

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 515 (SB 312)

2024 Regular Session

Edmonds

New law creates within the Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) the Adoption Awareness Program and states that the purpose of the program is to encourage two-parent families, provide awareness of current adoption options, and ensure access to correct information on adoption.

New law directs DCFS to contract with eligible vendors who will be responsible for providing supportive services.

New law requires a contracted vendor to provide the following services:

- (1) Marketing of adoption information and resources.
- (2) Providing a telephone hotline to provide information about the adoption process.
- (3) Providing educational and training resources about adoption for healthcare professionals serving pregnant women.

New law allows a contracted vendor to subcontract with another entity to provide services.

New law provides that a nonprofit corporation or other entity is eligible to contract with DCFS to provide services if the vendor and any subcontractor meets all of the following requirements:

- (1) Is in good standing with the secretary of state and registered to do business in this state.
- (2) Is capable of providing services.
- (3) Is not an abortion provider or an entity that promotes, refers for, or assists women in obtaining an abortion.

New law provides the eligibility requirements for participation in the Adoption Awareness Program. A participant must be any of the following:

- (1) A Louisiana resident who is the biological parent of an unborn child.
- (2) A parent of a child under two years of age.
- (3) A parent of a child in the custody of DCFS.
- (4) A parent of a minor who is the biological parent of an unborn child.

New law requires the contracted vendor to submit a monthly report on the status and operation of the Adoption Awareness Program and provides requirements for the content of such reports.

New law requires that DCFS implement the Adoption Awareness Program with funds obtained through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant.

New law allows the contracted vendor to use program funds to provide required services, market the program with the state, and cover administrative and other associated costs if the administrative costs does not exceed 15%.

New law provides protection of religious freedom, freedom of speech, and freedom of assembly protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and the La. Constitution to contracted vendors, subcontractors, and employees of contracted vendors or subcontractors.

New law requires the La. Dept. of Health and DCFS to include a link to the AdoptionOption.La.Gov website, or any successor state agency website that promotes adoption awareness and makes adoption resource information available to the public, in a prominent location on the departments' websites.

New law provides that the provisions of new law shall not be implemented unless monies sufficient to fund new law are obtained from the TANF block grant.

Effective January 1, 2025.

(Adds R.S. 46:1445.1-1445.14)