

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.
Commissioner



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October 3, 2019

Senator Gratwick, Chair
Representative Hymanson, Chair
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 195 – *An Act To Continue MaineCare Coverage for Parents During the Rehabilitation and Reunification Process*

Senator Gratwick, Rep Hymanson, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

The Legislature passed LD 195, *An Act To Continue MaineCare Coverage for Parents During the Rehabilitation and Reunification Process*, in the First Regular Session. The bill requires the Department to submit a waiver request to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to seek approval for Medicaid coverage of a parent who has one or more children removed from the home but remains engaged in reunification efforts. It also directs the Department to report quarterly to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services on the Department's progress in seeking a waiver.

In early February 2019, DHHS initiated the process to seek a 1115 Demonstration Waiver from CMS to allow federal match for services delivered to members ages 21-64 who are being treated in an "Institute for Mental Disease" for Substance Use Disorder (SUD). This waiver is intended to allow MaineCare funding to more fully support the SUD continuum of care.

The Department has engaged in discussions with CMS and is looking for ways to incorporate the directive under LD 195 into this 1115 request given the disruption caused when parents lose MaineCare coverage. The Department considers this the most likely way to get this request approved, as LD 195 carries a fiscal cost and would not be budget neutral (a requirement of federal Medicaid waivers) on its own.

The Department intends to submit this waiver in October and will then work with CMS through negotiations with a requested Spring 2020 start date.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Michelle Probert".

Michelle Probert
Director, MaineCare Services