

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 137**

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

***Gerard J. Cassidy***

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act providing for insurance coverage for vision screening for children.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Gerard J. Cassidy</i>	<i>9th Plymouth</i>	<i>1/18/2023</i>
<i>Sally P. Kerans</i>	<i>13th Essex</i>	<i>2/7/2023</i>
<i>Michelle M. DuBois</i>	<i>10th Plymouth</i>	<i>3/1/2023</i>

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By Representative Cassidy of Brockton, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 137) of Gerard J. Cassidy, Sally P. Kerans and Michelle M. DuBois for legislation to provide insurance coverage for vision screening for children. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 195 OF 2021-2022.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

—————  
**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court  
(2023-2024)**  
—————

An Act providing for insurance coverage for vision screening for children.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 32A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2006 Official  
2 Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 17I the following section:

3 Section 17J. The commission shall provide to any active or retired employee of the  
4 commonwealth who is insured under the group insurance commission coverage for the cost of a  
5 vision screening for children conducted within 12 months prior to entering kindergarten,  
6 pursuant to the first paragraph of section 57 of chapter 71. The vision screening shall be  
7 conducted by personnel approved by the department of public health and trained in vision  
8 screening techniques developed by the department of public health in consultation with the  
9 department of education.

10 For children who fail to pass the vision screening and for children diagnosed with  
11 neurodevelopmental delay, the commission shall provide coverage of a comprehensive eye  
12 examination performed by a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist chosen by the child's parent  
13 or guardian indicating any pertinent diagnosis, treatment, prognosis, recommendation and  
14 evidence of follow-up treatment, if necessary.

15 SECTION 2. Chapter 118E of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after  
16 section 10F the following section: —

17 Section 10G. The division shall provide coverage for the cost of a vision screening for  
18 children conducted within 12 months prior to entering kindergarten, pursuant to the first  
19 paragraph of section 57 of chapter 71. The vision screening shall be conducted by personnel  
20 approved by the department of public health and trained in vision screening techniques  
21 developed by the department of public health in consultation with the department of education.

22 For children who fail to pass the vision screening and for children diagnosed with  
23 neurodevelopmental delay, the division shall provide coverage of a comprehensive eye  
24 examination performed by a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist chosen by the child's parent  
25 or guardian indicating any pertinent diagnosis, treatment, prognosis, recommendation and  
26 evidence of follow-up treatment, if necessary.

27 SECTION 3. Chapter 175 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after  
28 section 110L the following section: —

29 Section 110M. Any blanket or general policy of insurance which is delivered or issued  
30 for delivery within or without the commonwealth and which covers residents of the  
31 commonwealth and any employees health and welfare fund which is promulgated or renewed to

32 any person or group of persons in the commonwealth shall provide coverage for a vision  
33 screening for children conducted within 12 months prior to entering kindergarten, pursuant to the  
34 first paragraph of section 57 of chapter 71.. The vision screening shall be conducted by personnel  
35 approved by the department of public health and trained in vision screening techniques  
36 developed by the department of public health in consultation with the department of education.

37 For children who fail to pass the vision screening and for children diagnosed with  
38 neurodevelopmental delay, coverage shall be provided for a comprehensive eye examination  
39 performed by a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist chosen by the child's parent or guardian  
40 indicating any pertinent diagnosis, treatment, prognosis, recommendation and evidence of  
41 follow-up treatment, if necessary.

42 SECTION 4. Chapter 176A of the General Laws, is hereby amended by inserting after  
43 section 8Z the following section:—

44 Section 8AA. Any contract between a subscriber and the corporation under an individual  
45 or group hospital service plan that provides hospital expense and surgical expense insurance,  
46 delivered, issued, or renewed by agreement between the insurer and the policyholder; within or  
47 without the commonwealth, shall provide coverage for a vision screening for children conducted  
48 within 12 months prior to entering kindergarten, pursuant to the first paragraph of section 57 of  
49 chapter 71. The vision screening shall be conducted by personnel approved by the department of  
50 public health and trained in vision screening techniques developed by the department of public  
51 health in consultation with the department of education.

52 For children who fail to pass the vision screening and for children diagnosed with  
53 neurodevelopmental delay, coverage shall be provided for a comprehensive eye examination

54 performed by a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist chosen by the child's parent or guardian  
55 indicating any pertinent diagnosis, treatment, prognosis, recommendation and evidence of  
56 follow-up treatment, if necessary.

57 SECTION 5. Chapter 176B of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after  
58 section 4Z the following section:—

59 Section 4AA. Any subscription certificate under an individual or group medical service  
60 agreement which provides hospital expense and surgical expense insurance, delivered, issued, or  
61 renewed by agreement between the insurer and the policyholder, within or without the  
62 commonwealth, shall provide coverage for a vision screening for children conducted within 12  
63 months prior to entering kindergarten, pursuant to the first paragraph of section 57 of chapter 71.  
64 The vision screening shall be conducted by personnel approved by the department of public  
65 health and trained in vision screening techniques developed by the department of public health in  
66 consultation with the department of education.

67 For children who fail to pass the vision screening and for children diagnosed with  
68 neurodevelopmental delay, coverage shall be provided for a comprehensive eye examination  
69 performed by a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist chosen by the child's parent or guardian  
70 indicating any pertinent diagnosis, treatment, prognosis, recommendation and evidence of  
71 follow-up treatment, if necessary.

72 SECTION 6. Chapter 176G of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after  
73 section 4S the following section:—

74 Section 4T. Any group health maintenance contract, except contracts providing  
75 supplemental coverage to Medicare or to other government programs, delivered, issued or

76 renewed by agreement within or without the commonwealth shall provide to a member or  
77 enrollee coverage for a vision screening for children conducted within 12 months prior to  
78 entering kindergarten, pursuant to the first paragraph of section 57 of chapter 71. The vision  
79 screening shall be conducted by personnel approved by the department of public health and  
80 trained in vision screening techniques developed by the department of public health in  
81 consultation with the department of education.

82           For children who fail to pass the vision screening and for children diagnosed with  
83 neurodevelopmental delay, coverage shall be provided for a comprehensive eye examination  
84 performed by a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist chosen by the child's parent or guardian  
85 indicating any pertinent diagnosis, treatment, prognosis, recommendation and evidence of  
86 follow-up treatment, if necessary.