

§ 143B-50.1. Additional powers and duties of the Department regarding recreation.

(a) Definition. – As used in this section, "recreation" means those interests that are diversionary in character and that aid in promoting entertainment, pleasure, relaxation, instruction, and other physical, mental, and cultural developments and experiences of a leisure nature, and includes all governmental, private nonprofit, and commercial recreation forms of the recreation field and includes parks, conservation, recreation travel, the use of natural resources, wilderness, and high density recreation types and the variety of recreation interests in areas and programs which are incorporated in this range.

(b) Recreation. – The Department shall have the following powers and duties with respect to recreation:

- (1) To study and appraise the recreation needs of the State and to assemble and disseminate information relative to recreation.
- (2) To cooperate in the promotion and organization of local recreation systems for counties, municipalities, and other political subdivisions of the State, to aid them in the administration, finance, planning, personnel, coordination and cooperation of recreation organizations and programs.
- (3) To aid in recruiting, training, and placing recreation workers, and to promote recreation institutes and conferences.
- (4) To establish and promote recreation standards.
- (5) To cooperate with appropriate State, federal, and local agencies and private membership groups and commercial recreation interests in the promotion of recreation opportunities, and to represent the State in recreation conferences, study groups, and other matters of recreation concern.
- (6) To accept gifts, devises, and endowments. The funds, if given as an endowment, shall be invested in securities designated by the donor, or if there is no such designation, in securities in which the State sinking fund may be invested. All such gifts and devises and all proceeds from such invested endowments shall be used for carrying out the purposes for which they were made.
- (7) To advise agencies, departments, organizations and groups in the planning, application and use of federal and State funds which are assigned or administered by the State for recreation programs and services on land and water recreation areas and on which the State renders advisory or other recreation services or upon which the State exercises control.
- (8) To act jointly, when advisable, with any other State, local or federal agency, institution, private individual or group in order to better carry out the Department's objectives and responsibilities.

(c) Federal Assistance. – The Department, with the approval of the Governor, may apply for and accept grants from the federal government and its agencies and from any foundation, corporation, association, or individual, and may comply with the terms, conditions, and limitations of the grant, in order to accomplish any of the purposes of the Department. Grant funds shall be expended pursuant to the State Budget Act. The Director of the Department's Division of Parks and Recreation is designated as the State liaison officer with respect to funding through the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund or any successor fund established for similar purposes, and the Secretary may designate additional personnel to assist the Director in the responsibilities imposed by this subsection. (2019-20, s. 4(a), (c); 2020-78, s. 8.1.)