
DIGEST

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HB 998 Engrossed

2026 Regular Session

Freeman

Abstract: Provides relative to the examination and medical care of victims of domestic violence, including strangulation.

Present law (R.S. 15:622) provides for sexual assault collection kits.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law defines "forensic medical examination".

Proposed law amends the definition in present law as follows:

- (1) Adds victims of domestic violence, including strangulation, as recipients of forensic medical examinations.
- (2) Provides for additional assessments within a forensic medical examination relative to patient interviews, collection and evaluation of evidence, testing, and medication.

Proposed law (R.S. 15:622(A)(6) and R.S. 40:1216.1(H)(8)) defines "domestic violence".

Present law (RS 40:1216.1) provides for procedures for survivors of a sexually oriented criminal offense.

Proposed law amends present law to include survivors of domestic, including strangulation.

Present law provides for the procedures that are included within the examination and treatment of sexual assault survivors.

Proposed law amends present law to provide for additional assessments within the examination and treatment relative to patient interviews, collection and evaluation of evidence, testing, and medication.

Present law prohibits the direct billing of a survivor of a sexually oriented criminal offense for any healthcare services rendered in conducting a forensic medical examination.

Proposed law amends present law as follows:

- (1) Adds survivors of domestic violence, including strangulation, as individuals who are exempt from direct billing.
- (2) Provides what is considered medical treatment and what is exempt from forensic costs or billing.
- (3) Provides for billing through the insurance provider of the patient, if applicable.

Present law (RS 46:1816) provides for the Crime Victims Reparations Fund.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law requires the fund to be composed of monies from the collection of unclaimed prize money provided in present law (R.S. 4:176 and R.S. 27:94, 252, 394, and 610) exclusively used to pay the expenses associated with healthcare services of victims of sexually oriented criminal offenses, including forensic medical examinations.

Proposed law retains present law and adds expenses associated with the healthcare services of victims of domestic violence, including strangulation.

Present law (R.S. 46:1822) provides for forensic medical examinations and reimbursement for these examinations.

Proposed law retains present law and provides for services, procedures, testing, and medication that the reimbursement amounts encompass.

Proposed law provides for duties of the La. State Law Institute relative to the proper placement of proposed law.

Proposed law provides for implementation no later than six months from the effective date of proposed law as follows:

- (1) Establishment, by the Crime Victims Reparations Board within the La. Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice, of a statewide domestic violence forensic protocol and implementation of procedures for processing the reimbursement of forensic medical examinations pursuant to present law (R.S. 46:1822).
- (2) Coordination, by the La. Dept. of Justice, office of the attorney general, and other state agencies and stakeholders across La. to develop and approve a standardized, statewide forensic medical examination.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 15:622 (A)(intro. para.), (2), and (3), the heading of Part III-A of Subchapter D of Ch. 5-D of Title 40 of the La. Rev. Stat. of 1950, R.S. 40:1216.1(A)(intro. para.), (1)(b), and (2)(intro.

para.), (b), and (c)-(e), (5)(intro. para.), (6), and (7), and (G)(1), R.S. 46:1816(B)(intro. para.) and (8) and 1822(A); Adds R.S. 15:622(A)(6) and R.S. 40:1216.1(A)(5)(c) and (H)(8))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice to the original bill:

1. Remove the references to human trafficking-related offenses.
2. Provide for an implementation time period of not later than six months from the effective date of proposed law for the following to occur:
 - (a) The Crime Victims Reparations Board within the La. Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice to establish a statewide domestic violence forensic protocol and implement procedures for processing the reimbursement of forensic medical examinations pursuant to present law (R.S. 46:1822).
 - (b) The La. Dept. of Justice, office of the attorney general, to work with other state agencies and stakeholders to develop and approve a standardized statewide forensic medical examination.
3. Provide for an effective date upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.
4. Make technical changes.