

2020 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 501

BY REPRESENTATIVE WILLARD

INSURANCE/HEALTH: Provides for health insurance coverage for midwifery services

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 22:1057, relative to health insurance coverage for midwifery services; to  
3 require health insurance coverage for healthcare services provided by midwives; to  
4 provide for legislative findings; to prohibit discrimination in reimbursement; to  
5 define key terms; to provide for applicability; to establish an effective date; and to  
6 provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 22:1057 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

9 §1057. Required coverage for midwifery services; reimbursement discrimination  
10 prohibited; definitions

11 A. The legislature hereby finds and affirms all of the following:

12 (1) Licensed midwives are community-based practitioners who provide  
13 comprehensive, holistic, individualized maternity care and alternative birthing  
14 services to low-risk clients.

15 (2) Midwifery care is family-centered and individualized to consider the  
16 unique cultural, ethnic, psychosocial, nutritional, and educational needs of the client  
17 and supports healthy lifestyle habits that benefit the whole family.

18 (3) Midwives have made a tremendous contribution to the health and welfare  
19 of mothers and the practice of midwifery continues to advance as a profession as  
20 these providers comprise an increasing part of mainstream health care.

1           B.(1) Any health coverage plan delivered or issued for delivery in this state  
2           that provides benefits for maternity services shall include coverage for healthcare  
3           services provided by a midwife.

4           (2) The coverage provided for in this Section may be subject to annual  
5           deductibles, coinsurance, and copayment provisions as are consistent with those  
6           established under the health coverage plan.

7           C.(1) Whenever any health coverage plan delivered or issued for delivery in  
8           this state provides for reimbursement of any services which are within the lawful  
9           scope of practice of a licensed midwife as defined in R.S. 37:3241, the insured or  
10          other person entitled to benefits under the health coverage plan shall be entitled to  
11          reimbursements for the services, whether the services are performed by a physician  
12          or a midwife.

13          (2) There shall be no discrimination in the amount of reimbursement allowed  
14          for the services, whether performed by a midwife or physician, in instances where  
15          the services performed are within the lawful scope of practice of both professions.

16          (3) Terminology in any health coverage plan policy or contract deemed  
17          discriminatory against midwives or the practice of midwifery shall be void.

18          D. For purposes of this Section, the following definitions apply:

19          (1) "Health coverage plan" means any hospital, health, or medical expense  
20          insurance policy, hospital or medical service contract, employee welfare benefit plan,  
21          contract, or other agreement with a health maintenance organization or a preferred  
22          provider organization, health and accident insurance policy, or any other insurance  
23          contract of this type in this state, including a group insurance plan, a self-insurance  
24          plan, and the Office of Group Benefits programs. "Health coverage plan" shall not  
25          include a plan providing coverage for excepted benefits as defined in R.S. 22:1061,  
26          limited benefit health insurance plans, and short-term policies that have a term of  
27          less than twelve months.

1                   (2) "Midwife" means a certified nurse midwife licensed by the Louisiana  
2                   State Board of Nursing or a midwife licensed pursuant to the Midwife Practitioners  
3                   Act, R.S. 37:3240 et seq.

4                   Section 2(A). This Act shall become effective on January 1, 2021.

5                   (B) This Act shall apply to any new policy, contract, program, or health coverage  
6 plan issued on and after January 1, 2021. Any policy, contract, or health coverage plan in  
7 effect prior to January 1, 2021, shall convert to conform to the provisions of this Act on or  
8 before the renewal date, but no later than January 1, 2021.

---

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, 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)]

---

HB 501 Original

2020 Regular Session

Willard

**Abstract:** Requires health insurance coverage for healthcare services provided by midwives and prohibits discrimination in reimbursement amounts.

Proposed law requires any health coverage plan delivered or issued for delivery in this state that provides benefits for maternity services to include coverage for healthcare services provided by a midwife, subject to annual deductibles, coinsurance, and copayment provisions as are consistent with those established under the health coverage plan.

Proposed law provides that the insured or other person entitled to benefits under the health coverage plan is entitled to reimbursements for services within the lawful scope of practice of a licensed midwife as defined in law, whether the services are performed by a physician or a midwife.

Proposed law prohibits discrimination in the amount of reimbursement allowed for midwifery services, whether performed by a midwife or physician, in instances where the services performed are within the lawful scope of practice of both professions.

Proposed law defines "health coverage plan" and "midwife".

Effective Jan. 1, 2021.

(Adds R.S. 22:1057)