

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Reduce Costs and Increase Access to Methadone Treatment

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

Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §20010 is enacted to read:

§ 20010. Methadone treatment

The department shall take the following steps to reduce the cost of and increase access to methadone treatment.

1. Licensing. The department shall license as a methadone treatment clinic a federally qualified health center or other health care provider or medical practice that applies for licensure and meets all state and federal requirements.

2. Treatment location. The department shall require that a member of the MaineCare program under Title 22, chapter 855 who is eligible for services at a licensed methadone treatment clinic enroll at the clinic closest to the residence of the person unless the person is exempt from this requirement in accordance with rules adopted by the department. The department shall work with licensed methadone treatment clinics to facilitate access to services and distribution of services across the State.

3. Rules. The department shall adopt rules to implement this section. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

Sec. 2. Rules. The Department of Health and Human Services shall amend the rules for licensed methadone treatment clinics to eliminate the requirement that the centers be open for administration of methadone treatment on Sundays. Rules adopted pursuant to this section are routine technical rules as defined in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A. The department shall work with current clinics, potential licensees, federal parties and other stakeholder groups to address barriers to providing this service that exist in rules and policies at local, state and national levels.

SUMMARY

This bill proposes to decrease costs of and increase access to substance abuse treatment services by requiring the Department of Health and Human Services to increase the number of federally qualified health centers that provide methadone treatment services, to require enrollment at the clinic closest to the person's home and to work to facilitate access to services and distribution of services across the State. The bill requires the department to amend the methadone clinic rules to eliminate the requirement that the centers be open for administration of methadone treatment on Sundays. The bill designates the rules as routine technical rules. The department is required to work with stakeholders to address current rules and policies that act as barriers to achieve the intent of this legislation.