

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE  
132<sup>ND</sup> LEGISLATURE  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION



Disposition of bills and summaries of all laws enacted or finally passed

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

May 2026

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**STAFF:**

SAMUEL SENFT, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST  
ANNA BROOME, PRINCIPAL ANALYST  
OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS  
13 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, ME 04333  
(207) 287-1670  
<http://legislature.maine.gov/opla>

\*Committee member for a portion of the session

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information and personnel records. The office may enter the premises of the department as long as the entry does not create a safety and security concern. Information obtained, held or created by the office is confidential and may be disclosed only under certain circumstances.

The law also creates the Advisory Committee to the Child Advocate, an 11-member committee with members who serve three-year terms, except for legislative members whose terms are coterminous with their term in office. The duties of the advisory committee include: recommending at least three qualified candidates for the Child Advocate position to the Governor as well as determining whether to recommend reappointment of the Child Advocate; evaluating the Child Advocate's performance; recommending cost-of-living or salary increases for the Child Advocate and requesting the Governor to include any salary increase in the next budget; advising on the strategic direction of the office; working collaboratively with the Child Advocate to provide fiscal oversight and compliance with federal and state laws; and providing consultation to the office in its efforts to promote an effective, comprehensive and coordinated system of services and programs. Appointments to the advisory committee must be completed by March 15, 2027.

The Child Advocate is required to report annually to the Governor, the joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services matters and juvenile justice matters and the Advisory Committee to the Child Advocate. The joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services matters has oversight over the operations of the office and may make recommendations to the Governor and report out legislation related to the annual report.

The law transfers the funding and the positions from the current ombudsman contract to the Office of the Child Advocate as of October 1, 2026. The appointment of the first Child Advocate must be made by July 15, 2027. The new Child Advocate may hire staff as necessary, which may include staff that were transferred. Beginning April 1, 2027, funding is available for two additional staff, one of which is professional child advocate staff and one of which is administrative staff. The law also provides an additional \$100,000 in one-time funding for staffing, office expenses, training and contractual services. The Governor is required to appoint an interim Child Advocate by October 1, 2026, giving preference to the current ombudsman. The interim Child Advocate is required to prepare an in-depth report of resource needs, including staffing, equipment, travel and consultancies, to implement the new office. This report must be submitted by February 15, 2027 to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services matters. The joint standing committee may report out legislation related to that report to make any necessary adjustments to the office.

### **LD 1989 An Act to Increase Access to the Progressive Treatment Program Fund**

Public Law 2025, chapter 576 changes eligibility for reimbursement from the Progressive Treatment Program Fund by replacing the term "private entities" with a list of individuals eligible to receive reimbursements, including the superintendent or chief administrative officer of a private psychiatric hospital, the director of an ACT team, a private medical practitioner, a law enforcement officer or the legal guardian of the patient who is the subject of an application to a progressive treatment program. It also allows reimbursement for legal costs incurred to extend an existing

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progressive treatment program. It adds language stating that a private attorney representing an individual eligible to receive funds may also be reimbursed. It changes the cap for reimbursement from the fund from \$800 to an annual cap of \$3,500. It adds language stating that reimbursement is subject to available funds.

Public Law 2025, chapter 576 was enacted as an emergency measure effective March 19, 2026.

**LD 2001 An Act to Clarify the Laws Governing Facilities for Children and Adults Under the Health and Human Services Laws**

Public Law 2025, chapter 594 updates the laws governing the licensing and investigation of facilities for children and adults by clarifying the requirements regarding confidential abuse and neglect investigation records, requiring the Department of Health and Human Services, instead of the State Fire Marshal or other public safety inspectors, to inspect specialized children's homes and removing requirements for interagency licensing of children's homes between the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education and for licensing of nursery schools. The law also corrects outdated references to "residential child care facilities" with the current term, "children's residential care facilities."

**LD 2021 An Act to Add an Online Option for Reporting of Suspected Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of Adults**

Public Law 2025, chapter 541 adds the option of reporting the abuse, neglect or exploitation of adults to the Department of Health and Human Services using an online portal. This change aligns state law with federal regulations promulgated in June 2024 that require states to allow at least two methods of reporting, one of which must be online.

**LD 2051 An Act to Ensure Access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Maine**

Public Law 2025, chapter 647 repeals language describing eligibility for the state Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. It adds language clarifying current eligibility and establishing eligibility for the program for individuals who became ineligible for the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program under Public Law 119-21 (2025), commonly known as the One Big Beautiful Bill Act.

**LD 2083 An Act to Expand Access to Certified Residential Medication Aide Training**

Public Law 2025, chapter 574 directs the Department of Health and Human Services to issue a certificate to an individual who has successfully completed a department-approved certified residential medication aide course that meets the medication administration training requirements for unlicensed assistive personnel in accordance with rules established by the department for