

2026 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 227

BY SENATORS HARRIS AND HENRY

LAW ENFORCEMENT. Creates a pre-Spectrum Alert action plan. (8/1/26)

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AN ACT

To enact Chapter 24-F of Title 40 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 40:2530.11, relative to a pre-Spectrum Alert action plan; to provide for requirements; to provide for rules and regulations; to provide for terms, conditions, and procedures; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. Chapter 24-F of Title 40 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 40:2530.11, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

CHAPTER 24-F. PRE-SPECTRUM ALERT ACTION PLAN

§2530.11. Pre-Spectrum Alert action plan; requirements; rules and regulations

A. The legislature finds that autism spectrum disorder (ASD) significantly affects children in this country, creating unique challenges that can lead to critical safety risks, such as elopement or wandering behaviors in children. Children with ASD are prone to wander from safe environments at a higher rate than their nonautistic peers. Elopement frequently results in severe consequences, including fatalities caused by traffic accidents and drowning. Notably, drowning is the leading cause of death of children with ASD in this

1 country. The high propensity for elopement and the ineffectiveness of
2 traditional search and response methods necessitate a robust system that will
3 swiftly locate and ensure the safety of missing children with ASD. The
4 legislature finds that a standardized system is necessary to aid in the search for
5 a missing child with ASD.

6 B. No later than July 1, 2027, the Department of Public Safety and
7 Corrections, in cooperation with the Department of Children and Family
8 Services, shall institute a pre-Spectrum Alert action plan to enhance the safety
9 and well-being of children with ASD through immediate and effective
10 community and emergency response. The plan shall, at a minimum, consist of
11 one or more programs to:

12 (1) Develop a training program and alert system for missing children
13 with ASD that is compatible with existing alert systems. The training program
14 shall implement crisis intervention team training to equip law enforcement
15 officers with the skills to understand ASD and other mental illnesses, to
16 de-escalate interactions with children in crisis, to facilitate appropriate
17 interventions, and to respond effectively to a reported missing child emergency
18 when the child has ASD.

19 (2) Establish policies and procedures for responding to a reported
20 missing child emergency when the child has ASD. The policies and procedures
21 shall, at a minimum, provide for all of the following:

22 (a) Immediate and widespread dissemination of critical information
23 when a child with ASD is reported missing.

24 (b) Enhancement of emergency response teams' competence by
25 informing them of the unique behaviors and needs of children with ASD.

26 (c) Measures to increase public awareness and understanding of the risks
27 associated with autism-related elopement, to foster community support for
28 children with ASD.

29 (3) Require a law enforcement agency, at a minimum, to do all of the

1 **following upon receiving a missing child with ASD report:**

2 **(a) Contact media outlets in the affected area or inform all on-duty law**
3 **enforcement officers of the reported missing child with ASD.**

4 **(b) Communicate the report to all other law enforcement agencies in the**
5 **parishes surrounding the parish in which the report was filed.**

6 **C. The secretary of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections and**
7 **the secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services may**
8 **promulgate rules and regulations in accordance with the Administrative**
9 **Procedure Act to carry out the provisions of this Section.**

10 **D. The implementation of the provisions of this Section shall be subject**
11 **to the appropriation of funds by the legislature for this purpose.**

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Senate Legislative Services. The keyword, summary, 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)]

DIGEST

SB 227 Original

2026 Regular Session

Harris

Proposed law requires the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections (DPS&C), in cooperation with the Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS), to institute a pre-Spectrum Alert action plan to enhance the safety and well-being of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) through immediate and effective community and emergency response.

Proposed law requires the plan to, at a minimum, consist of one or more programs to:

- (1) Develop a training program and alert system for missing children with ASD which is compatible with existing alert systems.
- (2) Establish policies and procedures for responding to a reported missing child emergency when the child has ASD, with the policies and procedures, at a minimum, providing for all of the following:
 - (a) Immediate and widespread dissemination of critical information when a child with ASD is reported missing.
 - (b) Enhancement of emergency response teams' competence by informing them of the unique behaviors and needs of children with ASD.
 - (c) Measures to increase public awareness and understanding of the risks associated with autism-related elopement, to foster community support for children with ASD.
- (3) Require a law enforcement agency, at a minimum, to do all of the following upon receiving a missing child with ASD report:

- (a) Contact media outlets in the affected area or inform all on-duty law enforcement officers of the reported missing child with ASD.
- (b) Communicate the report to all other law enforcement agencies in the parishes surrounding the parish in which the report was filed.

Proposed law authorizes the DPS&C secretary and the DCFS secretary to promulgate rules and regulations in accordance with the APA to carry out the provisions of proposed law.

Proposed law provides that the implementation of proposed law is subject to available funding.

Effective August 1, 2026.

(Adds R.S. 40:2530.11)