

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-THREE

H.P. 343 - L.D. 538

An Act Regarding the Appointment of Expert Witnesses in Certain Family Court Actions

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

Sec. 1. 19-A MRSA §1653, sub-§6, ¶H is enacted to read:

H. In cases involving past or current allegations of domestic abuse between the parents, if the court orders an assessment or evaluation that will include providing court recommendations regarding the award of parental rights and responsibilities or conditions of parent-child contact that are in the best interest of the child from a person other than a guardian ad litem appointed under Title 4, section 1554, subsection 1, the court may appoint only a licensed clinical social worker, psychologist or psychiatrist who has training and demonstrated expertise on at least the following topics:

- (1) The domestic abuse tactics affecting adult and child safety after separation of the parents;
- (2) The effects of domestic abuse and violence on children and conditions that support resilience;
- (3) Best practices for recognizing, asking about and assessing the effects of domestic abuse on the parent-child relationship; and
- (4) Methods for reducing post-separation abuse of the nonabusing parent and promoting child safety and security.