

2022 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 909

BY REPRESENTATIVES EDMONDS AND GAROFALO

1 AN ACT

2 To enact Chapter 15 of Title 46 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised  
3 of R.S. 46:1451 through 1455, relative to assistance programs of the Department of  
4 Children and Family Services; to establish within the department an assistance  
5 program for certain pregnant women and parents; to provide for services to be  
6 delivered through the program; to require reporting to certain legislative committees  
7 concerning the program; to require administrative rulemaking; and to provide for  
8 related matters.

9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

10 Section 1. Chapter 15 of Title 46 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950,  
11 comprised of R.S. 46:1451 through 1455, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

12 CHAPTER 15. CONTINUUM OF CARE FOR  
13 CERTAIN PREGNANT WOMEN AND PARENTS

14 §1451. Definitions

15 As used in this Chapter, the following terms have the meaning ascribed to  
16 them in this Section:

17 (1) "Department" means the Department of Children and Family Services.

18 (2) "Program" means the continuum of care program established and  
19 provided for in this Chapter.

20 (3) "TANF" means the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block  
21 grant program established pursuant to the Personal Responsibility and Work

1 Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Public Law 104-193, and administered in  
2 this state by the Department of Children and Family Services.

3 §1452. Continuum of care program; purpose and goals; means of finance

4 A. The legislature hereby creates within the department a continuum of care  
5 program for certain pregnant women and parents, referred to hereafter in this Chapter  
6 as the "program".

7 B.(1) The purpose of the program is to facilitate the operation of a statewide  
8 telecare support network that provides community outreach, consultations, and care  
9 coordination for women who are challenged with unexpected pregnancies.

10 (2) The program shall be designed to accomplish all of the following goals:

11 (a) Encourage healthy childbirth.

12 (b) Support childbirth as an alternative to abortion.

13 (c) Promote family formation.

14 (d) Assist parents in establishing successful parenting techniques.

15 (e) Increase the economic self-sufficiency of families.

16 C.(1) The program shall encompass a statewide telecare support network.  
17 The department shall provide in rule for the functions and administration of this  
18 network.

19 (2) The rules of the department providing for the telecare support network  
20 shall ensure that the network does not hold itself out to be an entity that can perform,  
21 refer for, or assist with an abortion. The telecare support network shall not set  
22 appointments with or refer women or parents to any entity that performs abortions  
23 or recommends for abortion.

24 D. The department shall finance the program with monies appropriated to  
25 it by the legislature for the operation of the program, including TANF funds,  
26 American Rescue Plan Act funds, and any other sources of revenue.

1           §1453. Services and supports; eligibility

2                   A.(1) The program shall provide direct services, supports, social services  
3                   case management, and referrals to biological parents of unborn children and  
4                   biological or adoptive parents of children under the age of two years.

5                   (2) The program shall deliver services exclusively through electronic means,  
6                   including synchronous and asynchronous interactions, utilizing the telecare support  
7                   network provided for in R.S. 46:1452 unless the legislature specifically appropriates  
8                   monies for other modes of service delivery.

9                   B. The components of the program shall include, without limitation, all of  
10                  the following:

11                   (1) Outreach to at-risk populations eligible for the program.

12                   (2) Utilization of registered nurses, who shall be licensed in accordance with  
13                   R.S. 37:911 et seq., to perform the following functions:

14                   (a) Assessment and evaluation of needs related to pregnancy or parenting.

15                   (b) Provision of medically accurate, pregnancy-related medical information  
16                   to program participants.

17                   (3) Utilization of social workers, who shall be licensed in accordance with  
18                   R.S. 37:2701 et seq., or other licensed individuals with equivalent experience to  
19                   perform the following functions:

20                   (a) Development of a care plan, resources, and supports for program  
21                   participants to address identified needs.

22                   (b) Referrals to appropriate local resources including, without limitation,  
23                   state and federal benefits programs and local charitable organizations.

24                   (c) Assistance in applying for state and federal benefits programs.

25                   (d) Assistance in accomplishing elements of the care plan.

26                   (4) Coordination for pregnant women served by the telecare support network  
27                   of appointments with in-person pregnancy resources centers or similar agencies in  
28                   this state which provide information and services including, without limitation,

1 counseling, ultrasound services, pregnancy tests, prenatal assistance, parenting  
2 classes, material support, and adoption information.

3 C. In order to be eligible to receive services through the program, an  
4 individual shall, at the time of initial contact with the program, meet all of the  
5 following requirements:

6 (1) Is a resident of this state.

7 (2) Is a biological parent of an unborn child or a biological or adoptive  
8 parent of a child under the age of two years.

9 D. Any program participant who terminates a pregnancy shall be eligible to  
10 continue receiving services through the program for a period of six months from the  
11 date of the pregnancy termination.

12 §1454. Reporting

13 On or before December 1, 2023, and annually thereafter, the department shall  
14 submit to the House and Senate committees on health and welfare a report on the  
15 status and operation of the program. Each report required by this Section shall  
16 include, at minimum, all of the following:

17 (1) A detailed itemization of expenditures associated with the program.

18 (2) The number of individuals served by the program, and for the individuals  
19 served, the types of services provided to each.

20 (3) Any information regarding the program requested by and provided to any  
21 elected member of the legislature during the period addressed in the report.

22 (4) Any other information that the secretary of the department deems  
23 necessary or appropriate for facilitating evaluation of the program.

24 §1455. Rulemaking

25 The department shall promulgate in accordance with the Administrative  
26 Procedure Act all such rules as are necessary to implement the provisions of this  
27 Chapter.

1           Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not  
2 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature  
3 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If  
4 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become  
5 effective on the day following such approval.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_