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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Carla S. Roberts.

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DIGEST

SB 312 Original

2024 Regular Session

Edmonds

Proposed law creates within the Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) an adoption awareness program and provides 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.

Proposed law defines "agency adoption", "birth parent", "expectant parent", "department", and "home study".

Proposed law directs the Dept. of Children and Family Services to contract with an eligible vendor who will be responsible for providing supportive services.

Proposed law requires the contract vendor to provide the following services:

- (1) Marketing of adoption information and resources.
- (2) Provide for a telephone hotline providing information about the adoption process; how the adoption process works for expectant parents, resources and support for expectant parents, birth parents, and adopted children, a biological parents' rights and legal protections; and adoption agencies in Louisiana.
- (3) Education and training about adoption for providers serving pregnant women.

Proposed law allows the vendor to contract with another entity to provide services.

Proposed law provides the eligibility requirements for participation in the Adoption Awareness Program. A participant must be:

- (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 the Dept. of Children and Family services; or
- (4) A parent of a minor who is the biological parent of an unborn child.

Proposed 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.

Proposed law requires that the Dept. of Children and Family Services finance the Adoption

Awareness Program with TANF funds to the extent feasible.

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

Proposed law provides protection for the contracted vendor and its employees such that giving up religious freedom, freedom of speech and freedom of assembly protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitutions and the La. Constitution.

Proposed law requires that nothing in proposed law is intended to alter the requirements for adoption in present law.

Proposed law directs the Dept. of Children and Family Services to establish the Adoption Support Program.

Proposed law provides that the Adoption Support Program may reimburse La. residents who have adopted a child or those seeking to adopt a child, who qualify as a foster parent, or qualify as a respite care provider for certain qualification and out-of-pocket expenses.

Proposed law directs the Dept. of Children and Family Services to issue rules necessary for carrying out disclosure requirements.

Proposed law directs the contracted vendor to prepare a brochure or other media describing the program and pertinent contact information, including the website.

Proposed law requires the Dept. of Children and Family Services to distribute the information brochure to public health offices, including those in high schools and middle schools, charitable pregnancy clinics, any person tested for sexually transmitted diseases through a public health office, and any pregnant woman applying for Medicaid.

Proposed law requires the Dept. of Children and Family Services to provide the informational brochure to the parent of any child taken into DCFS custody.

Proposed law provides for severability of any provision held to be invalid.

Effective August 1, 2024.

(Adds R.S. 46:1445.1-1445.13)