
DIGEST

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HB 193 Reengrossed

2021 Regular Session

Marcelle

Abstract: Creates the office on women's health within the La. Department of Health and provides for the functions of the office.

Present law provides that the La. Department of Health (LDH) shall be composed of the following offices:

- (1) The executive office of the secretary.
- (2) The office of management and finance.
- (3) The office of public health.
- (4) The office of behavioral health.
- (5) The office for citizens with developmental disabilities.
- (6) The office of aging and adult services.
- (7) Such other offices as shall be created by law.

Proposed law creates within LDH the office on women's health. Provides that the office shall be responsible for leading, consolidating, and coordinating efforts across the state that are intended to improve women's health outcomes through policy, education, evidence-based practices, programs, and services.

Proposed law provides that the office on women's health shall perform all of the following functions:

- (1) Educate and advocate for women's health, either on its own or in partnership with other entities, by establishing appropriate forums, programs, or initiatives designed to educate the public regarding women's health, with an emphasis on preventive health and healthy lifestyles.
- (2) Identify, coordinate, and establish priorities for programs, services, and resources for women's health issues and concerns.
- (3) Serve as a clearinghouse and resource regarding women's health data, strategies, services,

and programs that address women's health issues.

- (4) Collect, classify, and analyze relevant information and data resulting from research conducted or compiled by LDH and any collaborative entities; provide information to the public regarding the results of such research except as prohibited by law.
- (5) Develop and recommend funding and program activities for educating the public on women's health initiatives relating to social determinants of health.
- (6) Make recommendations to the secretary of LDH concerning programs that address women's health issues for inclusion in the department's budget and strategic planning.
- (7) Seek funding from private or other governmental entities to carry out the purposes provided in proposed law.
- (8) Prepare for publication and dissemination to the public materials regarding women's health.
- (9) Conduct public educational forums in La. to raise public awareness and to educate citizens about women's health programs, issues, and services.
- (10) Coordinate the activities and programs of the office with other entities that focus on women's health or women's issues.
- (11) Provide an annual report to the governor, the legislature, and the secretary of LDH concerning the priorities and services needed for women's health in this state and areas for improvement.

Present law provides that each office within LDH, except the office of management and finance, shall be under the immediate supervision and direction of an assistant secretary, who shall be appointed by the governor with consent of the Senate. Requires that, except as otherwise provided in present law, each assistant secretary shall employ, appoint, remove, assign, and promote such personnel as is necessary for the efficient administration of their office and its programs in accordance with applicable civil service laws, rules, and regulations, and with policies and rules of LDH, all subject to budgetary control and applicable laws. Proposed law retains present law.

Proposed law requires LDH to develop a proposed operating budget for FY 2022-2023 which shall include salaries and benefits for an assistant secretary, executive assistant to the assistant secretary, and an employee specializing in research and grant applications. Proposed law further requires funding for the office to be included in the executive budget for FY 2022-2023.

Provisions of proposed law relative to the creation of the office of women's health become effective June 30, 2022. All other provisions of proposed law become effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 36:251(C)(1); Adds R.S. 36:258(M))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Health and Welfare to the original bill:

1. Prohibit the office on women's health created by proposed law from doing any of the following:
 - a. Utilizing any personnel or funding to promote abortion.
 - b. Coordinating with any entity that promotes abortion.

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Appropriations to the engrossed bill:

1. Remove the prohibition on the office of women's health utilizing any personnel or funding to promote abortion or coordinating with any entity that promotes abortion.
2. Require LDH to develop a proposed operating budget for the office and require funding for the office to be included in the executive budget for FY 2022-2023.
3. Change the effective date for the creation of the office to July 1, 2022.