

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 278

BY REPRESENTATIVES EDMONSTON, DICKERSON, EGAN, AND MCMAKIN AND
SENATOR BARROW

COURTS/FAMILY: Provides rules for live streaming proceedings in The Family Court for
East Baton Rouge Parish

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 13:1401.2 through 1401.5, relative to The Family Court proceedings in East
3 Baton Rouge Parish; to require live streaming, remote public access of all family
4 court proceedings, including status conferences; to provide for the payment of costs
5 associated with live streaming, remote public access of The Family Court
6 proceedings and status conferences; to provide relative to matters heard in chambers;
7 to provide relative to custody hearings; to provide for an effective date; and to
8 provide for related matters.

9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

10 Section 1. R.S. 13:1401.2 through 1401.5 are hereby enacted to read as follows:

11 §1401.2. The Family Court of East Baton Rouge Parish; constitutional access

12 A. Article I, Section 22 of the Louisiana Constitution of 1974, known as the
13 "Access to Courts" clause, mandates that "All courts shall be open, and every person
14 shall have an adequate remedy by due process of law and justice, administered
15 without denial, partiality, or unreasonable delay."

16 B. Notwithstanding an other provision of law to the contrary, The Family
17 Court of East Baton Rouge Parish shall provide for live streaming, remote public
18 access of all court proceedings, including status conferences.

1 C. Any costs for upgrading the current internet system to provide live
2 streaming, remote access to the public shall be paid from funds in the Court
3 Modernization and Technology Fund pursuant to R.S. 39:100.211.

4 §1401.3. The Family Court of East Baton Rouge Parish; sitting in chambers

5 The court may sit in chambers only to take the testimony of a minor with the
6 parties and counsel of record present, whether contested or not, in the discretion of
7 the judge.

8 §1401.4. The Family Court for the Parish of East Baton Rouge; custody matters

9 In all custody matters, the court may invoke the use of the minors initials or
10 a pseudonym for the minor and all parties to the suit shall refer to the minor by such
11 initials or pseudonym during the proceedings.

12 §1401.5. The Family Court of East Baton Rouge Parish; closed custody hearing

13 A custody hearing shall not be closed to the public unless all of the following
14 occur:

15 (1) The judge determines on the record that good cause exists based upon
16 evidence submitted.

17 (2) All parties have agreed, in writing and on the record, to the closing of the
18 courtroom to the public.

19 Section 2. The live streaming, remote public access described in R.S. 13:1401.2(B)
20 as enacted by Section 1 of this Act shall be provided for all court proceedings, including
21 status conferences, no later than January 1, 2027.

22 Section 3. The provisions of this Act shall become effective on January 1, 2027.

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)]

HB 278 Original

2026 Regular Session

Edmonston

Abstract: Provides for audio-visual live streaming, remote public access to family court proceedings and status conferences and rules regarding custody and in chamber proceedings in The Family Court for East Baton Rouge Parish.

Proposed law requires that The Family Court of East Baton Rouge Parish provide for live streaming, public access to family court proceedings and status conferences no later than Jan. 1, 2027.

Proposed law requires the costs for upgrading the current internet system for The Family Court of East Baton Rouge Parish to be paid from funds in the Court Modernization and Technology Fund (R.S. 39:100.211).

Proposed law requires that matters in The Family Court of East Baton Rouge Parish be heard only in chambers for the testimony of a minor with all parties and counsel of record present.

Proposed law authorizes The Family Court of East Baton Rouge Parish to use a minor's initials or a pseudonym for custody matters.

Proposed law prohibits custody hearings in The Family Court of East Baton Rouge Parish from being closed to the public unless the judge determines that good cause exists based upon evidence submitted and all parties agree in writing and on the record.

Effective Jan. 1, 2027.

(Adds R.S. 13:1401.2 through 1401.5)