



# 131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2023

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Legislative Document

No. 1925

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H.P. 1230

House of Representatives, May 11, 2023

**An Act to Clarify and Improve the Laws Relating to the  
Background Check Center and the Maine Certified Nursing  
Assistant and Direct Care Worker Registry**

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Submitted by the Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to Joint Rule 204.  
Reference to the Committee on Health and Human Services suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative SHAGOURY of Hallowell.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§1-B, ¶E**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
3 amended to read:

4 E. "Disqualifying offense" means a substantiation for abuse, neglect or ~~exploitation~~  
5 misappropriation of property, or a criminal conviction identified in rules adopted by  
6 the department that prohibits employment as a certified nursing assistant or a direct  
7 care worker in accordance with subsection 2-C.

8 **Sec. 2. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§1-B, ¶F**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
9 amended to read:

10 F. "Employer" means a person or licensed, certified or registered provider or other  
11 entity that employs ~~direct access workers, including~~ certified nursing assistants and  
12 direct care workers; to provide direct contact services in home, community or other  
13 health care or direct access settings. An individual who employs an unlicensed person  
14 to provide care for that individual is not an employer for the purposes of this section,  
15 except when required by rules adopted by the department.

16 **Sec. 3. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§1-B, ¶J**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
17 amended to read:

18 J. "Nondisqualifying criminal conviction" means a criminal conviction identified in  
19 rules adopted by the department pursuant to subsection 18 that is included as a notation  
20 on the registry but does not prohibit employment as a certified nursing assistant ~~or a~~  
21 ~~direct care worker~~.

22 **Sec. 4. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§1-B, ¶K**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
23 repealed.

24 **Sec. 5. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§1-B, ¶L**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
25 amended to read:

26 L. "Registry" means the Maine Registry of Certified Nursing Assistants and Direct  
27 Care Workers established in subsection 1, which identifies individuals qualified and  
28 eligible for employment as a certified nursing assistant ~~or a registered direct care~~  
29 ~~worker~~ and individuals who are not eligible for employment as a certified nursing  
30 assistant or direct care worker due to notations for disqualifying offenses.

31 **Sec. 6. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§2-A**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
32 amended to read:

33 **2-A. Registry listing.** All active certified nursing assistants employed in the State  
34 must be listed on the registry. The registry must contain a listing of certified nursing  
35 assistants and direct care workers that are ineligible for employment based on notations for  
36 disqualifying offenses. ~~Direct care workers registered for training, education or compliance~~  
37 ~~purposes may apply for registration and listing on the registry.~~ Direct care workers who  
38 may be listed on the registry include but are not limited to the following:

- 39 A. Behavior specialists;
- 40 B. Behavioral health professionals;
- 41 C. Certified residential care aides;

- 1 D. Certified residential medication aides;
- 2 E. Direct support professionals;
- 3 F. Mental health rehabilitation technicians;
- 4 G. Mental health support specialists;
- 5 H. Other qualified mental health professionals;
- 6 I. Personal care attendants or personal support specialists;
- 7 J. Registered medical assistants;
- 8 K. Residential care specialists;
- 9 L. Community health workers; and
- 10 M. Other direct care workers described in rules adopted by the department pursuant to
- 11 subsection 18.

12 **Sec. 7. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§2-C**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
13 amended to read:

14 **2-C. Registry notations.** The registry must include for a certified nursing assistant  
15 ~~and direct care worker~~ listed on the registry a notation of:

- 16 A. Disqualifying criminal convictions;
- 17 B. Nondisqualifying criminal convictions, except that a notation is not required on the
- 18 registry for Class D and Class E criminal convictions over 10 years old that did not
- 19 involve as a victim of the act a patient, client or resident; and
- 20 C. Substantiated findings, including but not limited to the following information:
  - 21 (1) Documentation of an investigation of a certified nursing assistant ~~or a direct~~
  - 22 ~~care worker~~, including the nature of the allegation and evidence supporting a
  - 23 determination that substantiates the allegation of abuse, neglect or
  - 24 misappropriation of property of a client, patient or resident;
  - 25 (2) Documentation of substantiated findings of abuse, neglect or misappropriation
  - 26 of property of a client, patient or resident;
  - 27 (3) If the certified nursing assistant ~~or direct care worker~~ appealed the
  - 28 substantiated finding, the date of the hearing; and
  - 29 (4) The statement of the certified nursing assistant ~~or direct care worker~~ disputing
  - 30 the allegation of abuse, neglect or misappropriation of property of a client, patient
  - 31 or resident if the certified nursing assistant or direct care worker submitted such a
  - 32 statement; ~~and~~.
- 33 ~~D. Petitions filed by a certified nursing assistant or direct care worker for removal of~~
- 34 ~~an employment ban issued by the department that was based on a criminal conviction~~
- 35 ~~and the department's review and determination.~~

36 **Sec. 8. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§3-A**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
37 repealed and the following enacted in its place:

1           **3-A. Listing on the registry; direct care worker.** The department shall adopt routine  
2 technical rules regarding listing direct care workers on the registry, including but not  
3 limited to the following:

4           A. Direct care workers with disqualifying offenses must be listed on the registry; and

5           B. The notation for direct care workers listed on the registry for substantiated findings  
6 must include the following information:

7                   (1) Documentation of an investigation of a direct care worker, including the nature  
8 of the allegation and evidence supporting a determination that substantiates the  
9 allegation of abuse, neglect or misappropriation of property of a client, patient or  
10 resident;

11                   (2) Documentation of substantiated findings of abuse, neglect or misappropriation  
12 of property of a client, patient or resident;

13                   (3) If the direct care worker appealed the substantiated finding, the date of the  
14 hearing; and

15                   (4) The statement of the direct care worker disputing the allegation of abuse,  
16 neglect or misappropriation of property of a client, patient or resident if the direct  
17 care worker submitted such a statement.

18           **Sec. 9. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§3-B** is enacted to read:

19           **3-B. Petition for removal of a substantiated finding of neglect or**  
20 **misappropriation of property.** No sooner than 12 months after the date a substantiated  
21 finding of neglect or misappropriation of property is placed on the registry, a direct care  
22 worker may petition the department to remove the notation from the registry if the  
23 substantiated complaint is a one-time occurrence and there is no pattern of neglect or  
24 misappropriation of property.

25           **Sec. 10. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§4,** as amended by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is further  
26 amended to read:

27           **4. Department verification of credentials and training.** The department may verify  
28 the credentials and training of certified nursing assistants ~~and registered direct care workers~~  
29 listed on the registry.

30           **Sec. 11. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§4-A,** as amended by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
31 further amended to read:

32           **4-A. Provider verification fee.** The department may establish a provider verification  
33 fee not to exceed \$25 annually per provider for verification of a certified nursing assistant's  
34 ~~or registered direct care worker's~~ credentials and training. Providers may not pass the cost  
35 on to the individual certified nursing assistant ~~or registered direct care worker~~. Provider  
36 verification fees collected by the department must be placed in a special revenue account  
37 to be used by the department to operate the registry, including but not limited to the cost of  
38 criminal history record checks. The department may adopt rules necessary to implement  
39 this subsection. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as  
40 defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

41           **Sec. 12. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§5-A,** as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
42 amended to read:

1           **5-A. Employment eligibility verification; direct care access worker.** An employer,  
2 including a health care institution, facility or other organization that employs an individual  
3 as a direct care access worker, shall verify that the direct care access worker, ~~if listed on~~  
4 ~~the registry,~~ has no disqualifying notations and has complied with the training or education  
5 requirements for registration, if applicable offenses.

6           **Sec. 13. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§6,** as repealed and replaced by PL 2015, c. 494,  
7 Pt. A, §16, is amended to read:

8           **6. Prohibited employment based on disqualifying offenses.** An individual with a  
9 disqualifying offense, including a substantiated complaint or a disqualifying criminal  
10 conviction, may not work as a certified nursing assistant or a direct care access worker, and  
11 an employer is subject to penalties for employing a disqualified or otherwise ineligible  
12 person in accordance with applicable federal or state laws.

13           **Sec. 14. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§6-A,** as amended by PL 2015, c. 494, Pt. A,  
14 §§17 and 18, is further amended to read:

15           **6-A. Background check.** Certified nursing assistants ~~and direct care workers~~ are  
16 subject to a background check ~~as defined by rules adopted by the department pursuant to~~  
17 ~~chapter 1691~~ and according to the following:

18           A. A training program for certified nursing assistants ~~or direct care workers~~ must  
19 secure or pay for a background check on each individual who applies for enrollment.  
20 The individual's current name and all previous names are subject to the background  
21 check. A copy of the background check is given to the individual who, upon successful  
22 completion of the training, submits it with an application to be listed on the registry as  
23 a certified nursing assistant ~~or a registered direct care worker~~.

24           (1) Prior to enrolling an individual, a training program for certified nursing  
25 assistants ~~or direct care workers~~ must notify individuals that a background check  
26 will be conducted and that certain disqualifying offenses, including criminal  
27 convictions, may prohibit an individual from working as a certified nursing  
28 assistant ~~or a direct care worker~~.

29           B. Pursuant to sections 1717, 1724, 2137, 2149-A, 7706, 8606 ~~and~~ 9005 ~~and~~ 9054  
30 and Title 34-B, section 1225, licensed, certified or registered providers shall secure and  
31 pay for a background check prior to hiring an individual who will work in direct contact  
32 with clients, patients or residents, including a certified nursing assistant ~~or a direct care~~  
33 ~~worker~~.

34           C. The department may secure a background check on certified nursing assistants ~~and~~  
35 ~~registered direct care workers~~ on the registry ~~every 2 years~~.

36           D. A person or other legal entity that is not otherwise licensed by the department and  
37 that employs or places a certified nursing assistant ~~or direct care worker~~ to provide  
38 services allowing direct access shall secure and pay for a background check in  
39 accordance with state law and rules adopted by the department.

40           **Sec. 15. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§6-B,** as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
41 repealed.

42           **Sec. 16. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§6-C, ¶A,** as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
43 amended to read:

1 A. A disqualifying criminal conviction ~~within the previous 10 years~~ prohibits  
2 employment as a certified nursing assistant or a direct ~~care~~ access worker.

3 (1) An individual with a disqualifying criminal conviction is subject to an  
4 employment ban of 5, 10 or 30 years. The department shall adopt rules that specify  
5 disqualifying criminal convictions that prohibit employment for 5 years,  
6 disqualifying criminal convictions that prohibit employment for 10 years and  
7 disqualifying criminal convictions that prohibit employment for 30 years.

8 **Sec. 17. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§6-C, ¶B**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
9 amended to read:

10 B. Nondisqualifying criminal convictions do not prohibit employment as a certified  
11 nursing assistant or a direct ~~care~~ access worker.

12 **Sec. 18. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§6-D**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
13 repealed.

14 **Sec. 19. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§8**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
15 repealed.

16 **Sec. 20. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§10**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
17 amended to read:

18 **10. Complaint investigation.** The department may investigate complaints and  
19 allegations against certified nursing assistants or ~~registered~~ direct ~~care~~ access workers of  
20 abuse, neglect, ~~exploitation~~ or misappropriation of property of a client, patient or resident.

21 **Sec. 21. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§11**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
22 amended to read:

23 **11. Issue a decision.** After an investigation under subsection 10, the department shall  
24 issue a written decision that the allegation of abuse, neglect, ~~exploitation~~ or  
25 misappropriation of property of a client, patient or resident is unsubstantiated or  
26 substantiated. Each allegation of abuse, neglect or misappropriation of property must be  
27 considered separately. A substantiated finding must be based on factors established by  
28 department rules. The written decision must include at least the following information:

- 29 A. Whether the allegation is unsubstantiated or substantiated;
- 30 B. A description of the factors supporting a substantiated finding;
- 31 C. If a notation of a substantiated finding is entered on the registry;
- 32 D. A description of the employment prohibition, if any; and
- 33 E. Notice of the right to appeal the department's decision pursuant to subsection 12.

34 **Sec. 22. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§13**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
35 amended to read:

36 **13. Substantiated finding; lifetime employment ban.** A certified nursing assistant  
37 or a ~~registered~~ direct care worker with a notation on the registry of a substantiated finding  
38 on the registry of abuse of a patient, client or resident is banned for life from employment  
39 as either a certified nursing assistant or a direct care worker.

1           **Sec. 23. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§14**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
2 repealed.

3           **Sec. 24. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§15**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
4 repealed.

5           **Sec. 25. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§16**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
6 repealed.

7           **Sec. 26. 22 MRSA §1812-G, sub-§17**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 196, §9, is  
8 repealed.

9           **Sec. 27. 22 MRSA §1812-J**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 299, §§11 to 17 and c. 494,  
10 Pt. D, §3, is further amended by amending the section headnote to read:

11 **§1812-J. ~~Unlicensed assistive persons~~ Direct care workers**

12           **Sec. 28. 22 MRSA §1812-J, sub-§1, ¶A-7**, as enacted by PL 2011, c. 257, §3, is  
13 amended to read:

14           A-7. "Nondisqualifying criminal conviction" means a criminal conviction identified  
15 in rules adopted by the department that is included as a notation on the registry but  
16 does not prohibit employment as ~~an unlicensed assistive person~~ a direct care worker.

17           **Sec. 29. 22 MRSA §1812-J, sub-§1, ¶B**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 299, §12, is  
18 further amended to read:

19           B. "Registry" means the Maine Registry of Certified Nursing Assistants and Direct  
20 Care Workers, which is a list of certified nursing assistants, with notations if applicable,  
21 and a list of direct care workers ~~registered for training, education or compliance~~  
22 ~~purposes, or unlicensed assistive persons~~ with notations and is established under  
23 section 1812-G.

24           **Sec. 30. 22 MRSA §1812-J, sub-§1, ¶D**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 299, §13, is  
25 further amended to read:

26           D. "~~Unlicensed assistive person~~ Direct care worker" means an unlicensed individual  
27 who by virtue of employment has direct access to and provides direct care or direct  
28 contact assistance with activities of daily living or other services to individuals in  
29 homes, assisted living programs, residential care facilities, hospitals and other health  
30 care and direct access services settings. "~~Unlicensed assistive person~~ Direct care  
31 worker" includes but is not limited to a direct support professional, residential care  
32 specialist, behavioral health professional, personal support specialist, mental health  
33 support specialist, mental health rehabilitation technician, behavior specialist, other  
34 qualified mental health professional, certified residential medication aide and  
35 registered medical assistant and other direct access workers or direct care workers as  
36 described in rules adopted by the department. "~~Unlicensed assistive person~~ Direct care  
37 worker" does not include a certified nursing assistant employed in the capacity of a  
38 certified nursing assistant.

39           **Sec. 31. 22 MRSA §1812-J, sub-§1, ¶F**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §14, is  
40 repealed.

41           **Sec. 32. 22 MRSA §1812-J, sub-§1, ¶G** is enacted to read:

1 G. "Registered direct care worker" means an individual listed on the registry.  
2 "Registered direct care worker" does not include a certified nursing assistant employed  
3 in the capacity of a certified nursing assistant or a direct care worker listed on the  
4 registry with notations for disqualifying offenses.

5 **Sec. 33. 22 MRSA §1812-J, sub-§2**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 299, §15, is further  
6 amended to read:

7 **2. Complaint investigation.** The department may investigate complaints and  
8 allegations of abuse, neglect, ~~exploitation~~ or misappropriation of property of a client,  
9 patient or resident in a home or health care setting against ~~unlicensed assistive persons~~  
10 direct care workers.

11 **Sec. 34. 22 MRSA §1812-J, sub-§3**, as amended by PL 2011, c. 257, §5, is further  
12 amended to read:

13 **3. Substantiated finding of complaint; registry listing.** When a complaint against  
14 ~~an unlicensed assistive person~~ a direct care worker is substantiated by the department and  
15 the ~~unlicensed assistive person~~ direct care worker is listed on the registry pursuant to  
16 subsection 4, the department's decision becomes final agency action as defined in Title 5,  
17 section 8002, subsection 4. The department shall notify the employer of the ~~unlicensed~~  
18 ~~assistive person~~ direct care worker that a substantiated finding of a complaint has been  
19 listed as a notation on the registry.

20 **Sec. 35. 22 MRSA §1812-J, sub-§3-A**, as enacted by PL 2011, c. 257, §6, is  
21 amended to read:

22 **3-A. Indicated finding of complaint; no registry listing.** An indicated finding by  
23 the department of a complaint against ~~an unlicensed assistive person~~ a direct care worker  
24 does not prohibit employment and is not listed as a notation on the registry. The  
25 department's complaint investigation decision becomes final agency action as defined in  
26 Title 5, section 8002, subsection 4.

27 **Sec. 36. 22 MRSA §1812-J, sub-§4**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 299, §16, is further  
28 amended to read:

29 **4. Registry listing.** The department shall list ~~an unlicensed assistive person employed~~  
30 ~~as a direct care worker~~ direct care workers with a ~~disqualifying offense~~ substantiated  
31 finding notation and ~~may register an unlicensed assistive person or direct care worker for~~  
32 ~~training, education and compliance purposes~~. Disqualifying notations must include but are  
33 not limited to the following information:

34 A. Documentation of the department's investigation, including the nature of the  
35 allegation and the evidence that led the department to substantiate the allegation of  
36 abuse, neglect, ~~exploitation~~ or misappropriation of property;

37 B. The date of the hearing, if the ~~unlicensed assistive person~~ direct care worker chose  
38 to appeal the department finding that the complaint was substantiated; and

39 C. The ~~unlicensed assistive person's~~ direct care worker's statement to the department  
40 disputing the allegation, if the ~~unlicensed assistive person~~ direct care worker chose to  
41 submit one; and.



1 ~~D. Notations indicating the listed unlicensed assistive person is not in compliance with~~  
2 ~~training or educational requirements.~~

3 **Sec. 37. 22 MRSA §1812-J, sub-§5**, as enacted by PL 2009, c. 215, §2, is amended  
4 to read:

5 **5. Right to hearing.** The department shall notify the ~~unlicensed assistive person~~ direct  
6 care worker of the right to request a hearing to contest the finding that the complaint under  
7 subsection 3 was substantiated.

8 **Sec. 38. 22 MRSA §1812-J, sub-§6**, as amended by PL 2011, c. 257, §7, is  
9 repealed.

10 **Sec. 39. 22 MRSA §1812-J, sub-§7**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 494, Pt. D, §3, is  
11 further amended to read:

12 **7. Prohibited employment based on disqualifying offenses.** An employer who  
13 employs an ~~unlicensed assistive person~~ a direct care worker to provide direct access  
14 services shall conduct a comprehensive background check in accordance with state law and  
15 rules adopted by the department and is subject to the employment restrictions set out in  
16 section 1812-G and chapter 1691 and other applicable federal and state laws. The employer  
17 is subject to penalties for employing a disqualified or otherwise ineligible person in  
18 accordance with applicable federal or state laws.

19 **Sec. 40. 22 MRSA §1812-J, sub-§7-A** is enacted to read:

20 **7-A. Background check.** This subsection governs background checks for direct care  
21 workers.

22 A. A training program for direct care workers may secure or pay for a background  
23 check pursuant to chapter 1691 on each individual who applies for enrollment in the  
24 program. The background check may check the individual's current name and all  
25 previous names. The background check result may be shared with the individual's  
26 prospective employer upon successful completion of the program.

27 (1) Prior to enrolling an individual, a training program for direct care workers must  
28 notify individuals that a background check may be conducted and that certain  
29 disqualifying offenses, including criminal convictions, may prohibit an individual  
30 from working as a direct care worker.

31 B. Pursuant to sections 1717, 1724, 2137, 2149-A, 7706, 8606, 9005 and 9054 and  
32 Title 34-B, section 1225, licensed, certified or registered providers shall secure and pay  
33 for a background check prior to hiring an individual who will work in direct contact  
34 with clients, patients or residents, including a direct care worker.

35 C. The department may review the results of a background check completed in  
36 accordance with chapter 1691 on a registered direct care worker.

37 D. A person that is not otherwise licensed by the department that employs or places a  
38 direct care worker to provide services allowing direct access shall secure and pay for a  
39 background check in accordance with state law and rules adopted by the department.

40 **Sec. 41. 22 MRSA §9053, sub-§2**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is amended  
41 to read:

1           **2. Assisted housing program.** "Assisted housing program" means a program or  
2 facility licensed pursuant to chapter 1663 or an independent housing with services program  
3 exempt from licensing pursuant to chapter 1663.

4           **Sec. 42. 22 MRSA §9053, sub-§3,** as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is amended  
5 to read:

6           **3. Background check.** "Background check" means the collection of personally  
7 identifiable information ~~and~~ data and biometric identifiers for comparison with criminal  
8 record repositories and registry databases that are relevant to an individual's identity and  
9 background, including monitoring for future offenses through a rap back monitoring  
10 program.

11           **Sec. 43. 22 MRSA §9053, sub-§5-A** is enacted to read:

12           **5-A. Biometric identifier.** "Biometric identifier" means a unique and measurable  
13 biological, anatomical or physiological characteristic used for identification of an  
14 individual, including, but not limited to, fingerprints, retinal or iris scans and palm prints.

15           **Sec. 44. 22 MRSA §9053, sub-§14,** as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is amended  
16 to read:

17           **14. Direct access worker.** "Direct access worker" means an individual who by virtue  
18 of employment ~~has direct access to a Medicare or Medicaid beneficiary or other protected~~  
19 ~~individual served by a provider subject to this chapter~~ generally provides to individuals  
20 direct contact assistance or has direct access regardless of setting. "Direct access worker"  
21 does not include an individual performing repairs, deliveries, installations or similar  
22 services who does not have direct access without supervision. "Direct access worker"  
23 includes but is not limited to the following individuals:

- 24           A. An individual seeking employment as a direct access worker;
- 25           B. An employee who is employed upon the effective date of this chapter and who is  
26 required to have a background check in accordance with section ~~9058~~ 9058-A;
- 27           C. A former employee who consents, prior to leaving employment, to periodic review  
28 of that employee's criminal background for a fixed time;
- 29           D. An independent contractor pursuant to Title 26, section 1043, subsection 11,  
30 paragraph E or Title 39-A, section 102, subsection 13-A or a worker who is placed with  
31 a provider by a temporary nurse agency or a personal care agency or a placement  
32 agency registered pursuant to section 1717; ~~and~~
- 33           E. A volunteer, student or other person with direct access who routinely performs  
34 unsupervised functions similar to those performed by a direct access worker for a  
35 provider; ~~and~~
- 36           F. A direct care worker pursuant to section 1812-J, subsection 1, paragraph G.

37           **Sec. 45. 22 MRSA §9053, sub-§19,** as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is repealed  
38 and the following enacted in its place:

39           **19. Grandfathered employee.** "Grandfathered employee" means an individual  
40 subject to the requirements of this chapter who has been employed prior to October 1, 2023,  
41 is subject to section 9058-A and has not previously submitted biometric identifier data for  
42 a background check under this chapter.

1           **Sec. 46. 22 MRSA §9053, sub-§21-A** is enacted to read:  
2           **21-A. Hospital.** "Hospital" means an entity licensed pursuant to chapter 405.  
3           **Sec. 47. 22 MRSA §9053, sub-§24-A** is enacted to read:  
4           **24-A. Noncriminal justice submitting entity.** "Noncriminal justice submitting  
5 entity" means the agency responsible for initiating requests under the rap back monitoring  
6 program pursuant to federal implementation guidance documents.  
7           **Sec. 48. 22 MRSA §9053, sub-§28-A** is enacted to read:  
8           **28-A. Portability.** "Portability" means the ability of a direct access worker to transfer  
9 the results of a background check eligibility determination and information from the rap  
10 back monitoring program to a new employer.  
11           **Sec. 49. 22 MRSA §9053, sub-§29**, as amended by PL 2019, c. 660, §6, is further  
12 amended to read:  
13           **29. Provider.** "Provider" means a licensed, license-exempt, certified or registered  
14 entity that employs direct ~~care~~ access workers to provide long-term care and in-home and  
15 community-based services under this chapter.  
16           **Sec. 50. 22 MRSA §9053, sub-§32**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is amended  
17 to read:  
18           **32. Residential care facility.** "Residential care facility" means a residential care  
19 facility licensed or exempted from licensing pursuant to chapter 1663.  
20           **Sec. 51. 22 MRSA §9053, sub-§32-A** is enacted to read:  
21           **32-A. Substance use disorder treatment agency.** "Substance use disorder treatment  
22 agency" means an approved treatment facility or program licensed pursuant to Title 5,  
23 chapter 521.  
24           **Sec. 52. 22 MRSA §9054, sub-§2**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is amended  
25 to read:  
26           **2. Employer obligations.** An employer subject to this chapter shall use the  
27 Background Check Center to conduct a comprehensive background check that includes a  
28 criminal history records check for all direct access workers. The employer shall comply  
29 with the requirements of this chapter, including, but not limited to, a biometric identifier-  
30 based background check, when making employment-related decisions for direct access  
31 workers.  
32           **Sec. 53. 22 MRSA §9054, sub-§5**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is amended  
33 to read:  
34           **5. Subsequent background check; 5 years.** An employer shall conduct a periodic  
35 subsequent background check in accordance with rules adopted pursuant to this chapter.  
36 Criminal history record checks for all direct access workers using a biometric identifier  
37 must be completed every 5 years subsequent to the date of hire or the anniversary date of a  
38 previous background check completed through use of the Background Check Center.  
39           **Sec. 54. 22 MRSA §9054, sub-§7, ¶O**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is  
40 amended to read:

1 O. Mental health services facilities or providers; ~~and~~  
2 **Sec. 55. 22 MRSA §9054, sub-§7, ¶P**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is  
3 amended to read:

4 P. Drug treatment centers-;  
5 **Sec. 56. 22 MRSA §9054, sub-§7, ¶Q** is enacted to read:

6 Q. Substance use disorder treatment agencies; and  
7 **Sec. 57. 22 MRSA §9054, sub-§7, ¶R** is enacted to read:

8 R. Hospitals.  
9 **Sec. 58. 22 MRSA §9054, sub-§8, ¶B**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is  
10 amended to read:

11 B. Coordinating with the bureau and other federal or state agencies as applicable to  
12 obtain ~~data~~ and analyze personally identifying information and biometric identifiers  
13 regarding criminal record information and notations that represent disqualifying  
14 offenses on relevant databases and registries;

15 **Sec. 59. 22 MRSA §9054, sub-§8, ¶F**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is  
16 amended to read:

17 F. Specifying offenses, including offenses that may appear in publicly available  
18 criminal record information, that disqualify an individual from employment as a direct  
19 access worker for a term of 5, 10 or 30 years or, for disqualifying offenses that occur  
20 in health care settings, the lifetime of the individual, including, but not limited to,  
21 convictions and other events or notations;

22 **Sec. 60. 22 MRSA §9054, sub-§10**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is amended  
23 to read:

24 **10. Background check report content.** The background check report must inform  
25 employers whether the individual submitted for a background check has offenses that  
26 disqualify the individual for employment as a direct access worker. The background check  
27 report must include information specific to the individual along with information about the  
28 source and type of offense sufficient to allow the individual named in the report to  
29 challenge the information. The content of the background check report must include, but is  
30 not limited to, notice that the individual submitted for a background check ~~has~~ is:

- 31 ~~A. No disqualifying offenses;~~
- 32 A-1. Eligible for hire; or
- 33 ~~B. A disqualifying offense; or~~
- 34 B-1. Ineligible for hire and the length of any ban on employment as a result.
- 35 ~~C. A criminal charge without disposition that upon final disposition may result in a~~
- 36 ~~disqualifying offense.~~

37 **Sec. 61. 22 MRSA §9054, sub-§13**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is amended  
38 to read:

1           **13. Waiver; disqualifying offense.** In the event that no other federal or state law  
2 mandates an employment prohibition by an employer subject to this chapter, an individual  
3 who is banned from employment because of a disqualifying criminal offense may initiate  
4 a request for a waiver under subsection 8, paragraph H in accordance with a process  
5 established by rules adopted pursuant to this chapter under the following circumstances:

6           A. The individual is seeking to be employed or is currently employed by an employer  
7 subject to the requirements of this chapter;

8           B. The employer has chosen to sponsor the individual's request for the removal of the  
9 ban in order to create or maintain an employment relationship; and

10          C. The employer must attest to the department that the decision to sponsor the waiver  
11 request occurred after the employer considered the objectively reasonable factors under  
12 subsection 15 and the following factors:

13           (1) The nature and gravity of the disqualifying offense or offenses;

14           (2) The time that has passed since the disqualifying offense or offenses;

15           (3) The nature of the employment held or sought;

16           (4) Whether the criminal conduct was employment-related; and

17           (5) A reasonable conclusion that the individual does not pose a threat of harm to  
18 a protected individual or others in the care and support of the individual.

19 The waiver must be sought with respect to the prospective or continued employment by a  
20 specific employer that is willing to sponsor the individual's request. An employee seeking  
21 a waiver may be conditionally employed in accordance with section 9057, subsection 4 and  
22 section ~~9058~~ 9058-A, subsection 3 until the waiver is denied.

23           **Sec. 62. 22 MRSA §9055, sub-§2**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is amended  
24 to read:

25           **2. Special revenue account.** Revenue generated pursuant to this section must be  
26 deposited in a special revenue account in the ~~Division~~ division of ~~Licensing~~ licensing and  
27 ~~Regulatory Services~~ certification and dedicated for Background Check Center operations.

28           **Sec. 63. 22 MRSA §9056, sub-§2**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is amended  
29 to read:

30           **2. Rap back monitoring program.** The bureau is authorized to initiate and provide  
31 services pursuant to federal or state rap back monitoring to report new criminal record  
32 events to the Background Check Center for noncriminal justice purposes. The bureau is  
33 authorized as the State's noncriminal justice submitting entity for federal rap back  
34 monitoring. Requests under the rap back monitoring program include the following  
35 procedures:

36           A. The noncriminal justice submitting entity submits to an electronic repository  
37 biometric identifier data of a direct access worker;

38           B. The electronic repository retains the biometric identifier data for a period of time  
39 specified in the State's subscription with the electronic repository; and

1 C. The electronic repository notifies the noncriminal justice submitting entity of any  
2 new criminal record events tied to the biometric identifier data that may disqualify an  
3 individual from continued employment as a direct access worker.

4 **Sec. 64. 22 MRSA §9056, sub-§3**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is amended  
5 to read:

6 **3. Collection of identifier data.** The bureau shall coordinate with the Background  
7 Check Center to collect the personally identifiable information and biometric identifier and  
8 relevant data of individuals as needed to meet the requirements of the rap back monitoring  
9 program or as otherwise required by this chapter and other laws.

10 **Sec. 65. 22 MRSA §9056, sub-§4, ¶A**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is  
11 amended to read:

12 A. Maintain the personally identifiable information and biometric identifier data in the  
13 criminal history records repository;

14 **Sec. 66. 22 MRSA §9056, sub-§4, ¶B**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is  
15 amended to read:

16 B. Compare the personally identifiable data, biometric identifier data or other data ~~or~~  
17 ~~both~~ to criminal records to conduct a criminal record check and disseminate the results  
18 of this record check to authorized entities;

19 **Sec. 67. 22 MRSA §9057, sub-§4, ¶D-1** is enacted to read:

20 D-1. The individual provides evidence to the employer that the individual has  
21 submitted the individual's biometric identifier data for the background check;

22 **Sec. 68. 22 MRSA §9057, sub-§4, ¶E**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is  
23 amended to read:

24 E. The employer verifies and documents that the individual has submitted the  
25 individual's biometric identifier data required for the background check and the  
26 mandatory identity verification and employment eligibility documents required by  
27 rules adopted in accordance with this chapter; and

28 **Sec. 69. 22 MRSA §9058**, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is repealed.

29 **Sec. 70. 22 MRSA §9058-A** is enacted to read:

30 **§9058-A. Grandfathered employees prior to biometric identifier reporting**

31 **1. Background check.** Beginning October 1, 2024, an employer employing direct  
32 access workers shall use the Background Check Center to secure a background check and  
33 a background check report using biometric identifier data for each direct access worker.

34 **2. Gradual implementation of grandfathered employee background checks with**  
35 **biometric identifier data.** The department shall adopt rules under section 9065 describing  
36 a staged and orderly process based on the type of provider and the number of direct access  
37 workers employed that employers must follow to implement the background checks using  
38 biometric identifier data for grandfathered employees consistent with this chapter. The  
39 department may grant an employer a deadline extension for good cause shown, which may  
40 not be unreasonably withheld.

1           **3. Background check deadline.** A grandfathered employee may continue to work in  
2 direct access employment for up to 60 calendar days from the date the grandfathered  
3 employee's first biometric identifier background check is initiated in accordance with  
4 subsection 2 and if:

5           A. The grandfathered employee signs a consent to release information and agrees in  
6 writing to submit to the background check process;

7           B. The grandfathered employee signs a statement declaring that a background check  
8 will not reveal any disqualifying offenses or that an offense that appears is inaccurate;

9           C. The employer verifies and documents that the grandfathered employee has  
10 submitted the biometric identifier data and mandatory identity verification and  
11 employment eligibility documents required by rules adopted in accordance with section  
12 9065;

13           D. The employer initiates the background check by entering the individual into the  
14 Background Check Center database as a grandfathered employee; and

15           E. The grandfathered employee is not identified in the Background Check Center  
16 database as a disqualified person.

17           **4. Disqualified grandfathered employee.** A grandfathered employee who receives  
18 a disqualifying background check report is subject to the provisions of subsection 3 and  
19 must be able to correct disqualifying offense information that appears in the background  
20 check report through the inaccurate records corrections process within 60 calendar days  
21 after the disqualifying report is issued. The grandfathered employee is subject to direct  
22 personal supervision during the conditional employment period as described in rules  
23 adopted pursuant to this chapter until a final background check report indicates that no  
24 disqualifying offenses appear in the updated records.

25           **5. Termination; disqualified grandfathered employees.** An employer shall  
26 terminate or remove from direct access employment any grandfathered employee who has  
27 not submitted the documents required in subsection 3, who refused to submit a biometric  
28 identifier or otherwise participate in the background check or who fails to receive a final  
29 nondisqualifying background check report in accordance with subsection 4.

30           **Sec. 71. 22 MRSA §9062, sub-§1, ¶B,** as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is  
31 amended to read:

32           B. Failure or refusal to terminate or remove from direct access employment an  
33 employee who is disqualified for employment based on the requirements of this  
34 chapter; and

35           **Sec. 72. 22 MRSA §9062, sub-§1, ¶C,** as enacted by PL 2015, c. 299, §25, is  
36 amended to read:

37           C. Substantial noncompliance with the procedures established by this chapter; and

38           **Sec. 73. 22 MRSA §9062, sub-§1, ¶D** is enacted to read:

39           D. Failure to enroll in the Background Check Center.

40           **Sec. 74. 22 MRSA §9066** is enacted to read:

41           **§9066. Portability**

1 **1. Portability authorized.** A direct access worker may choose to transfer the worker's  
2 background check report to another employer. The direct access worker may choose to  
3 transfer confidential information contained in the worker's background check report, as  
4 long as the background check used a biometric identifier, when:

5 A. The direct access worker agrees to submit to the requirements of this chapter;

6 B. The direct access worker signs a statement releasing the confidential information  
7 to the new employer;

8 C. The employer verifies and documents that the direct access worker has submitted  
9 the mandatory identity verification and employment eligibility documents required by  
10 rules adopted in accordance with this chapter; and

11 D. The employer ensures the background check was completed within the last 5 years  
12 and enters the direct access worker into the rap back monitoring program.

### 13 SUMMARY

14 This bill:

15 1. Amends the provisions of law relating to the Background Check Center, or BCC,  
16 established under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, chapter 1691, in order to:

17 A. Authorize the collection of biometric identifier data to enable the BCC to access  
18 national criminal history backgrounds of potential employees and to amend related  
19 grandfathering provisions;

20 B. Authorize the portability of background check results from one employer to  
21 another;

22 C. Clarify the relationship of the provisions to direct access workers;

23 D. Authorize the BCC to specify offenses that disqualify an individual from  
24 employment as a direct access worker; and

25 E. Establish the BCC as the noncriminal justice submitting entity for the federal rap  
26 back monitoring program and outline procedures related to rap back monitoring;

27 2. Amends the provisions of law relating to the Maine Registry of Certified Nursing  
28 Assistants and Direct Care Workers in order to:

29 A. Limit the registry's authority to the eligibility of certified nursing assistants and  
30 listing direct care workers who have substantiated findings of abuse, neglect or  
31 misappropriation of property;

32 B. Clarify the relationship of the provisions to direct care workers;

33 C. Allow a process for a direct care worker to petition removal of a substantiated  
34 finding of neglect or misappropriation of property;

35 D. Clarify that certified nursing assistants and direct care workers are subject to the  
36 background check required under the provisions of law governing the BCC;

37 E. Authorize the Department of Health and Human Services to adopt rules to specify  
38 criminal convictions that disqualify a person from employment as a certified nursing  
39 assistant or direct access worker; and



- 1 F. Remove the provisions related to the ability of applicants to seek relief relating to
- 2 disqualifying criminal convictions and site that authority within the BCC; and
- 3 3. Amends the provisions of law relating to unlicensed assistive persons in order to:
- 4 A. Replace the term "unlicensed assistive person" with "direct care worker";
- 5 B. Remove the provisions related to the ability of applicants to seek relief relating to
- 6 disqualifying criminal convictions and site that authority within the BCC; and
- 7 C. Provide for individuals enrolling in a training program for direct care workers to
- 8 receive a background check through the BCC.