



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document	No. 1725

H.P. 1152

House of Representatives, April 17, 2025

An Act Regarding the Membership of and Requirements for County Jail Boards of Visitors

Reference to the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety suggested and ordered printed.

R(+ B. Hunt

ROBERT B. HUNT Clerk

Presented by Representative NUTTING of Oakland. Cosponsored by Senator CYRWAY of Kennebec and Representatives: ARATA of New Gloucester, DUCHARME of Madison.

1	Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:
2 3	Sec. 1. 30-A MRSA §1651, sub-§2, as amended by PL 2023, c. 383, §1, is further amended to read:
4 5	2. Appointment. The sheriff for each county shall appoint a board of 7 <u>5 or more</u> visitors for each jail or other county correctional facility under the sheriff's supervision.
6	A. Members of the boards of visitors serve for terms of 3 years.
7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	B. Members of the boards of visitors are eligible for reappointment at the expiration of their terms. The boards of visitors must be representative of a broad range of professionals, family members and citizens interested in the well-being of prisoners, including representatives of advocacy groups for human and civil rights, medical and psychiatric professionals, persons who have served in corrections settings and other interested citizens. One member of each board of visitors must be a person with knowledge of issues related to the incarceration of women. One member of each board of visitors must be a woman who has been incarcerated in the State and who has prior child welfare experience with the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services. One member of each board of visitors must have experience in the field of mental or behavioral health.
18 19	C. A member of the Legislature or an employee of a sheriff's department may not serve on a board of visitors.
20 21	D. The sheriffs of 2 or more counties, at their discretion, may appoint a joint board of visitors of 75 or more members.
22 23	Sec. 2. 30-A MRSA §1651, sub-§4, ¶C, as enacted by PL 2023, c. 383, §1, is amended to read:
24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34	C. Each board of visitors shall review the management of the jail or other county correctional facility to which it is assigned to determine whether that management is consistent with the philosophy, mission and policy goals of the sheriff's office and facility. On or before February 15th of each calendar year, each board of visitors shall prepare an annual report including its recommendations and shall provide copies of its report to the jail administrator, the county correctional facility administrator, the county sheriff and the county commissioners and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over criminal justice and public safety matters. The sheriff shall provide copies with the sheriff's response to the reports to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over criminal justice and public safety matters.
35 36	Sec. 3. 30-A MRSA §1651, sub-§4, ¶D, as enacted by PL 2023, c. 383, §1, is repealed.
37	SUMMARY
38 39 40 41	This bill changes the number of members on boards of visitors of jails from 7 to 5 or more. It removes requirements that board members meet specific criteria. It requires a board of visitors to provide a copy of its annual report to the county sheriff. It removes the requirement that a board of visitors provide a copy of its annual report to the joint standing

requirement that a board of visitors provide a copy of its annual report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over criminal justice and public safety

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- matters and it removes the requirement that the sheriff provide copies with the sheriff's 1
- response to the reports to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction 2
- over criminal justice and public safety matters. It also removes the requirement that a board of visitors appear before the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction 3
- 4
- over criminal justice and public safety matters upon request. 5