

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

STAFF:

ANNA BROOME, SENIOR LEGISLATIVE ANALYST
ERIN DOOLING, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST
OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS
13 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, ME 04333
(207) 287-1670
AND
LUKE LAZURE, SENIOR LEGISLATIVE ANALYST
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND PROGRAM REVIEW
5 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, ME 04333
(207) 287-1635
<http://legislature.maine.gov/legis/opla/>

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STATE OF MAINE

129TH 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 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

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.

Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

4. It requires that the Department of Health and Human Services provide transitional Medicaid for a 12-month extension period pursuant to the state option provided in 42 United States Code, Section 1396r-6, Subsection (a), Paragraph (5) when a person's eligibility was terminated because of an increase in earned income or hours of employment or a loss of a time-limited earnings disregard.
5. It eliminates the TANF gross income test for applicants to conform the eligibility methodology for both applicants and recipients.
6. It establishes a procedure by which the Department of Health and Human Services must consider referrals made in accordance with department rule from educational institutions and similar programs as applications for the Parents as Scholars Program under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, section 3790.
7. It provides funds from the TANF block grant to provide personalized professional guidance, support and navigation services for participants in the Parents as Scholars Program in order to promote program completion and student success and requires the Commissioner of Health and Human Services to convene a working group to make recommendations related to the most effective way to achieve this goal, along with other suggestions to improve the program.
8. It requires the Commissioner of Health and Human Services to convene a working group to review and make recommendations to improve the operations of systems and programs administered by the Department of Health and Human Services providing services to people in need.
9. It provides that additional costs to the State resulting from implementation of this legislation must be paid from funds provided to the Department of Health and Human Services under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant or from resources representing the State's maintenance of effort to qualify for federal funds.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-605)

This amendment makes the following changes to the bill.

1. It removes the requirement for the Department of Health and Human Services to establish annual improvement targets to ensure access to public assistance programs.
2. It clarifies that sources of information to compile data measures of child and family economic security are not limited to the data sources in the bill and specifies that data from other state agencies including the Department of Labor and the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of Revenue Services must be compiled.
3. It includes a data requirement that includes families earning below 50% of the federal poverty level at the time participation in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program was terminated and during the second and fourth quarters after participation was terminated.
4. It clarifies the language regarding the ratio of persons receiving food supplement assistance to those eligible to specify that the ratio applies to the number of persons overall, the number of persons 60 years of age and older, nonelderly persons with a disability and children under 18 years of age.
5. It specifies that data collected regarding waiting times for calls to Department of Health and Human Services call centers are to a person and not to an interactive voice response system.
6. It changes the requirements of the Department of Health and Human Services to measure and report on the effect of departmental initiatives to improve child and family economic security rather than establishing improvement targets with reporting requirements.
7. It changes the amount of funding for navigators at educational institutions and programs from \$500,000 to

Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

\$250,000.

The amendment also adds an appropriations and allocations section.

Enacted Law Summary

Public Law 2019, chapter 485 makes the following changes to public assistance programs intended to reduce child poverty, increase food security and 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 report annually on those measures including an assessment of how these measures may be improved through department programming.
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.
4. It requires that the Department of Health and Human Services provide transitional Medicaid for a 12-month extension period pursuant to the state option provided in 42 United States Code, Section 1396r-6, Subsection (a), Paragraph (5) when a person's eligibility was terminated because of an increase in earned income or hours of employment or a loss of a time-limited earnings disregard.
5. It eliminates the TANF gross income test for applicants to conform the eligibility methodology for both applicants and recipients.
6. It establishes a procedure by which the Department of Health and Human Services must consider referrals made in accordance with department rule from educational institutions and similar programs as applications for the Parents as Scholars Program under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, section 3790.
7. It provides \$250,000 annually from the TANF block grant to provide personalized professional guidance, support and navigation services for participants in the Parents as Scholars Program in order to promote program completion and student success and requires the Commissioner of Health and Human Services to convene a working group to make recommendations related to the most effective way to achieve this goal, along with other suggestions to improve the program.
8. It requires the Commissioner of Health and Human Services to convene a working group to review and make recommendations to improve the operations of systems and programs administered by the Department of Health and Human Services providing services to people in need.
9. It provides that additional costs to the State resulting from implementation of the law must be paid from funds provided to the Department of Health and Human Services under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant or from resources representing the State's maintenance of effort to qualify for federal funds.