

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 126th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2013

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Legislative Document

No. 78

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H.P. 61

House of Representatives, January 22, 2013

### An Act To Expand Transitional Assistance for Families

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Reference to the Committee on Health and Human Services suggested and ordered printed.

*Millicent M. MacFarland*  
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND  
Clerk

Presented by Representative BEAUDOIN of Biddeford.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §3762, sub-§8**, as amended by PL 2011, c. 655, Pt. S, §§1 and  
3 2, is further amended to read:

4 **8. Transitional support services.** The department shall administer a program of  
5 transitional support services in accordance with PRWORA, DRA and this subsection.

6 A. The department shall administer a program of transitional Medicaid to families  
7 receiving benefits under Section 1931 of the federal Social Security Act in  
8 accordance with this paragraph.

9 (1) The department shall provide transitional Medicaid to families whose  
10 average gross monthly earnings, less costs to the family for child care necessary  
11 for employment, do not exceed ~~185%~~ 200% of the federal poverty guidelines in  
12 accordance with PRWORA and this subsection. In order to receive transitional  
13 Medicaid as the result of increased earnings or number of hours worked, a family  
14 must have received Medicaid assistance for at least 3 of the last 6 months, except  
15 as provided in subparagraph (2).

16 (2) The department shall provide transitional Medicaid for families whose  
17 eligibility for Medicaid assistance terminated due to employment obtained  
18 through work search activities pursuant to this chapter, in which case the family  
19 must have received Medicaid assistance for at least one of the last 3 months.

20 (3) To continue to receive transitional Medicaid assistance following the first ~~6~~ 9  
21 months of coverage, a family entering the transitional Medicaid program with  
22 income above 133% of the federal poverty guidelines must pay premiums in  
23 accordance with rules adopted by the department.

24 (5) The department shall provide transitional Medicaid for ~~4~~ 6 months to  
25 families whose eligibility for Medicaid assistance terminated due to an increase  
26 in the amount of child support received by the family.

27 (6) The department shall require reporting of income or circumstances for the  
28 purpose of determining eligibility and premium payments, copayments or other  
29 methods of cost sharing for benefits under this paragraph in accordance with  
30 rules adopted by the department.

31 (7) The scope of services provided under this paragraph must be the same as the  
32 scope of services provided when a family received Medicaid assistance.

33 B. The department shall provide limited transitional transportation benefits to meet  
34 employment-related costs to ASPIRE-TANF program participants who lose  
35 eligibility for TANF assistance due to employment. Benefits may be provided for up  
36 to ~~12~~ 18 months following loss of TANF eligibility. The department may adopt rules  
37 that impose a weekly limit on available transitional transportation benefits and that  
38 require a contribution from each participant toward the cost of transportation.

39 C. The department shall make available transitional child care services to families  
40 who lose eligibility for TANF as a result of increased earnings or an increase in the  
41 number of hours worked. The department shall make available transitional child care

1 services to families who lose eligibility for TANF as a result of increased earnings or  
2 an increase in the number of hours worked and whose gross income is equal to or less  
3 than ~~250%~~ 300% of the federal poverty guidelines. The department may also make  
4 transitional child care services available to families in which one or both adults are  
5 working and who, although they remain financially eligible for TANF benefits,  
6 request that their benefits be terminated. The family shall pay a premium of 2% to  
7 10% of gross income, based on the family's gross income compared to the federal  
8 poverty level in accordance with rules adopted by the department. Parents must have  
9 a choice of child care within the rate established by the department.

10 E. Beginning October 1, 2011, the department shall establish maximum rates for  
11 child care that are at least equal to the 75th percentile of local market rates for various  
12 categories of child care and higher rates for children with special needs.

13 F. The department may provide limited transitional food benefits to meet the needs  
14 of food supplement benefit recipients living with one or more dependent children  
15 under 18 years of age who are working at least 30 hours per week or who are working  
16 at least 20 hours per week if one or more dependent child is under 6 years of age.  
17 The benefit may not exceed ~~\$50~~ \$75 per month per family.

## 18 **SUMMARY**

19 This bill expands transitional benefits for families that lose eligibility for assistance  
20 under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program and the MaineCare  
21 program because of increased income and for certain working families that receive  
22 supplemental nutrition assistance as follows.

23 1. For families that were eligible for MaineCare because their income was below  
24 150% of the federal poverty level, it expands the upper limit of financial eligibility for  
25 transitional Medicaid from 185% to 200% of the federal poverty guidelines, extends the  
26 time period during which payment of premiums for transitional Medicaid is not required  
27 from 6 to 9 months and, for families whose ineligibility is due to increased child support,  
28 extends the period of eligibility for transitional Medicaid from 4 to 6 months.

29 2. For families that lose eligibility for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families due  
30 to employment, it expands transitional transportation benefits from 12 to 18 months.

31 3. For families that lose eligibility for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families due  
32 to increased earnings or increased hours of work, it expands financial eligibility for  
33 transitional child care services from 250% to 300% of the federal poverty guidelines.

34 4. For certain working families that receive supplemental nutrition assistance, it  
35 expands transitional food assistance from \$50 per month to \$75 per month.