

Laws of His Majesty's Province of Upper Canada, passed in the year 1837. Toronto: Robert Stanton, 1837.

7 William IV – Chapter 24

An Act to authorise the Erection, and provide for the Maintenance of Houses of Industry, in the several Districts of this Province. Passed 4th March, 1837.

Whereas it is expedient and necessary to provide a House of Industry in the several Districts of this Province, and to provide employment for the Indigent and Idle: Be it therefore enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Assembly of the Province of Upper Canada, constituted and assembled by virtue of and under the authority of an Act passed in the Parliament of Great Britain, entitled, "*An Act to repeal certain parts of an Act passed in the fourteenth year of His Majesty's Reign, entitled, 'An Act for making more effectual provision for the Government of the Province of Quebec, in North America, and to make further provision for the Government of the said Province,'*" and by the authority of the same, That the Court of General Quarter Sessions of the Peace, to be holden in each District, after the presentment of three successive Grand Juries recommending the same, it shall be the duty of the Justices of the said District, to procure Plans and Estimates for the erection of suitable Buildings for the reception and employment of the Poor and Indigent, and of the Idle and Dissolute, and to procure or purchase a suitable Site whereon to erect the same, and to contract for the erection thereof: Provided the expense thereof shall not exceed the sum of One Thousand Pounds; and also to appoint five Inspectors, who shall have the Inspection and Government of the said House, with full power to appoint a Master, Mistress, and such needful assistance for the immediate care and oversight of the persons received into, or employed in that House; which Inspectors, once every month, and at such other times as occasion may require, shall meet for the purpose of determining the best method of discharging the duties of their Office and at such Meetings shall have full power to make such needful Orders and Regulations for the Government of the said House, and to alter the same from time to time, as they may think expedient; and all such By-Laws for the ordering and regulating the said House, and the affairs thereof, as may be necessary, the same not being repugnant to the Laws of the Land.

II. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the Monies requisite and necessary for the building, erecting, keeping and maintaining the said Houses of Industry, in the several Districts of this Province, shall be paid by the several Districts; and all the rateable property of the District shall be taxed in the same way, for this purpose, as it is for the purpose of erecting Gaols and Court-houses; and His Majesty's Justices of the Peace in General Quarter Sessions may declare the amount of such Assessment or Tax to be levied, which Rate, Assessment or Tax, shall be collected in the same manner as all other District Rates and Assessments are now by Law collected: Provided always, that it shall be the duty of such Justices of the Peace, to publish in one or more Newspapers of the District, if one is published in the District, and if not, then by affixing a copy on the Door of the Court-house, the amount of such Rate or Assessment, so to be levied as aforesaid.

III. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That any two of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace, or of the Inspectors appointed as aforesaid, are hereby authorised, empowered and directed, to commit to such House, by writing under their hands and seals, to be employed and governed according to the Rules, Regulations and Orders of said House, any person or persons residing in the District that are by this Act declared liable to be sent thither.

IV. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the persons who shall be liable to be sent into, employed and governed in the said House, to be erected in pursuance of this Act, are all Poor and Indigent Persons, who are incapable of supporting themselves; all persons able of body to work and without any means of maintaining themselves, who refuse or neglect so to do; all persons living a lewd dissolute vagrant life, or exercising no ordinary calling, or lawful business, sufficient to gain or procure an honest living; all such as spend their time and property in Public Houses, to the neglect of their lawful calling.

V. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all Inspectors appointed in pursuance of this Act, shall keep an account of the charges of erecting, keeping, upholding and maintaining such House, together with an account of all materials found and furnished, together with the names of the persons received into such House, as well as of those discharged therefrom, and also of the Earnings; one copy of which shall be presented to the Justices of the Peace of each District, once in every year, or oftener, when required by such Justices in General Quarter Sessions assembled, and one copy to each Branch of the Legislature.

VI. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all and every person committed to such House, if fit and able, shall be kept diligently employed in labour, during his or her continuance there; and in case the person so committed or continued shall be idle and not perform such reasonable task or labour as shall be assigned, or shall be stubborn, disobedient or disorderly, he, she or they, shall be punished according to the Rules and Regulations made or to be made, for ruling, governing and punishing persons there committed.