

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

Amend the bill by striking out all of section 2 and inserting the following:

‘**Sec. 2. 22 MRSA §3109** is enacted to read:

§ 3109. Promoting accountable public programs that reduce child poverty and increase sustainable employment for low-income families with children

The department shall implement a system of accountability to measure the performance of certain programs administered by the department under this subtitle by examining the outcomes of participating families with children on an annual basis. The department shall establish benchmarks to measure, over time, the extent to which these programs have helped to alleviate poverty and hardship among families with children through increased employment, earnings, education and training and the provision of individualized services for those with barriers to employment.

1. Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

- A. "Federal poverty level" has the same meaning as in section 3762, subsection 1, paragraph C.
- B. "TANF" has the same meaning as in section 3762, subsection 1, paragraph E.

2. Identify measures of child and family economic security. Beginning October 15, 2017 and annually thereafter, the department shall obtain and compile the following data for the State on an annual basis from those sources reasonably available to the department, including data collected and maintained by the department, data available from other state or federal agencies and such other data as can reasonably be obtained from other public or private sources upon request. The data must include:

- A. The number and percentage of children living at or below 100% of the federal poverty level;
- B. The number and percentage of households headed by single parents with related children living at or below 100% of the federal poverty level;
- C. The number and percentage of children living at or below 50% of the federal poverty level;
- D. The ratio of families with children receiving TANF cash assistance to the number of families with children and income at or below 100% of the federal poverty level;
- E. The ratio of families with children receiving TANF cash assistance to the number of families with children and income at or below 50% of the federal poverty level;
- F. The number and percentage of households with children who are homeless;
- G. The number and percentage of individuals and children found to be food insecure by the United States Department of Agriculture;

H. The number and percentage of individuals and children found to have very low food security by the United States Department of Agriculture;

I. For all families that exit TANF cash assistance:

(1) The number and percentage of families with earnings in the month of TANF exit and the number and percentage of exiting families with earnings that are below 100%, at least 100% but not more than 150%, at least 151% but not more than 200% and in excess of 200% of the federal poverty level;

(2) The number and percentage of families with earnings in excess of \$5,000 per quarter in the 2nd quarter and in the 4th quarter after the quarter of exit from TANF; and

(3) The mean and median amount of earnings for families in the 2nd quarter and in the 4th quarter after the quarter of exit from TANF;

J. Median and mean wages for families with earnings that have children in the household and receive food supplement benefits pursuant to section 3104;

K. The number and percentage of adult parents or caretaker relatives receiving TANF cash assistance that have a high school degree or have successfully completed a general educational development examination or its equivalent, and the number and percentage of those adult parents or caretaker relatives that left TANF in the prior year that have a high school degree or have successfully completed a general educational development examination or its equivalent; and

L. The number and percentage of adult parents or caretaker relatives receiving TANF cash assistance that have a postsecondary degree or a postsecondary credential and the number and percentage of those adult parents or caretaker relatives that left TANF in the prior year that have a postsecondary degree or postsecondary credential.

3. Benchmarks established. The department shall examine and use the data related to measures of child and family economic security and employment compiled pursuant to subsection 2 to establish proposed benchmarks on an annual basis to serve as a standard against which progress related to improvements in the well-being of families with children in the State may be measured. Beginning January 15, 2018 and annually thereafter, the department shall present proposed benchmarks to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over human services matters along with data compiled pursuant to subsection 2 for the current year and comparative data for the 3 prior years for the committee's review. The committee's review must include the opportunity for public comment on the department's proposed benchmarks. After the committee's review and by March 15th annually, the department shall finalize benchmarks for the following year.

4. Report. By January 15, 2019 and annually thereafter, the department shall report on its progress in meeting benchmarks established for the preceding year, along with proposed benchmarks for the subsequent year, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over human services matters. If the department does not successfully meet the benchmarks established for the preceding year, it shall identify those obstacles that prevented it from meeting the benchmarks and present a plan for addressing the obstacles so that the department will be more successful in meeting the new benchmarks proposed for the following year. The department's plan must be reviewed by both the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee established pursuant to section 3110 and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over human services matters. The joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over human services matters may introduce any legislation that it considers necessary to improve the department's ability to meet benchmarks in future years.'

Amend the bill in section 3 in §3110 in the first paragraph in the 3rd line (page 3, line 10 in L.D.) by striking out the following: "goals as described in section 3109, subsection 4" and inserting the following: 'those benchmarks as described in section 3109, subsection 3'

Amend the bill in section 3 in §3110 in the first paragraph in the last line (page 3, line 12 in L.D.) by striking out the following: "and goals"

Amend the bill in section 3 in §3110 in subsection 2 in the 3rd line (page 3, line 18 in L.D.) by striking out the following: "and goals"

Amend the bill in section 3 in §3110 in subsection 5 in the last 2 lines (page 4, lines 9 and 10 in L.D.) by striking out the following: "and goals established in section 3109, subsection 4" and inserting the following: 'established in section 3109, subsection 3'

Amend the bill by adding after section 3 the following:

'Sec. 4. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF (FORMERLY DHS)

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families 0138

Initiative: Provides an allocation for one Statistician III position needed to accumulate and analyze data and performance measures in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program.

FEDERAL BLOCK GRANT FUND	2017-18	2018-19
POSITIONS - LEGISLATIVE COUNT	1.000	1.000
Personal Services	\$71,834	\$73,818
All Other	\$8,926	\$8,994
FEDERAL BLOCK GRANT FUND TOTAL	\$80,760	\$82,812

SUMMARY

This amendment, which is the majority report of the committee, makes minor changes to the data and benchmarks that must be collected by the Department of Health and Human Services and reviewed by the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee, which is established in the bill.

This amendment also adds an appropriations and allocations section to provide funding for a position in the Department of Health and Human Services to analyze the data.

FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED

(See attached)