

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
129TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION



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

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

August 2019

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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 First Regular Session of the 129th 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 FINAL 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 129th Legislature is Thursday, September 19, 2019. 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

intended outcomes of the projects in 2024.

This bill was carried over to any special or regular session, or both, of the 129th Legislature by joint order, H.P. 1322.

LD 1772 **An Act To Secure Transitions to Economic Prosperity for Maine Families and Children**

PUBLIC 484

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
STEWART T DOW D	OTP-AM	H-606

This bill:

1. Increases the income amounts that are disregarded when calculating benefits from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, or TANF program, for recipients who have earnings from employment. It also replaces for a limited period food assistance lost as a result of increased earnings from employment and the increased income amounts that are disregarded;
2. Increases the transitional food benefits available under the TANF program from \$50 per month per family to \$100 per month per family;
3. Establishes a whole family economic security initiative as part of the TANF program to increase the economic security of the entire family; and
4. Requires the Department of Health and Human Services to count the participation of a participant in the ASPIRE-TANF program in basic skills education, which includes programs to assist individuals in obtaining a high school equivalency diploma, toward the first 20 hours of the participant's weekly work participation requirements.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-606)

This amendment makes the following changes to the bill.

1. It clarifies that employment earnings in the months when earnings are subject to disregards do not affect special housing allowances.
2. It reduces the number of months that the Department of Health and Human Services disregards the earnings of a recipient of temporary assistance for needy families, or TANF, benefits and removes the requirement that the earnings be continuous for more than two months to be counted.
3. It stipulates that a month in which earnings are insufficient to change a benefit amount is not counted as a month in which earnings are disregarded.
4. It changes the requirement for food supplement assistance for a TANF recipient to be the same amount as prior to employment to a minimum of \$50 in food supplement assistance.
5. It requires the Department of Health and Human Services to approve an extension from the 60-month limit for TANF recipients who have employment earnings that are subject to disregards rather than not counting those months in the 60-month limit.
6. It changes the amount of TANF block grant funds that can be used for initiatives in the bill from \$3,000,000 to \$2,000,000.

Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

7. It corrects the language for basic skills education to refer to a high school diploma or equivalent or comparable credential. It also states that basic skills education counting as work participation requirements may be suspended if the State no longer meets the work participation rates required by the Federal Government. The amendment also adds an appropriations and allocations section.

Enacted Law Summary

Public Law 2019, chapter 484 makes the following changes to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, or TANF program.

- 1. It increases the income amounts that are disregarded when calculating benefits from the TANF program for recipients who have earnings from employment and determines that those earnings subject to disregard do not affect special housing allowances. It also allows for additional food assistance for recipients receiving income disregards.
- 2. It increases the transitional food benefits available under the TANF program from \$50 per month per family to \$100 per month per family.
- 3. It requires the Department of Health and Human Services to approve an extension from the 60-month limit for TANF recipients who have employment earnings.
- 4. It requires the Department of Health and Human Services to count the participation of a participant in the ASPIRE-TANF program in basic skills education, which includes programs to assist individuals in obtaining a high school diploma or equivalent or comparable credential, toward the first 20 hours of the participant's weekly work participation requirements. This requirement may be suspended if the State no longer meets the work participation rates required by the federal government.
- 5. It allows for \$2,000,000 of TANF block grant funds to be used for initiatives in this Act.

LD 1774 An Act To Reduce Child Poverty by Leveraging Investments so Families Can Thrive

PUBLIC 485

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
GIDEON S JACKSON T	OTP-AM	H-605

This bill makes the following changes, which are intended to reduce child poverty, increase food security and create stronger bridges to employment for families with children.

- 1. It requires the Department of Health and Human Services to collect data to measure access to and the performance of certain programs administered by the Department of Health and Human Services and establish improvement targets on an annual basis to monitor year-to-year improvements related to program accessibility and participant well-being.
- 2. It reallocates the provisions relating to transitional Medicaid from the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, chapter 1053-B, which pertains to temporary assistance for needy families, to Title 22, chapter 855, which pertains to aid to needy persons, to reflect that the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Public Law 104-193, 110 Stat. 2105 no longer just applies to families losing eligibility for Medicaid as a result of losing eligibility for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program but instead applies to all parents who lose eligibility for Medicaid.
- 3. It removes the requirement that a family must have received Medicaid assistance for at least three of the last six months in order for that family to receive transitional Medicaid.