

2026 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 52

BY SENATOR CATHEY

CHILDREN/FAMILY SERVICES DEPT. Provides relative to public assistance benefits for children. (8/1/26)

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 46:109, relative to public assistance benefits; to provide for the duties of the
3 Department of Children and Family Services and the Louisiana Department of
4 Health; to provide for reporting; to provide for the adjustment of benefits under
5 certain circumstances; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 46:109 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

8 **§109. Public assistance benefits; change in household; reporting; fraud**

9 **A. For the purpose of assisting the Louisiana Department of Health in**
10 **identifying changes in household circumstances for benefit allotments, the**
11 **Department of Children and Family Services shall report identifying**
12 **information to the Louisiana Department of Health within seventy-two hours**
13 **following a hearing held pursuant to Children's Code Article 624. The**
14 **Louisiana Department of Health shall determine the required information**
15 **necessary to identify the child and the child's household.**

16 **B. Upon receipt of a report from the Department of Children and Family**
17 **Services pursuant to this Section, the Louisiana Department of Health shall**

1 immediately:

2 (1) Review whether either of the child's parents is receiving any public
 3 assistance benefits as a result of the child being included in the parent's
 4 household.

5 (2) Adjust any Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, WIC, or
 6 FITAP benefits for the parent's household to reflect the change in circumstance.

7 (3) If the child is enrolled in Medicaid, issue a new Medicaid managed
 8 care insurance card for the child at the child's new residence.

9 C. If the child has not reached the age of eighteen at the time the child
 10 is returned to the custody of the child's parent, the Department of Children and
 11 Family Services shall report to the Louisiana Department of Health when the
 12 child is returned to the custody of the child's parent.

13 D. If the Louisiana Department of Health receives an application for a
 14 public assistance benefit for a child that is included in another household that
 15 receives benefits, the department shall conduct an assessment to determine
 16 where the child is currently residing and adjust the benefit allotment
 17 accordingly.

18 E. If the Louisiana Department of Health determines that an individual
 19 failed to report a change in household circumstances and is receiving public
 20 assistance benefits for a child that is no longer living in the household, the
 21 department shall report the individual to the fraud detection unit of the
 22 department for investigation and recovery of ineligible benefits.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Senate Legislative Services. The keyword, summary, 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)]

SB 52 Reengrossed

DIGEST
2026 Regular Session

Cathey

Proposed law requires the Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to report identifying information to the La. Dept. of Health (LDH) within 72 hours following a hearing held pursuant to present law for the purpose of identifying changes in household circumstances for benefit allotments.

Proposed law requires LDH, upon receipt of a report from DCFS, to immediately:

- (1) Review whether either of the child's parents is receiving any public assistance benefits as a result of the child being included in the parent's household.
- (2) Adjust any SNAP, WIC, or FITAP benefits for the parent's household to reflect the change in circumstance.
- (3) If the child is enrolled in Medicaid, issue a new Medicaid managed care insurance card for the child at the child's new residence.

Proposed law requires DCFS to report to LDH if a child under the age of 18 is returned to the custody of the child's parent.

Proposed law requires LDH to conduct an assessment to determine where a child is residing and adjust the benefits allotment accordingly if LDH receives an application for benefits for a child that is included in another household that receives benefits.

Proposed law requires LDH to report any individual that failed to report a change in household circumstances and is receiving public assistance benefits for a child that is no longer living in the household to the department's fraud unit.

Implementation of the provisions of proposed law shall be subject to the appropriation of funds by the legislature for this purpose.

Effective August 1, 2026.

(Adds R.S. 46:109)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Finance to the engrossed bill

1. Require DCFS to report identifying information to LDH within 72 hours following a hearing held pursuant to present law.
2. Make technical changes.