



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 922

H.P. 587

House of Representatives, March 11, 2025

An Act to Amend the Procedure for Filing a Petition to Terminate Parental Rights and Responsibilities

Submitted by the Judicial Department pursuant to Joint Rule 204.

Received by the Clerk of the House on March 5, 2025. Referred to the Committee on
Judiciary pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Rlt B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative KUHN of Falmouth.

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

Sec. 1. 19-A MRSA §1658, sub-§1-A, as enacted by PL 2021, c. 340, §2, is amended to read:

1-A. Filing and contents of petition. A petition to terminate parental rights and responsibilities must be filed in the District Court ~~and in the same case as a prior adjudication of parental rights and responsibilities, if any.~~ The petition must be sworn and must include at least the following:

A. The name and date and place of birth of the child;

B. The name and address of the petitioner and the nature of the petitioner's relationship to the child;

C. The name of each of the child's parents;

D. A summary statement of the alleged facts that the petitioner believes constitute grounds for termination under subsection 2;

E. A statement of the effects of a termination order; and

F. A statement that the parent whose rights and responsibilities are the subject of the petition to terminate parental rights and responsibilities is entitled to legal counsel in the termination proceedings and that, if the parent wants an attorney and is unable to afford one, the parent should contact the court as soon as possible to request appointed counsel.

SUMMARY

This bill amends the provision of law governing termination of parental rights and responsibilities to remove the requirement that a petition to terminate parental rights and responsibilities must be filed in the same case as any prior adjudication of parental rights and responsibilities.