

2022 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 259

BY SENATOR HEWITT

STATE AGENCIES. Provides reporting requirements for certain state agencies that administer certain federal and state social service or financial assistance programs. (gov sig)

1 AN ACT

2 To enact Chapter 21 of Title 49 of the Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S.  
3 49:1401-1403, relative to certain public benefit programs; to require annual reports  
4 from state agencies administering federal and state social services and financial  
5 assistance programs; to enhance program integrity; to eliminate fraud, waste, and  
6 abuse of federal and state resources; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. Chapter 21 of Title 49 of the Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S.  
9 49:1401-1403 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 **CHAPTER 21. REPORTS**

11 **§1401. Short title**

12 **This Chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Public Benefit**  
13 **Integrity Law".**

14 **§1402. Definition of terms**

15 **As used in this Chapter, the following terms have the meanings ascribed**  
16 **to them in this Section unless otherwise clearly indicated by context:**

17 **(1) "Agency" means any of the following state departments:**

1 **(a) Department of Children and Family Services.**

2 **(b) Department of Education.**

3 **(c) Louisiana Department of Health.**

4 **(d) Louisiana Workforce Commission.**

5 **(2) "Program" means any of the following:**

6 **(a) Medicaid.**

7 **(b) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).**

8 **(c) Family Independence Temporary Assistance (FITAP).**

9 **(d) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).**

10 **(e) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants, and**

11 **Children (WIC).**

12 **(f) Unemployment Compensation.**

13 **(g) Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).**

14 **§1403. Reports**

15 **Beginning in 2023, any agency that administers a program shall, no later**  
16 **than February fifteenth of each year, submit a report to the legislature,**  
17 **providing, at a minimum, the following information:**

18 **(1) For the current fiscal year, the total dollar amount and percentage**  
19 **of the agency's budget for the program allocated for program integrity and**  
20 **eliminating fraud, waste, and abuse.**

21 **(2) A description of the agency's current policies and practices that**  
22 **reduce fraud, waste, and abuse of program benefits.**

23 **(3) For the preceding calendar year, the total number of individuals**  
24 **determined by the agency or Legislative Auditor to have improperly received**  
25 **benefits through the program and the total dollar amount of benefits**  
26 **improperly received.**

27 **(4) The type and amount of improper payments.**

28 **(5) The type and amount of any improper payments prevented, if known.**

29 **(6) The dollar amount the state saved in preventing improper payments,**

1 and if any, in recouping improper payments.

2 (7) A description of all policies, processes, and procedures in place at the  
3 agency to determine eligibility for the program. The description shall include  
4 details about what information the agency verifies or cross-checks through  
5 databases and data exchanges with other agencies, including national databases,  
6 and the frequency of that verification or cross-checking.

7 (8) A description of all policies, processes, and procedures in place at the  
8 agency to identify individuals receiving benefits under the program who are no  
9 longer eligible to receive benefits and what steps, if any, are taken and under  
10 what timeline, to remove identified individuals from program participation.

11 (9) A detailed description of all policies, processes, and procedures in  
12 place at the agency to verify federal or state work or work search requirements  
13 for benefit eligibility, if applicable.

14 (10) The frequency with which the agency performs the verification.

15 (11) A description of any barriers the agency identifies to implementing  
16 additional program integrity measures, including privacy or data sharing  
17 impediments, administrative burden, and any increase in financial cost.

18 (12) A description of all metrics and data points used by the agency to  
19 measure success of the program, including all metrics and data points related  
20 to program integrity and fraud.

21 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not  
22 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature  
23 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If  
24 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become  
25 effective on the day following such approval.

---

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by LG Sullivan.

---

DIGEST

SB 259 Reengrossed                      2022 Regular Session                      Hewitt

Proposed law provides for the "Public Benefit Integrity Law". Requires the Dept. of Children and Family Services, Dept. of Education, La. Dept. of Health, and La. Workforce Commission to report to the legislature annually regarding the agency's policies and processes for identifying and eliminating fraud, waste, and abuse in certain government-funded programs and the results of the application of those policies and processes.

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

(Adds R.S. 49:1401-1403)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Senate Floor Amendments to engrossed bill

1. Requires affected agencies to include the frequency with which the agency performs the verification checks in their respective annual report.