

STATE OF MAINE

—
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND AND FOURTEEN

—
H.P. 1206 - L.D. 1683

**An Act To Improve Degree and Career Attainment for Former Foster
Children**

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

Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §4010-C is enacted to read:

§4010-C. Transition grant program

The Department of Health and Human Services shall establish a transition grant program to provide financial support to eligible individuals to pay for postsecondary education.

1. Age; enrollment in postsecondary education institution. In order to be eligible to participate in the program, an individual must be at least 21 years of age but less than 27 years of age, must have exited the voluntary extended care and support agreement with the State under section 4037-A at 21 years of age and must be enrolled in a postsecondary education institution.

2. Level of financial support. The transition grant is for postsecondary support up to the completion of an undergraduate degree. The level of financial support must be equivalent to the current voluntary extended foster care supports pursuant to section 4037-A. The department shall set duration limits, including a 6-year maximum for a 4-year degree, a 4-year maximum for a 2-year degree and other duration limits for other types of postsecondary education.

3. Postsecondary education navigator services. The program must include postsecondary education navigator services that provide transitional services and college support. The department shall determine the specifics of those services.

4. Advisory committee. The department shall establish an advisory committee to provide oversight of the implementation of the transition grant program. The advisory committee must include stakeholders in the postsecondary education field, the department's postsecondary education navigator under subsection 6, professionals who work with transitional foster youth, employers, representatives of the department and

other interested parties. The department shall adopt rules to determine the membership, terms of office and voting procedures of the advisory committee and other specifics of the advisory committee's governance structure. The advisory committee shall provide an annual report to the department and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services matters.

5. Limit on number of individuals receiving transition grants. No more than 40 individuals at any one time may receive transition grants under this section.

6. Postsecondary education navigator. The department shall develop the roles and responsibilities for the postsecondary education navigator to provide transitional services and college student support for individuals pursuant to this section. The postsecondary education navigator shall provide data to the advisory committee.

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

Sec. 2. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF (FORMERLY DHS)

State-funded Foster Care/Adoption Assistance 0139

Initiative: Appropriates funds for a transitional grant program for individuals exiting the state foster care system at 21 years of age and actively pursuing postsecondary education. This appropriation is to provide the initial 20 grants beginning January 1, 2015.

GENERAL FUND	2013-14	2014-15
All Other	\$0	\$50,000
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$50,000</u>

State-funded Foster Care/Adoption Assistance 0139

Initiative: Deappropriates funds on a one-time basis resulting from program savings.

GENERAL FUND	2013-14	2014-15
All Other	\$0	(\$50,000)
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$0</u>	<u>(\$50,000)</u>

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
DEPARTMENT OF (FORMERLY DHS)
DEPARTMENT TOTALS**

	2013-14	2014-15
GENERAL FUND	\$0	\$0
DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	\$0	\$0