

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 117th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1995

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Legislative Document

No. 398

H.P. 294

House of Representatives, February 6, 1995

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### An Act to Ensure Courteous Treatment of the Public by State Employees.

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Reference to the Committee on State and Local Government suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph W. Mayo".

JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative LANE of Enfield.

Cosponsored by Representatives: BIRNEY of Paris, CAMERON of Rumford, CHICK of Lebanon, FARNUM of South Berwick, GIERINGER of Portland, GUERRETTE of Pittston, HEINO of Boothbay, JOY of Crystal, KEANE of Old Town, LOOK of Jonesboro, LOVETT of Scarborough, LUMBRA of Bangor, MARSHALL of Eliot, MURPHY of Berwick, PENDLETON of Scarborough, PINKHAM of Lamoine, RICE of South Bristol, ROBICHAUD of Caribou, SAVAGE of Union, SPEAR of Nobleboro, UNDERWOOD of Oxford, WATERHOUSE of Bridgton, YACKOBITZ of Hermon, Senators: AMERO of Cumberland, CARPENTER of York.

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

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4       **Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §49, sub-§5, ¶¶H and I**, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 476, §1, are amended to read:

6           H. Identify processes of State Government that are common  
8           to departments and need priority attention, and provide  
          direction for achieving improvement in these processes; and

10          I. Undertake other responsibilities determined appropriate  
12          by the council to implement total quality management in  
          State Government; and

14       **Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §49, sub-§5, ¶J** is enacted to read:

16           J. Provide direction for achieving improvement in total  
18           customer satisfaction by encouraging courteous treatment of  
          the public by state employees.

20       **Sec. 3. 5 MRSA §7034, sub-§4-A** is enacted to read:

22           4-A. Provide customer relations training. Provide training  
24           programs on positive customer relations and maintaining courteous  
26           demeanor in stressful situations to employees whose job  
          responsibilities include dealing with the public;

28       **Sec. 4. 5 MRSA §7036, sub-§8**, as enacted by PL 1985, c. 785, Pt. B, §38, is amended to read:

30           **8. Establish and implement a job performance evaluation**  
32           **process.** Establish and implement, in accordance with policies and  
34           procedures approved by the Policy Review Board, an employee job  
36           performance evaluation process to be used by all agencies with  
38           employees in the classified service. If the employee deals with  
          the public, the evaluation must include a review of whether the  
          employee treats the public courteously. The job performance  
          evaluation procedure shall must be consistent in its use and  
          application among all classified service employees;

40       **Sec. 5. 5 MRSA c. 557** is enacted to read:

42                                   CHAPTER 557

44                                   OFFICE OF CITIZEN RELATIONS

46       §21301. Office of Citizen Relations established; purpose

48           The Office of Citizen Relations is established within the  
50           Executive Department. The office is directly responsible to the  
          Governor and, through the Governor, provides an avenue for

2 citizens to register complaints about discourteous treatment by  
3 state employees.

4 **§21302. Citizen hotline**

6 The Office of Citizen Relations shall operate a  
7 well-publicized toll-free telephone number that citizens may call  
8 to report instances of discourteous treatment by state  
9 employees. The name and address of the caller, the nature of the  
10 complaint and the state agency involved must be forwarded to the  
11 responsible person at that agency for investigation and  
12 resolution.

14 **§21303. Investigation of complaint**

16 Each department and agency in State Government shall  
17 identify one unclassified employee to be responsible for handling  
18 all complaints received by the Office of Citizen Relations. Each  
19 complaint received must be investigated through available means  
20 such as interviews with the complaining citizen and any state  
21 employees involved. A written record of the results of the  
22 investigation must be kept for each complaint received.

24 **§21304. Remedial action**

26 When an investigation indicates that the citizen was treated  
27 discourteously by a state employee, the person who conducted the  
28 investigation shall review the results with the employee and the  
29 employee's supervisor. A copy of the investigation report and a  
30 record of any remedial steps taken must be placed in the  
31 employee's personnel file.

34 **§21305. Report**

36 By January 15th of each year, the Office of Citizen  
37 Relations shall report to the joint standing committee of the  
38 Legislature having jurisdiction over state government matters the  
39 number of complaints received for the preceding year and the  
40 agencies involved.

42  
44 **STATEMENT OF FACT**

46 This bill makes discourteous treatment of citizens by state  
47 employees a subject for attention in the Total Quality Management  
48 process and in employee training and development programs. The  
49 bill also requires that courteous treatment of the public be  
50 evaluated in employee performance appraisals. The bill  
establishes the Office of Citizen Relations with a toll-free

2 number that citizens may call to register complaints. The Office of Citizen Relations forwards the information received to the appropriate department for investigation and resolution.