

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 943

H.P. 608

House of Representatives, March 11, 2025

**An Act to Require the ASPIRE-TANF Program to Be Administered
by State Employees**

Received by the Clerk of the House on March 5, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative ARCHER of Saco.
Cosponsored by Senator INGWERSEN of York and
Representatives: CROCKETT of Portland, DHALAC of South Portland, MACIAS of
Topsham, ROEDER of Bangor, SAYRE of Kennebunk.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §3782-A, sub-§2**, as repealed and replaced by PL 1993, c. 385,
3 §17, is repealed.

4 **Sec. 2. 22 MRSA §3782-A, sub-§2-A** is enacted to read:

5 **2-A. Department to provide services.** Beginning January 1, 2027, the department
6 shall deliver all employment, training and other services for program participants under
7 this chapter and may not contract with a public or private agency or individual to provide
8 program services, except for certain service delivery functions when necessary, including
9 job training and education, employment support, child care assistance and transportation
10 assistance.

11 **Sec. 3. 22 MRSA §3782-A, sub-§3**, as repealed and replaced by PL 1993, c. 385,
12 §17, is repealed.

13 **Sec. 4. 22 MRSA §3782-A, sub-§5-A** is enacted to read:

14 **5-A. Annual reporting.** By January 1st of each year, the department shall submit a
15 report to the Legislature detailing the staffing and participant outcomes of the program and
16 the challenges and successes of administering the program.

17 **Sec. 5. 22 MRSA §3788, sub-§12**, as amended by PL 2017, c. 407, Pt. A, §82, is
18 further amended to read:

19 **12. Developing resources.** ~~To~~ In order to assist in the development of job placement
20 opportunities, the department in its efforts to encourage job placement opportunities and
21 provide the services necessary to ensure self-support to recipients of TANF assistance, the
22 department may contract with public and private agencies to establish job placement
23 opportunities cooperation with the Department of Labor and other state agencies shall
24 explore the feasibility of developing a shared approach to technology to support access to
25 information talent banks, national job banks, Maine's job listings and any other job
26 opportunity listings, to facilitate linking program resources listings and to coordinate case
27 service providers.

28 ~~In order to assist in the development of job placement opportunities, the department in~~
29 ~~cooperation with the Department of Labor and other state agencies shall explore the~~
30 ~~feasibility of developing a shared approach to technology to support access to information~~
31 ~~talent banks, national job banks, Maine's job listings and any other job opportunity listings,~~
32 ~~to facilitate linking program resources listings and to coordinate case service providers.~~

33 In addition, all public and private agencies are subject to the following requirements.

34 A. All agencies that receive funds from any state department or division must provide
35 at least one workforce-MaineServe opportunity for an ASPIRE-TANF participant.

36 B. All state agencies that provide funding for child care or transportation services must
37 require that recipients of TANF be given priority for those services.

38 C. All agencies that receive funds from any state agency for the treatment of substance
39 use disorder must require that recipients of TANF be given priority for those services.

40 **Sec. 6. Transition.** By December 31, 2026, the Department of Health and Human
41 Services shall replace program services of the Additional Support for People in Retraining

1 and Employment - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, established in the
2 Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, chapter 1054-A, provided under contract by outside
3 public and private agencies and individuals with program services delivered by department
4 employees. Funds allocated under contract to outside public and private agencies and
5 individuals must be reallocated to support the hiring and training of department staff to
6 deliver program services under this Act.

7 **Sec. 7. Effective date.** Those sections of this Act that repeal the Maine Revised
8 Statutes, Title 22, section 3782-A, subsections 2 and 3 and that enact Title 22, section
9 3782-A, subsection 2-A take effect January 1, 2027.

10 **SUMMARY**

11 This bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services to administer the
12 Additional Support for People in Retraining and Employment - Temporary Assistance for
13 Needy Families program, also known as the ASPIRE-TANF program, with department
14 employees and provides for the phasing out of contracted public and private agencies
15 providing program services by December 31, 2026, except for certain service delivery
16 functions including job training and education, employment support, child care assistance
17 and transportation assistance. The bill also requires the department to submit an annual
18 report to the Legislature detailing the staffing and participant outcomes of the program and
19 the challenges and successes of administering the program.