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## **An Act Creating a Probationary Period for County Corrections Officials**

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

**Sec. 1. 30-A MRSA §501, sub-§2-A** is enacted to read:

**2-A. Probationary period for corrections officials.** Beginning October 1, 2009, a person who is hired as jailer, master, keeper or a subordinate assistant or employee under section 1501 must complete an employment probationary period that lasts for one year.

**Sec. 2. 30-A MRSA §501, sub-§3**, as amended by PL 2001, c. 349, §5, is further amended to read:

**3. Dismissal, suspension, discipline.** Following a reasonable probationary period consistent with the provisions of subsection 2-A and section 2701, a county officer or department head may dismiss, suspend or otherwise discipline a department employee only for cause, except as provided in paragraph A. Cause for dismissal, suspension or disciplinary action must be a just, reasonable, appropriate and substantial reason for the action taken that relates to or affects the ability, performance of duties, authority or actions of the employee or the public's rights or interests.

A. An employee may be dismissed by a county officer or department head only for cause and only with the prior approval of the county commissioners or personnel board, except that county employees may be laid off or dismissed, with the approval of the county commissioners or personnel board, to meet the requirements of budget reductions or governmental reorganization.

B. In every case of suspension or disciplinary action other than dismissal, at the employee's request, the county commissioners or personnel board shall investigate the circumstances and fairness of the action and, if they find the charges unwarranted, shall order the employee's reinstatement to the employee's former position with no loss of pay, rights or benefits resulting from the suspension or disciplinary action.

Effective September 12, 2009