

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

## **An Act To Provide Protection for Victims of Domestic Violence**

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

**Sec. 1. 19-A MRS §4012, sub-§9** is enacted to read:

**9. Notification of attempted purchase of firearm.** When the Department of Public Safety receives notification from a federal agency that a background criminal records check conducted under the system established pursuant to 18 United States Code, Section 922(t) indicates that a potential buyer or transferee is prohibited from receipt or possession of a firearm pursuant to a temporary or final protection from abuse order, the department shall make every reasonable effort to notify as quickly as practicable both the individual intended to be protected by the protection from abuse order and another law enforcement agency with jurisdiction in the municipality in which that individual resides of the information received from the federal agency.

For the purposes of this subsection, notification may be made by the Department of Public Safety to the individual intended to be protected by the protection from abuse order through a law enforcement agency within the county in which the individual resides. When the department makes notification through such a law enforcement agency, that agency then must make reasonable effort to notify as quickly as practicable the individual intended to be protected by the protection from abuse order. If, when notifying a law enforcement agency, the department is informed by that agency that it cannot notify the individual intended to be protected by the protection from abuse order, the department must continue to make a reasonable effort to notify that individual as quickly as practicable, including through a different law enforcement agency within the county in which the individual resides.

**Sec. 2. 19-A MRS §4012, sub-§10** is enacted to read:

**10. Liability for damages.** The State, a political subdivision of the State or a law enforcement officer is not liable for damage that may be caused by the failure or inability to inform an individual who is the subject of a protection from abuse order in accordance with subsection 9. This subsection does not prohibit the State or a political subdivision of the State from pursuing legally authorized disciplinary action.

### **SUMMARY**

This bill specifies that, upon receiving information from a federal agency that through a criminal background check an individual subject to a protection from abuse order has illegally attempted to purchase a firearm, the Department of Public Safety shall share that information with the individual who is intended to be protected by the order and with another law enforcement agency with jurisdiction in the municipality in which that individual resides as quickly as practicable.

The bill also specifies that the Department of Public Safety may accomplish the notification process by notifying another law enforcement agency within the county in which the individual intended to be protected by the protection from abuse order resides. When the department makes notification through such a law enforcement agency, that agency then must make reasonable effort to notify as quickly as

practicable the individual intended to be protected by the protection from abuse order. If, when notifying another law enforcement agency, the department is informed by that agency that it cannot notify the individual intended to be protected by the protection from abuse order, the department must continue to make its own reasonable effort to notify that individual as quickly as practicable, and this may be accomplished through a different law enforcement agency within the county in which the individual resides.

The bill also clarifies that the immunity provision does not prohibit the State or a political subdivision of the State from pursuing legally authorized disciplinary action.