

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 319 (HB 449)

2018 Regular Session

Edmonds

New law provides that it may be referred to as the "Adoption Option Act".

Existing law requires the La. Dept. of Health (LDH) to publish an abortion alternatives and informed consent website. Provides for information to be featured on the website including information on adoption.

New law retains existing law and stipulates that the abortion alternatives and informed consent website shall feature all of the following:

- (1) Information on adoption agencies that are not affiliated with an abortion provider.
- (2) Information to aid pregnant women seeking to confidentially explore the option of placing her child for adoption, and indicating whether the adoption agency allows the woman to choose the adoptive parents.

New law requires that the online adoption-related information required by new law be featured on a website created and maintained by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), linked on the LDH website, and accessible by redirecting from the domain name "AdoptionOption.La.Gov".

Existing law requires LDH to publish printed materials which abortion providers are required to give to a woman prior to an abortion in order for consent to the abortion to be deemed voluntary and informed.

New law retains existing law and adds thereto a requirement that such materials include the adoption-related information provided on the abortion alternatives and informed consent website, along with a list of entities that offer free and confidential counseling to a woman considering placing her child for adoption. Stipulates that such list shall not include any facility that counsels, refers, performs, induces, prescribes, or provides any means for abortion.

New law creates a task force within LDH to assist the secretary of the department in the preparation of the printed and Internet materials provided for in existing law and new law, and to develop public education initiatives to publicize such information on abortion alternatives. Provides that the task force shall be composed of the following members:

- (1) Not more than two licensed clinical social workers licensed by the La. State Board of Social Work Examiners, each of whom shall have experience in assisting birth mothers in navigating the adoption process, appointed by the governor.
- (2) Not more than two La. residents who provide pre-abortion or post-abortion counseling in association with a nonprofit organization that does not counsel for or provide abortion, appointed by the governor.
- (3) Not more than two attorneys licensed in La. and employed by nonprofit organizations who specialize in advocacy for women at risk of being coerced into abortion, or who specialize in navigating the adoption process, appointed by the governor.
- (4) Not more than two La. residents who are employed by public or private nonprofit adoption agencies, appointed by the governor.
- (5) Not more than two executive directors of La. nonprofit organizations that promote adoption as an alternative to abortion, or their designees.
- (6) Two members of the Senate appointed by the president.
- (7) Two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker.
- (8) The secretary of LDH or his designee, who shall serve as a co-chairperson of the task force.

- (9) The secretary of DCFS or his designee, who shall serve as a co-chairperson of the task force.

New law requires LDH to prepare and make publicly available the printed and Internet materials provided for in existing law and new law on or before April 8, 2019.

Effective August 1, 2018.

(Amends R.S. 40:1061.17(C)(1)(e) and (D)(intro. para.) and (2); Adds R.S. 40:1061.17.1)