

2020 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 556

BY REPRESENTATIVE DUPLESSIS

COURTS/COURT COSTS: Provides relative to juvenile court fees

1 AN ACT  
2 To amend and reenact R.S. 15:1093(A), R.S. 47:299.1, and Children's Code Articles 320(A),  
3 335(D), 405(B) and (G), 607(C), 774(B), 781.1(A), 793.4(A), 809(A), 811.2(A),  
4 839(C), 848, 868(B), 888(C), 896(G), 897(B)(2)(g), and 899(B)(2)(g); to enact R.S.  
5 13:1595.3(C) and Code of Criminal Procedure Article 887(I); and to repeal R.S.  
6 13:1565.2, 1595.2, and 1631, R.S. 15:910, 1086, 1094.7, and 1097.7, and Children's  
7 Code Articles 321, 405(D), (E), and (F), 781.1(B), 783, 8112(B), (C), and (D), 901.1,  
8 and 924(B) and (C), relative to court fees; to eliminate juvenile court fees, costs, and  
9 taxes associated with juvenile delinquency cases; and to provide for related matters.

10 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

11 Section 1. R.S. 13:1595.3(C) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

12 §1595.3. Fees; enumeration

13 \* \* \*

14 C. No court exercising juvenile jurisdiction in any parish in the state of  
15 Louisiana shall tax or assess costs against any juvenile delinquent or defendant, or  
16 the parents or guardians of the juvenile delinquent or defendant, for any judicial  
17 expenses or to cover any operating expenses of the court; including but not limited  
18 to, any salaries of court personnel, the establishment or maintenance of a law library  
19 for the court, or the purchase or maintenance of any type of equipment or supplies.

20 \* \* \*

Section 2. R.S. 15:1093 is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

§1093. Juvenile detention centers; special court costs

A. The district court in any parish which is also contained within the jurisdiction of any juvenile detention center ~~may levy special costs in the amount of fifty dollars against every defendant who is convicted of a felony after trial or who enters a plea of guilty or nolo contendere or forfeits bond, excluding traffic offenses and misdemeanors~~ shall not levy special costs against a defendant who is adjudicated delinquent, convicted of a felony, or who enters a plea of guilty or nolo contendere or forfeits bond.

\* \* \*

Section 3. R.S. 47:299.1 is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

§299.1. Purpose

A. The purpose of this Part is to establish a system to permit agencies of the state of Louisiana to make a claim of offset to the secretary of revenue against any amounts refundable to an individual because of overpayments of Louisiana individual income taxes for debts owed by the individual to such agencies. It is the intention of the legislature that this offset remedy be in addition to and not in substitution of any other remedy or action provided for by law in favor of such agency for the collection of debts.

B. Any debts resulting from a delinquency adjudication are exempted from the provisions of this Section.

C. Any debts resulting from the conviction of a person who was a child at the time of their offense are exempt from the provisions of this Section.

\* \* \*

Section 4. Children's Code Articles 320(A), 335(D), 405(B) and (G), 607(C), 774(B), 781.1(A), 793.4(A), 809(A), 811.2(A), 839(C), 848, 868(B), 888(C), 896(G), 897(B)(2)(g), and 899(B)(2)(g) are hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

1 Art. 320. Indigency determination

2 A. For purposes of the appointment of counsel, children are presumed to be  
3 indigent, regardless of court jurisdiction.

4 \* \* \*

5 Art. 335. Preparation of record; costs

6 \* \* \*

7 D. If a child desires a transcript for appeal, ~~he or his parents shall pay the~~  
8 ~~cost of transcription of the record unless the court determines that the child and his~~  
9 ~~parents lack means to pay such cost~~ one shall be provided at no expense to the child,  
10 or the parent or guardian of the child.

11 \* \* \*

12 Art. 405. Court or witness fees; travel expenses

13 \* \* \*

14 B. The court may authorize the payment of necessary travel expenses to  
15 witnesses attending in response to summons. Travel expenses, when authorized by  
16 the court, shall be paid from the general fund of the parish or other funds available  
17 to the court. Except in proceedings initiated by the state, the court may authorize the  
18 payment of curator expenses and fees, which, if so authorized, shall be fixed by the  
19 court and paid by petitioners, unless the petitioner is a child or the parent or guardian  
20 of a child petitioner. In such a case, no fees shall be assigned to the child, or the  
21 parent or guardian of the child.

22 \* \* \*

23 G. In all cases in which support rights have been assigned to the Department  
24 of Children and Family Services as a condition of eligibility for Family  
25 Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP) and in all civil, criminal, or  
26 juvenile support proceedings initiated by the department on its own behalf or on  
27 behalf of a non-AFDC applicant, the provisions of Chapter 2 of Title XIII shall apply  
28 as to imposition of a collection fee against the person owing the support obligation.  
29 However, if a cost or fee originates from any proceeding involving a juvenile

1 delinquent, that cost or fee shall not be imposed against the child, or the parent or  
2 guardian of the child.

3 \* \* \*

4 Art. 607. Child's right to appointed counsel; payment

5 \* \* \*

6 C. ~~If the court finds that the parents of the child are financially able, it may~~  
7 ~~order the parents to pay some or all of the costs of the child's representation in~~  
8 ~~accordance with Children's Code Articles 320 and 321. Representation shall be~~  
9 provided to the child at no expense to the child, or the parent or guardian of the child.

10 \* \* \*

11 Art. 774. Physical and mental examination for disposition

12 \* \* \*

13 B. ~~After giving the caretaker a reasonable opportunity to be heard, the court~~  
14 ~~may order that he shall contribute to the cost of any court-ordered examination or~~  
15 ~~evaluation in an amount commensurate with his ability to pay. The child, or the~~  
16 parent or guardian of the child, shall not be responsible for the costs arising from an  
17 order for a physical or mental examination.

18 \* \* \*

19 Art. 781.1. Probation and parole supervision fees

20 A. When the court suspends the imposition or execution of sentence and  
21 places the child or his parent or both on supervised probation or grants the child  
22 supervised parole, and the probationer or parolee is to be supervised by the  
23 Department of Public Safety and Corrections or any other agency, ~~the court shall~~  
24 ~~order payment, as a condition of probation or parole, of a monthly supervision fee.~~  
25 ~~The supervision fee imposed shall be not less than ten nor more than one hundred~~  
26 ~~dollars per month and shall be payable to the department or other supervising agency~~  
27 ~~to defray the costs of supervision. These funds are only to supplement the level of~~  
28 ~~funds that would ordinarily be available from regular state or other appropriations~~

1 the court shall not order the child or the parent or guardian of the child to pay any  
2 supervision fees as a condition of probation or parole.

3 \* \* \*

4 Art. 793.4. Early intervention fund; fees collected

5 A. ~~In all criminal matters except for matters involving traffic violations in~~  
6 ~~the parishes of East Baton Rouge, Iberia, St. Mary, and St. Martin, there shall be~~  
7 ~~taxed against every defendant who is convicted after trial or after a plea of guilty or~~  
8 ~~nolo contendere or who forfeits his bond, a sum in the amount of twenty-five dollars~~  
9 ~~for each misdemeanor and fifty dollars for each felony, which shall be in addition to~~  
10 ~~all other fines, costs, or forfeitures lawfully imposed, and which shall be transmitted~~  
11 ~~to the sheriff of the respective parish for further disposition in accordance with the~~  
12 ~~provisions of this Article.~~ No taxes or fees may be imposed upon any child who is  
13 adjudicated delinquent or convicted after trial or after a plea of guilty or nolo  
14 contendere or who forfeits his bond in any parish, or the parent or guardian of the  
15 child.

16 \* \* \*

17 Art. 809. Right to counsel

18 A. At every stage of proceedings under this Title, the accused child shall be  
19 entitled to the assistance of counsel at state expense. The court shall appoint counsel  
20 or refer the child for representation by the district public defender. Neither the child  
21 nor the parent or guardian of the child shall be responsible for payment of any  
22 portion of the costs of the child's representation.

23 \* \* \*

24 Art. 811.2. Victims of juvenile crime compensation fund; established;  
25 disbursements

26 A. ~~All courts exercising juvenile jurisdiction may levy a special cost in an~~  
27 ~~amount not to exceed fifteen dollars against any juvenile defendant, other than an~~  
28 ~~indigent, who is found to have committed a traffic violation resulting in injury or~~  
29 ~~property loss, or who pleads guilty to or is adjudicated convicted of a juvenile~~

1 ~~offense. Such cost shall be in addition to any fine, clerk's fees or costs, or any other~~  
2 ~~fees or costs provided by law. No special costs shall be levied against any child who~~  
3 ~~is found to have committed a traffic violation resulting in injury or property loss, or~~  
4 ~~who pleads guilty to or is convicted of or adjudicated delinquent for any related~~  
5 ~~offense, or against the parent or guardian of the child.~~

6 \* \* \*

7 Art. 839. Availability of an informal adjustment agreement

8 \* \* \*

9 C. When entering an informal adjustment agreement, the court may, with  
10 concurrence of the district attorney, utilize or initiate a teen or youth court program,  
11 but shall not and may assess a fee to a participant in the program, or the parent or  
12 guardian of the participant to offset costs.

13 \* \* \*

14 Art. 848. Notice of right to counsel; form

15 "NOTICE

16 RIGHT TO COUNSEL

17 Under the laws of Louisiana, every child accused of delinquency is entitled  
18 to have a lawyer to be present and to assist the child to answer the attached petition.  
19 A child is entitled to be represented by a lawyer at every stage of proceedings in the  
20 juvenile court, including the right to appeal from any judgment of disposition which  
21 might be ordered by the court.

22 The court may appoint a lawyer to assist the child. If the court does appoint  
23 a lawyer to assist the child, such appointment shall be at no cost to the child or the  
24 parent or guardian of the child.

25 ~~If the parents of an accused child are completely financially unable to afford~~  
26 ~~to employ a lawyer, the court will appoint a lawyer and the state will pay for his~~  
27 ~~services.~~

~~If the parents are found to be financially able to afford to employ a lawyer but fail to employ one, the juvenile court may appoint a lawyer for the child and require the parents to pay for the lawyer's services.~~

~~The financial ability or inability of the parents to employ a lawyer will be determined by the court after a hearing. The court may require the parents to pay for some or all of the costs of lawyer's services on behalf of the child.~~

After consulting with the parents or other adult interested in the child's welfare, the child may be permitted by the court to proceed without the assistance of a lawyer. This decision can be made at any time during the proceedings in the juvenile court."

\* \* \*

Art. 868. Medical treatment of children; costs

\* \* \*

B. If the parent fails to provide such care, the court may, after due notice to the parent, order the care ~~and order the parent to pay all or part of the expense, but~~ the court shall not order the parent to pay any part of the expense resulting from the order.

\* \* \*

Art. 888. Physical and mental examination for disposition; costs

\* \* \*

C. The court may, after due notice to the parent, order the parent to pay all or part of the expense of any evaluation or examination. The court shall make a determination of the parent's ability to pay according to the procedures of Article 406. The child, or the parent or guardian of the child, shall not be responsible for the costs arising from an order for a physical or mental examination following an adjudication.

\* \* \*

### Art. 896. Deferred dispositional agreement

\* \* \*

G. Pursuant to the provisions of this Article, the court has the authority to utilize or initiate a teen or youth court program, but shall not ~~and may~~ assess a fee to a participant in the program, or the parent or guardian of the participant ~~to offset costs.~~

\* \* \*

Art. 897. Disposition after adjudication of a felony-grade delinquent act

\* \* \*

B. As conditions of probation, if ordered pursuant to Subparagraph (A)(3) of this Article:

\* \* \*

(2) The court may impose any other term and condition deemed in the best interests of the child and the public, including:

\* \* \*

(g) ~~A requirement that the child pay a supervision fee of not less than ten nor more than one hundred dollars per month, payable to the Department of Public Safety and Corrections or other supervising agency, to defray the costs of supervision. The amount of the fee shall be based upon the financial ability of the payor to pay such a fee. The court may order a parent, tutor, guardian, or other person who is financially responsible for the care of the child to be responsible for payment of all or part of any supervision fee imposed.~~ No supervision fee of any amount shall be required of the child or of any adult who is financially responsible for the care of the child.

\* \* \*

Art. 899. Disposition after adjudication of a misdemeanor-grade delinquent act

\* \* \*

B. As conditions of probation, if ordered pursuant to Subparagraph A(3) of this Article:

\* \* \*



1 (2) The court may impose any other term and condition deemed in the best  
2 interests of the child and the public, including:

3 \* \* \*

4 (g) ~~A requirement that the child pay a monthly supervision fee of not less~~  
5 ~~than ten nor more than one hundred dollars per month, payable to the Department of~~  
6 ~~Public Safety and Corrections or other supervising agency, to defray the cost of~~  
7 ~~supervision. The court may order a parent, tutor, guardian, or other person who is~~  
8 ~~financially responsible for the care of the child to be responsible for payment of all~~  
9 ~~or part of any supervision fee imposed.~~ No supervision fee of any amount shall be  
10 required of the child or of any adult who is financially responsible for the care of the  
11 child.

12 \* \* \*

13 Section 5. Code of Criminal Procedure Article 887(I) is hereby enacted to read as  
14 follows:

15 Art. 887. Defendant's liability for costs; suspension of costs; no advance costs

16 \* \* \*

17 I. Paragraphs A through H of this Article shall not be construed to authorize  
18 any jurisdiction or agency to impose costs of prosecution or proceeding on any  
19 juvenile delinquent or any juvenile convicted as an adult, or on the parent or  
20 guardian of any juvenile delinquent or the parent or guardian of any juvenile  
21 convicted as an adult.

22 Section 6. R.S. 13:1565.2, 1595.2, and 1631, R.S. 15:910, 1086, 1094.7, and 1097.7,  
23 and Children's Code Articles 321, 405(D), (E), and (F), 781.1(B), 783, 8112(B), (C), and  
24 (D), 901.1, and 924(B) and (C) are hereby repealed in their entirety.

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DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HB 556 Original

2020 Regular Session

Duplessis

**Abstract:** Eliminates administrative fees, costs, and taxes related to juvenile delinquency cases.

Under present law, courts are required or allowed to assess administrative fees, costs, and taxes in juvenile delinquency cases. Courts impose these fees, costs, and taxes on juveniles or their parents or guardians.

Present law establishes a Judicial Expense fund for the Juvenile Courts for Caddo Parish, Orleans Parish, and East Baton Rouge Parish.

Present law allows the fund for the juvenile courts for Caddo Parish, Orleans Parish, and East Baton Rouge Parish to be used for any operating expenses of the courts. Monies for the fund are generated through court fines and court assessed fees and court costs.

Present law allows juvenile detention centers to levy a special cost against a defendant who is convicted of a felony after trial or who enters a plea of guilty or nolo contendere or forfeits bond, excluding traffic offenses and misdemeanors.

Present law also allows for an amount to be deducted from any fine imposed prior to disposition of the fine in lieu of imposing such special costs.

Present law provides that in the parishes of Bienville, Claiborne, DeSoto, Natchitoches, Red River, Sabine, and Webster, in all courts exercising juvenile jurisdiction, special costs in the amount of \$50 shall be levied against every juvenile who is found to have committed a traffic violation or who is adjudicated a delinquent.

Present law provides that the child or the parents or guardians are responsible for the following fees, costs, or taxes, including but not limited to:

- (1) Probation and parole supervision fees.
- (2) Supervision fees associated with the disposition after adjudication of misdemeanor and felony grade delinquent acts.
- (3) Teen or youth court program fee.
- (4) Physical and mental examination fee following an adjudication or for disposition.
- (5) Fees related to lawyer's services when the court appoints a lawyer.
- (6) Special costs against any juvenile defendant who is found to have committed a traffic violation resulting in the injury or property loss or who pleads guilty to or is adjudicated convicted of a juvenile offense.
- (7) Taxes against every defendant who is convicted after trial or after a plea of guilty or nolo contendere or who forfeits his bond in all criminal matters except for matters involving traffic violations in the parishes of East Baton Rouge, Iberia, St. Mary, and St. Martin.

- (8) Parent's contribution to costs of care and treatment.
- (9) Fee for a copy of the child's transcript for appeal.
- (10) Curator expenses and fees to be paid by the petitioners.

Proposed law eliminates all fees, costs, and taxes in juvenile delinquency cases.

Proposed law eliminates the Judicial Expense Fund for the Juvenile Courts for Caddo Parish, Orleans Parish, and East Baton Rouge Parish.

(Amends R.S. 15:1093(A), R.S. 47:299.1, and Ch.C. Arts. 320(A), 335(D), 405(B) and (G), 607(C), 774(B), 781.1(A), 793.4(A), 809(A), 811.2(A), 839(C), 848, 868(B), 888(C), 896(G), 897(B)(2)(g), and 899(B)(2)(g); Adds R.S. 13:1595.3(C) and C.Cr.P. Art. 887(I); Repeals R.S. 13:1565.2, 1595.2, and 1631, R.S. 15:910, 1086, 1094.7, and 1097.7, Ch.C. Arts. 321, 405(D), (E), and (F), 781.1(B), 783, 8112(B), (C), and (D), 901.1, and 924(B) and (C))