

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2021

Legislative Document

No. 934

H.P. 690

House of Representatives, March 8, 2021

**An Act To Create a Family and Juvenile Mediation Program within
the Department of Health and Human Services**

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

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

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative LIBBY of Auburn.

Cosponsored by Representatives: EVANGELOS of Friendship, WARREN of Hallowell.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 22 MRSA, Sub-T. 3, Pt. 3, c. 1049** is enacted to read:

3 **CHAPTER 1049**

4 **FAMILY MEDIATION RESOURCE PROGRAM**

5 **§3681. Definitions**

6 As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms
7 have the following meanings.

8 **1. Family.** "Family" means a parent and a minor child.

9 **2. Parent.** "Parent" means a parent, custodian or person responsible for the child as
10 those terms are defined in section 4002.

11 **3. Program.** "Program" means the family mediation resource program established by
12 the department in accordance with this subchapter.

13 **§3682. Family mediation resource program established**

14 The department shall establish and implement a family mediation resource program to
15 support communication and conflict resolution between parents and children as an
16 alternative to mental health services or the court system. The program must meet the
17 following requirements.

18 **1. Eligibility.** A family self-referred or referred by a school counselor, school official,
19 law enforcement officer, prosecutor or juvenile court judge may be eligible for the program
20 or may be eligible according to other criteria established by the department in rule.

21 **2. Collaboration.** The program must connect a family eligible for the program under
22 subsection 1 to applicable resources, including but not limited to community-based
23 providers, who will work collaboratively with parents and children to solve disputes and
24 support the needs of the family.

25 **3. Individualized services.** The program must provide individualized services or
26 referrals to services based on the needs of the family eligible for the program under
27 subsection 1.

28 **4. Rules.** The department may adopt rules to develop and implement this program.
29 Rules adopted pursuant to this subchapter are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5,
30 chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

31 **Sec. 2. Rulemaking.** The Department of Health and Human Services shall adopt
32 rules to develop and implement the program established in the Maine Revised Statutes,
33 Title 22, section 3682 no later than October 1, 2021. Rules adopted pursuant to this section
34 are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

SUMMARY

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This bill establishes a family mediation resource program within the Department of Health and Human Services to support communication and conflict resolution between parents and children as an alternative to mental health services or the court system.