

CHAPTER 266
SB 569 - FINAL VERSION

14May2026... 1869h

2026 SESSION

26-2186
06/05

SENATE BILL

569

AN ACT relative to the qualifications for hearings officers within the department of labor.

SPONSORS: Sen. Birdsell, Dist 19

COMMITTEE: Executive Departments and Administration

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill requires hearing officers at the department of labor to be graduates of an accredited law school and directs the labor commissioner to give a hiring preference to licensed attorneys who have workers' compensation experience or who have administrative adjudication experience.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
 Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struck through.]~~
 Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six

AN ACT relative to the qualifications for hearings officers within the department of labor.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 266:1 Hearing Officers. Amend RSA 281-A:42-b to read as follows:

2 281-A:42-b Hearing Officers. The commissioner shall appoint as many individuals as necessary to
3 carry out the department's responsibilities under this chapter. Such individuals ~~[shall have experience in~~
4 ~~workers' compensation and]~~ shall hear workers' compensation cases before the commissioner. The
5 commissioner shall set forth the job qualification necessary to ~~[insure]~~ **ensure** that each hearing officer is
6 qualified to hear workers' compensation cases. ***Individuals employed as hearing officers shall have***
7 ***graduated from an accredited law school. The commissioner shall give a hiring preference to licensed***
8 ***attorneys who have workers' compensation experience or who have administrative adjudication***
9 ***experience.*** The ***hearing officer*** salary shall be commensurate with the responsibilities and experience
10 required. The commissioner shall, by rules adopted under RSA 541-A, strengthen the reporting structure
11 and the role of a hearing officer; develop a code of ethics for hearings and hearing officers; develop and
12 require at least 15 hours of continuing education on an annual basis for hearing officers; and require a
13 minimum of an additional 15 hours of annual training and briefing with the attorney general's staff.

266:2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

Approved: July 02, 2026
Effective Date: August 31, 2026