

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE  
127<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATURE  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION



Summaries of bills, adopted amendments and laws enacted or finally passed

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

May 2016

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# STATE OF MAINE

127<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATURE

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## LEGISLATIVE DIGEST OF BILL SUMMARIES AND ENACTED LAWS

This *Legislative Digest of Bill Summaries and Enacted Laws* contains summaries of all LDs and adopted amendments and all laws enacted or finally passed during the Second Regular Session of the 127<sup>th</sup> Maine Legislature.

The *Digest* is arranged alphabetically by committee and within each committee by Legislative Document (LD) number. The committee report(s), prime sponsor and lead co-sponsor(s), if designated, are listed below each LD title. All adopted amendments are summarized and listed by paper number. A subject index is included with each committee. An appendix provides a summary of relevant session statistics.

Final action on each LD is noted to the right of the LD title. The following describes the various final actions.

*CARRIED OVER*..... carried over to a subsequent session of the Legislature  
*CON RES XXX*..... chapter # of constitutional resolution passed by both houses  
*CONF CMTE UNABLE TO AGREE*..... Committee of Conference unable to agree; legislation died  
*DIED BETWEEN HOUSES*..... House & Senate disagreed; legislation died  
*DIED IN CONCURRENCE*..... defeated in each house, but on different motions; legislation died  
*DIED ON ADJOURNMENT*..... action incomplete when session ended; legislation died  
*EMERGENCY*..... enacted law takes effect sooner than 90 days after session adjournment  
*FAILED, EMERGENCY ENACTMENT or PASSAGE*..... emergency failed to receive required 2/3 vote  
*FAILED, ENACTMENT or FINAL PASSAGE*..... failed to receive final majority vote  
*FAILED, MANDATE ENACTMENT*..... legislation proposing local mandate failed required 2/3 vote  
*HELD BY GOVERNOR*..... Governor has not signed; final disposition to be determined at subsequent session  
*LEAVE TO WITHDRAW*..... sponsor's request to withdraw legislation granted  
*NOT PROPERLY BEFORE THE BODY*..... ruled out of order by the presiding officer; legislation died  
*INDEF PP*..... indefinitely postponed; legislation died  
*ONTP, ACCEPTED, MAJORITY, MINORITY or REPORT X*... ought-not-to-pass report accepted; legislation died  
*P&S XXX*..... chapter # of enacted private & special law  
*PUBLIC XXX*..... chapter # of enacted public law  
*RESOLVE XXX*..... chapter # of finally passed resolve  
*VETO SUSTAINED*..... Legislature failed to override Governor's veto

The effective date for non-emergency legislation enacted in the First Regular Session of the 127<sup>th</sup> Legislature is July 29, 2016. The effective date for legislation enacted as an emergency measure may be found in the enacted law summary for that legislation.

*Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services*

**LD 1267 An Act To Assist Working Families with Young Children**

**Died Between  
Houses**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
GATTINE A MILLETT R	OTP-AM ONTP	

This bill was carried over from the First Regular Session of the 127th Legislature.

This bill provides funding to the Department of Health and Human Services to leverage all available federal child care development funds.

**Committee Amendment "A" (H-635)**

This amendment, which is the majority report of the committee, replaces the bill. The amendment repeals unallocated language in Public Law 2011, chapter 380, Part UU that set the child care subsidy reimbursement rates at the 50th percentile of local market rates. This amendment increases the reimbursement rates to the 60th percentile of local market rates beginning on August 1, 2016, the implementation date for the new child care and development fund plan for Maine.

This amendment was not adopted.

**LD 1268 An Act To Reform Welfare by Establishing Bridges to Sustainable Employment**

**Died Between  
Houses**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
GATTINE A HASKELL A	OTP-AM ONTP	

This bill was carried over from the First Regular Session of the 127th Legislature.

This bill makes the following changes to the laws governing public assistance, which are intended to provide bridges to employment.

1. Child care assistance begins on the date of application if the applicant is eligible.
2. The Department of Health and Human Services is directed to establish rules to provide uninterrupted access to subsidized child care for eligible persons with irregular hours of employment.
3. It provides Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or TANF, benefits and alternative aid benefits to two-parent families based on the same eligibility requirements as single-parent families have.
4. It changes the income amounts for TANF recipients who have employment earnings that are disregarded in calculating TANF benefits.
5. It directs the Department of Health and Human Services to set up specialized navigator services related to employment in the Additional Support for People in Retraining and Employment - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program so that families receiving TANF benefits understand how earned income affects benefit levels and work supports.

## *Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services*

6. It requires the Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Labor, Maine employers, the Maine Community College System and the University of Maine System to establish structured pathways leading to education, training and employment opportunities for persons eligible for TANF.

7. It requires the Commissioner of Health and Human Services to convene a working group to review and make recommendations to establish a program to provide access to reliable transportation for families that qualify for assistance under TANF. The commissioner must report the findings of the working group to the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services by January 1, 2016. The Department of Health and Human Services must amend its TANF rules to incorporate the findings of the working group.

### **Committee Amendment "A" (H-650)**

This amendment, which is the majority report of the committee, replaces the bill. It makes the following changes to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, TANF, program.

1. It requires the Department of Health and Human Services to establish a service delivery model with different tracks that are based on the levels of education, work experience, family physical and mental health and other conditions that affect a person's ability to work. The family profile developed during the comprehensive screening and assessment program in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, section 3788, subsection 3-A is used to determine which track a family should be on. Tracks are based on crisis resolution, employment, education and work incentive disregards.

2. It changes eligibility for the Parents as Scholars Program so that families that do not qualify for TANF but earn no more than 150% of the federal poverty level qualify for the program.

3. It allows educational institutions and programs in the State to refer eligible applicants to the Parents as Scholars Program.

4. It establishes the Transitional Jobs Program in the Department of Health and Human Services for families unable to find employment through conventional means. Employers receive subsidies and must meet certain requirements to participate in the program. Performance data on the program must be collected by the department.

5. It develops a voucher program through the Maine State Housing Authority for families with shelter expenses that exceed 50% of their monthly income.

6. It requires the Department of Health and Human Services to collect data related to performance measures of the TANF program, including reducing child poverty and food insecurity and improving educational attainment, employment and income levels. It also requires the department to set benchmarks to measure improvement and success of the TANF program.

7. It establishes the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee to monitor the Department of Health and Human Services' progress with respect to meeting benchmarks for success of the TANF program.

8. It requires any administrative, technological or other costs associated with the changes to the TANF program outlined in the amendment to be funded by using the federal block grant funding allocated to the Department of Health and Human Services within the State Family Assistance Grant of the TANF program.

This amendment was not adopted.