Class D or Class E crimes and the aggregate length of the terms imposed is one year or more, the court may order that they be served in the custody of the Department of Corrections.

[ 1989, c. 693, §7 (NEW) .]

**8.**

[ 1991, c. 622, Pt. N, §3 (NEW); T. 17-A, §1252, sub-§8 (RP) .]

9. Subsections in this section that make the sentencing class for a crime one class higher than it would otherwise be when pled and proved may be applied successively if the subsections to be applied successively contain different class enhancement factors.

[ 2005, c. 527, §20 (NEW) .]

## SECTION HISTORY

1975, c. 499, §1 (NEW). 1975, c. 740, §§116-118, 118A (AMD). 1977, c. 176, (AMD). 1977, c. 196, (AMD). 1977, c. 217, (AMD). 1977, c. 510, §§75-78 (AMD). 1979, c. 701, §30 (AMD). 1983, c. 581, §4 (AMD). 1983, c. 673, §4 (AMD). 1983, c. 816, §A6 (AMD). 1985, c. 821, §§7-10 (AMD). 1987, c. 535, §7 (AMD). 1987, c. 808, §§1, 3 (AMD). 1989, c. 693, §§5-7 (AMD). 1989, c. 925, §11 (AMD). 1991, c. 622, §N3 (NEW). 1995, c. 28, §1 (AMD). 1995, c. 425, §2 (AMD). 1995, c. 473, §1 (AMD). 1997, c. 460, §5 (AMD). 1999, c. 374, §6 (AMD). 1999, c. 536, §2 (AMD). 1999, c. 788, §8 (AMD). 2001, c. 383, §§150, 151 (AMD). 2001, c. 383, §156 (AFF). 2001, c. 439, §0004 (AMD). 2001, c. 667, §A39 (AMD). 2001, c. 667, §A40 (AFF). 2003, c. 1, §10 (AMD). 2003, c. 143, §9 (AMD). 2003, c. 232, §1 (AMD). 2003, c. 475, §1 (AMD). 2003, c. 657, §10 (AMD). 2003, c. 688, §A14 (AMD). 2003, c. 711, §§B19,20 (AMD). 2005, c. 88, §B2 (AMD). 2005, c. 447, §1 (AMD). 2005, c. 527, §§17-20 (AMD). 2005, c. 673, §§3, 4 (AMD). 2007, c. 476, §§45, 46 (AMD). 2007, c. 685, §2 (AMD). 2013, c. 133, §15 (AMD). 2015, c. 358, §7 (AMD). 2015, c. 470, §13 (AMD). 2015, c. 485, §5 (AMD). 2017, c. 336, §1 (AMD).

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