



# 127th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2015

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Legislative Document

No. 1134

S.P. 403

In Senate, March 31, 2015

**An Act To Require the Department of Health and Human Services  
To Distribute Information Regarding Down Syndrome to Providers  
of Prenatal and Postnatal Care and to Genetic Counselors**

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Reference to the Committee on Health and Human Services suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Heather J.R. Priest".

HEATHER J.R. PRIEST  
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator VOLK of Cumberland.  
Cosponsored by Representative LAJOIE of Lewiston and  
Senators: BRAKEY of Androscoggin, CUSHING of Penobscot, EDGECOMB of Aroostook,  
LIBBY of Androscoggin, MASON of Androscoggin, PATRICK of Oxford, Representatives:  
CRAFTS of Lisbon, TIMBERLAKE of Turner.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §1642** is enacted to read:

3 **§1642. Down syndrome**

4 The department shall establish, maintain and operate an information service for  
5 Down syndrome. For the purposes of this section, "Down syndrome" means a  
6 chromosomal condition caused by an error in cell division that results in the presence of  
7 an extra whole or partial copy of chromosome 21.

8 **1. Expectant or new parent; others.** A hospital, physician, health care provider or  
9 certified nurse midwife who renders prenatal care or postnatal care or a genetic counselor  
10 who renders prenatal or postnatal genetic counseling shall, upon receipt of a positive test  
11 result from a prenatal or postnatal test for Down syndrome, provide the expectant or new  
12 parent with information provided by the department under subsection 2. The department  
13 shall also make such information available to any other person who has received a  
14 positive test result from a prenatal or postnatal test for Down syndrome.

15 **2. Information provided.** The department shall make available to a person who  
16 renders prenatal care, postnatal care or genetic counseling to expectant or new parents  
17 who receive a prenatal or postnatal diagnosis of Down syndrome the following:

18 A. Up-to-date evidence-based written information about Down syndrome that  
19 includes physical, developmental, educational and psychosocial outcomes, life  
20 expectancy, clinical course and intellectual and functional development and treatment  
21 options. The information must have been reviewed by medical experts and national  
22 Down syndrome organizations; and

23 B. Contact information regarding support programs and services, including  
24 information hotlines specific to Down syndrome, resource centers and  
25 clearinghouses, national, statewide and local Down syndrome organizations and other  
26 educational and support programs.

27 **3. Accessibility of information.** Information provided under this section must be  
28 culturally and linguistically appropriate for a person receiving a positive prenatal  
29 diagnosis and for the family of a child receiving a postnatal diagnosis of Down syndrome.

30 **SUMMARY**

31 This bill requires that hospitals, physicians and other health professionals provide  
32 information about Down syndrome to expectant or new parents who have received a  
33 prenatal or postnatal diagnosis of Down syndrome. The Department of Health and  
34 Human Services is directed to distribute appropriate information to health care providers  
35 for distribution.