



131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

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Legislative Document

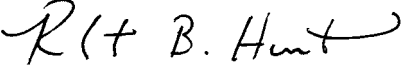
No. 1013

H.P. 649

House of Representatives, March 7, 2023

**An Act to Provide Training, Professional Development and Wellness
Supports for Child Protective Services Workers**

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


ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative MADIGAN of Waterville.
Cosponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot and
Representatives: ABDI of Lewiston, CLOUTIER of Lewiston, DHALAC of South Portland,
GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, RANA of Bangor, SHAGOURY of Hallowell, WHITE of
Waterville.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §4004, sub-§4** is enacted to read:

3 **4. Caseworker training and case loads; alternative schedules.** The department shall
4 implement a training protocol for all caseworkers that includes smaller case loads and
5 additional supervision during the first year of employment by the department and ongoing
6 professional development opportunities for all caseworkers and supervisors of
7 caseworkers. The department shall offer caseworkers options for alternative work
8 schedules and telecommuting.

9 **Sec. 2. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and**
10 **Family Services training program for child protective services caseworkers.**

11 The Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services shall
12 develop and implement a training program for ongoing training and coaching of
13 caseworkers that includes mentoring, professional development and wellness supports.
14 The program must include the following components:

15 1. Smaller case loads for the first year of employment by the department combined
16 with additional supervisory hours;

17 2. Increased professional development for all caseworkers, administrators and other
18 appropriate staff;

19 3. Training that includes practices on how racism and implicit bias affect the lives of
20 children and methods of addressing structural racism;

21 4. Increased training aimed at preparing caseworkers for child protective
22 investigations, including job shadowing, mentoring, observations of the process prior to
23 the first investigation, legal and court preparation, how to conduct interviews and other
24 practical aspects of investigations;

25 5. Training from the Office of the Attorney General, when appropriate, on legal issues
26 faced by caseworkers; and

27 6. Offering flexible work schedules, including telecommuting, alternative schedules
28 and job-sharing.

29 The Department of Health and Human Services shall include a report on its progress
30 in developing and implementing the training program pursuant to this section to the joint
31 standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services
32 matters in the annual case load report due on January 31, 2025 pursuant to Resolve 2019,
33 chapter 34.

34 **SUMMARY**

35 This bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and
36 Family Services to implement a training protocol for child protective services caseworkers
37 that includes smaller case loads and additional supervision for caseworkers in their first
38 year of employment. It requires additional ongoing training for all caseworkers and
39 supervisors that includes mentoring, professional development and wellness supports. It
40 requires the Department of Health and Human Services to include in its case load report

1 due on January 31, 2025, pursuant to Resolve 2019, chapter 34, an update on development
2 and implementation of the training program.