

2026 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 52

BY SENATOR CATHEY

CHILDREN/FAMILY SERVICES DEPT. Provides relative to public assistance benefits for children. (8/1/26)

AN ACT

To enact R.S. 46:109, relative to public assistance benefits; to provide for the duties of the Department of Children and Family Services and the Louisiana Department of Health; to provide for reporting; to provide for the adjustment of benefits under certain circumstances; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 46:109 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§109. Public assistance benefits; change in household; reporting; fraud

A. For the purpose of assisting the Louisiana Department of Health in identifying changes in household circumstances for benefit allotments, the Department of Children and Family Services shall report identifying information to the Louisiana Department of Health within seventy-two hours of a child being placed in the custody of the Department of Children and Family Services. The Louisiana Department of Health shall determine the required information necessary to identify the child and the child's household.

B. Upon receipt of a report from the Department of Children and Family Services pursuant to this Section, the Louisiana Department of Health shall

immediately:

(1) Review whether either of the child's parents is receiving any public assistance benefits as a result of the child being included in the parent's household.

(2) Adjust any Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, WIC, or FITAP benefits for the parent's household to reflect the change in circumstance.

(3) If the child is enrolled in Medicaid, issue a new Medicaid managed care insurance card for the child at the child's new residence.

C. If the child has not reached the age of eighteen at the time the child is returned to the custody of the child's parent, the Department of Children and Family Services shall report to the Louisiana Department of Health when the child is returned to the custody of the child's parent.

D. If the Louisiana Department of Health receives an application for a public assistance benefit for a child that is included in another household that receives benefits, the department shall conduct an assessment to determine where the child is currently residing and adjust the benefit allotment accordingly.

E. If the Louisiana Department of Health determines that an individual failed to report a change in household circumstances and is receiving public assistance benefits for a child that is no longer living in the household, the department shall report the individual to the fraud detection unit of the department for investigation and recovery of ineligible benefits.

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)]

SB 52 Original

DIGEST
2026 Regular Session

Cathey

Proposed law requires the Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to report to the La. Dept. of Health (LDH) within 72 hours of a child being placed in the custody of DCFS.

Proposed law requires LDH, upon receipt of a report from DCFS, to immediately:

- (1) Review whether either of the child's parents is receiving any public assistance benefits as a result of the child being included in the parent's household.
- (2) Adjust any SNAP, WIC, or FITAP benefits for the parent's household to reflect the change in circumstance.
- (3) If the child is enrolled in Medicaid, issue a new Medicaid managed care insurance card for the child at the child's new residence.

Proposed law requires DCFS to report to LDH if a child under the age of 18 is returned to the custody of the child's parent.

Proposed law requires LDH to conduct an assessment to determine where a child is residing and adjust the benefits allotment accordingly if LDH receives an application for benefits for a child that is included in another household that receives benefits.

Proposed law requires LDH to report any individual that failed to report a change in household circumstances and is receiving public assistance benefits for a child that is no longer living in the household to the department's fraud unit.

Effective August 1, 2026.

(Adds R.S. 46:109)