

Jeff Landry
GOVERNOR



Rebecca Harris
SECRETARY

State of Louisiana

Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services

April 9, 2026

Senate Committee on Health and Welfare
apa.s-h&w@legis.la.gov

House Committee on Health and Welfare
apa.h-hw@legis.la.gov

RE: Summary Report - Louisiana Pregnancy and Baby Care Initiative (LAC 67:V, Chapter 9)

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) hereby announces its plan to proceed with rulemaking by finalizing the Notice of Intent entitled, "Louisiana Pregnancy and Baby Care Initiative" which was published in the February 20, 2026 issue of the *Louisiana Register*. The proposed Rule will adopt LAC 67:V, Subpart 2, Chapter 9, Louisiana Pregnancy and Baby Care Initiative (PBCI).

The department held a public hearing on March 31, 2026, and received one written public comment in response to the proposed Rule. The commenter expressed general support for the proposed regulations while offering recommendations regarding medical standards for subcontractors, protection of patient privacy, regulation of educational materials, and public transparency.

Upon review of the comment, the department determined that the proposed Rule is necessary to comply with R.S. 46:972.1 by outlining the structure necessary to implement the provisions of the initiative. Therefore, no changes were made to the proposed Rule. The department will continue its efforts to refine provisions to ensure the proper delivery of services.

Unless otherwise directed, the department intends to submit the Final Rule for publication in the May 2026 issue of the *Louisiana Register*, to be effective June 1, 2026.

Please contact me at Charles.Watkins.DCFS@la.gov if the department may be of any assistance regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles Watkins".

Charles Watkins
Assistant Secretary, Family Support

cc: Christopher Bahm, Undersecretary, DCFS
Mona Chapman, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Family Support, DCFS
Julie Starns, TANF Program Director, DCFS
Office of State Register

Attachments

Notices of Intent

NOTICE OF INTENT

Department of Children and Family Services Division of Child Welfare

Louisiana Pregnancy and Baby Care Initiative
(LAC 67:V.Chapter 9)

In accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act R.S. 49:950 et seq., the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) proposes to adopt LAC 67:V, Subpart 2, Chapter 9, Louisiana Pregnancy and Baby Care Initiative (PBCI).

Pursuant to R.S. 46:972.1, adoption of Chapter 9, Louisiana Pregnancy and Baby Care Initiative (PBCI), is necessary to implement a program designed to improve access to resources that promote childbirth for women experiencing unplanned pregnancies, while providing comprehensive support services, including pregnancy support, parenting support, and adoption assistance. The proposed Rule establishes the framework for implementing the initiative, under which DCFS shall enter into an agreement with a nonprofit organization to coordinate and oversee the delivery of services.

Title 67

SOCIAL SERVICES

Part V. Child Welfare

Subpart 2. Community Services

Chapter 9. Louisiana Pregnancy and Baby Care Initiative (PBCI)

§901. Eligibility for Services

A. The Louisiana Pregnancy and Baby Care Initiative (PBCI) is a program designed to provide pregnancy, parenting, and adoption support. Program services are available to Louisiana residents who are:

1. pregnant;
2. the biological father of an unborn child;
3. the biological or adoptive parent, or legal guardian, of a child from birth through thirty-six months of age;
4. a program participant who has experienced the loss of a child; or
5. an immediate family member of a current biological parent who is a program participant.

B. Program services are available during pregnancy and may continue for up to thirty-six months following the birth of the child.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 46:972.1.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Children and Family Services, Division of Child Welfare, LR 52:

§903. Authorized Services

A. Services provided under the PBCI shall be limited to the following:

1. counseling or mentoring intended to improve the pregnancy or parenting situation, including care coordination for prenatal services, providing educational materials and information about pregnancy and parenting;

- a. Counseling services shall be provided only by individuals or organizations that hold a professional license, or by individuals or organizations providing services funded by Medicaid and not reimbursed through this program.

- b. Mentoring services shall be provided only by individuals or organizations that hold approved training certificates or whose experience has been specifically approved by the department on a service-by-service basis.

2. referrals intended to improve the pregnancy or parenting situation, including referrals to parish and social service programs; referrals for childcare, transportation, housing resources, state and federal benefit programs, and health programs;

3. classes intended to improve the pregnancy or parenting situation, including classes on life skills, healthy pregnancies, budgeting, parenting, stress management, job training, and job placement; and

- a. Classes or educational materials shall use an evidence-based, evidence-informed, or otherwise department approved curriculum.

4. material items intended to improve the pregnancy or parenting situation, including but not limited to car seats, cribs, maternity clothing, infant diapers, and formula.

B. Program subcontractors may offer additional services at their discretion; however, only services authorized under applicable state law are reimbursable through the PBCI. Services not authorized for reimbursement shall not be funded by the PBCI.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 46:972.1.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Children and Family Services, Division of Child Welfare, LR 52:

§905. General Contractor Responsibilities

A. DCFS will select a single nonprofit organization to serve as a general contractor responsible for managing the provision of services under the PBCI. The general contractor may not provide direct services to clients and shall:

1. subcontract on a fee-for-service basis with other local nonprofits, such as pregnancy centers, adoption agencies, and maternity homes, that will directly provide services to clients;

2. submit all proposed subcontracts to the department for review and approval;

- a. A subcontractor may not receive funding under the program without prior written approval from the department.

- b. The department may deny approval of any subcontractor that does not meet applicable programmatic requirements.

3. provide ongoing monitoring and oversight of all approved subcontractors to ensure strict adherence to program requirements;

4. establish and implement a formal review process to review subcontractor performance against established benchmarks and outcomes;

5. ensure that all funds disbursed to subcontractors are used solely for authorized services and in compliance with department financial standards;

6. ensure that all subcontracts include provisions granting the department, or its designee, the right to audit, inspect, and copy all records related to the subcontractor's performance and participant eligibility verification;

7. identify deficiencies in subcontractor performance and require corrective action plans when necessary; and

8. notify the department immediately of any violation of program policy or statutory requirements by a subcontractor.

B. Documentation Requirements

1. The general contractor must ensure that all subcontractors maintain and submit complete documentation for any services or materials funded through the program. Documentation shall be sufficient to support reimbursable expenses and verify participant eligibility. Payments may be disallowed for services provided when required documentation is incomplete, inaccurate, or unavailable.

a. Documentation of participant eligibility may include information reasonably available from participants, such as evidence of pregnancy, relationship to the minor or unborn child, or a signed certification attesting to specific eligibility criteria.

b. Documentation of services and materials provided must include department-required records, receipts, invoices, proof of reimbursable expenses, and any records necessary to verify eligibility and compliance with service standards for services funded through the program.

C. Record Retention

1. The general contractor must ensure that subcontractors maintain service and eligibility documentation for a minimum of three calendar years from the end of the calendar year in which the documentation was received, or a longer period if required by the department.

2. If a subcontractor ceases participation in the program, the general contractor must obtain and maintain all relevant records for the required retention period.

D. Consistent with R.S. 46:972.1, the department shall not impose requirements on the general contractor other than those set forth in this Chapter and the standard terms and conditions of the contract.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 46:972.1.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Children and Family Services, Division of Child Welfare, LR 52:

§907. Department Oversight and Penalties

A. DCFS shall monitor the program to ensure that services reimbursed under the PBCI are provided to eligible clients and to support accurate reimbursement, accountability, and consistent oversight of program performance and outcomes.

B. Failure by the general contractor to comply with R.S. 46:972.1, applicable contract requirements, or the standards set forth in this Chapter may result in enforcement action by the department. Such enforcement actions may include, but are not limited to:

1. withholding of payments;
2. recoupment of payments;
3. assessment of liquidated damages;
4. imposition of monetary fines; and/or
5. termination of the contract.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 46:972.1.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Children and Family Services, Division of Child Welfare, LR 52:

Family Impact Statement

The proposed Rule is not anticipated to have an impact on family formation, stability, and autonomy as described in R.S. 49:972.

Poverty Impact Statement

The proposed Rule is not anticipated to have an impact on poverty as defined by R.S. 49:973.

Small Business Statement

The proposed Rule is not anticipated to have an adverse impact on small businesses as defined in the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

Provider Impact Statement

The proposed Rule is not anticipated to have an impact on providers of services funded by the state as described in HCR 170 of the 2014 Regular Legislative Session.

Public Comments

All interested persons may submit written comments to Yazan Rantisi, DCFS Policy and Rulemaking Director, Department of Children and Family Services, P.O. Box 3776, Baton Rouge, LA 70821 or by email to DCFSPublicHearings@la.gov. The deadline for submitting written comments is at 4:30 p.m. on March 31, 2026.

Public Hearing

A public hearing on the proposed Rule will be held on March 31, 2026, at DCFS, Iberville Building, 627 North Fourth Street, Room 127, Baton Rouge, LA beginning at 9 a.m. All interested persons will be afforded an opportunity to submit data, views, or arguments, orally or in writing, at said hearing.

Individuals with disabilities who require special services should contact the DCFS Policy and Rulemaking Unit at least seven working days in advance of the hearing. For assistance, call (225) 219-0210 (voice and TDD).

Rebecca Harris
Secretary

**FISCAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR ADMINISTRATIVE RULES**

RULE TITLE: Louisiana Pregnancy and Baby Care Initiative

I. ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION COSTS (SAVINGS) TO STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS (Summary)

As a result of the proposed rule, an expenditure increase for implementation costs of \$1.74 M, publication costs of \$1,385, and a minimal increase in workload are anticipated to impact the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). Implementation of the initiative will be supported by state general funds and/or federal funds as appropriated by the Louisiana legislature.

The proposed rule will include a minimal increase in workload because the initiative will be managed by one (1) Contract Monitor within the department, while implemented by a general contractor who will administer subcontracts for the provision of services and material goods to eligible participants.

II. ESTIMATED EFFECT ON REVENUE COLLECTIONS OF STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL UNITS (Summary)

This proposed rule will have no effect on revenue collections of state or local governmental units.

III. ESTIMATED COSTS AND/OR ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO DIRECTLY AFFECTED PERSONS OR NONGOVERNMENTAL GROUPS (Summary)

This proposed rule is not anticipated to provide economic cost or benefit to small businesses; however, the Louisiana Pregnancy and Baby Care Initiative will assist pregnant women and their families in the form of services and material items, and eligible nonprofit organizations (i.e., non-governmental groups) as general contractors and subcontractors to manage the program and provide services.

IV. ESTIMATED EFFECT ON COMPETITION AND EMPLOYMENT (Summary)

This proposed rule is not anticipated to have a significant impact on competition. The PBCI provides funding exclusively to eligible nonprofit organizations, and participation in the program may provide a competitive advantage to the selected general contractor and subcontractor, limited to nonprofit organizations offering similar services.

The proposed rule is not anticipated to have a significant impact on employment levels statewide. Program funding may support the continuation or modest expansion of employment within the nonprofit organizations, including counselors, case managers, and administrative staff. Additionally, program services may indirectly support workforce participation among recipients by reducing barriers related to pregnancy and parenting.

Christopher B. Bahm
Undersecretary
2602#019

Alan M. Boxberger
Legislative Fiscal Officer
Legislative Fiscal Office

NOTICE OF INTENT

Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Bulletin 746—Louisiana Standards for State Certification of School Personnel—Certification Endorsement (LAC 28:CXXXI.547, 1901, 1903, 1904, 1909, 1911, 1913, and 2103)

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 17:6(A)(10) and the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), R.S. 49:953(B)(1), *et seq.*, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) proposes to amend LAC 28:CXXXI in *Bulletin 746—Louisiana Standards for State Certification of School Personnel*. The revisions update the appeal process for issuance or reinstatement and clarifies criminal background check, rap back monitoring, fraud, and definitions. Further changes remove a redundant certification requirement for JROTC instructors and expand access to currently serving members of the U.S. Armed Forces, update paraprofessional ETS assessments, and provide for technical edits.

**Title 28
EDUCATION**

**Part CXXXI. Bulletin 746—Louisiana Standards for State Certification of School Personnel
Chapter 5. Teaching Credentials, Licenses and Certifications**

**Subchapter C. Ancillary Teaching Certificates
§547. Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps Instructor (ROTC)**

A. Effective June 1, 2026, a retiree, retired grade, non-retired/currently serving Guard/Reserve, or honorably discharged veteran who holds a current, valid JROTC

certification and recommendation issued by the appropriate branch of the U.S. Armed Forces is considered certified by BESE.

B. - B.2. Repealed.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 17:6, R.S. 17:7(6), R.S. 17:8.1-8.3, and R.S. 17:3902.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, LR 48:441 (March 2022), repromulgated LR 48:1045 (April 2022), amended LR 50:663 (May 2024), LR 52:

**Subchapter D. All Other Supervisory Endorsements
Chapter 19. Actions and Sanctions to Louisiana Educator Credentials**

§1901. Overview

A. Educator credentials can be sanctioned for a conviction of certain criminal offenses, for fraud, for professional license censure, for failure to meet the standards for effectiveness, or for participation in cheating. This chapter presents the circumstances that result in sanction, the criteria under which reinstatement or issuance may be obtained, and the circumstances under which a credential may be rescinded. Conditions and mandates for issuance and sanction outlined in this Chapter will be the same for all educator credentials issued by the Louisiana Department of Education.

B. - B.1. ...

2. The person has been found to have submitted or used fraudulent documents.

B.3. - E. ...

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 15:587.1, R.S. 17:6, R.S. 17:7(6), R.S. 17:8.7, R.S. 17:8.9, and R.S. 17:3902.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, LR 48:1750 (July 2022), amended LR 50:1448 (October 2024), LR 52:

§1903. Definitions

Cheating—as determined by the LDOE in accordance with LAC 28:XI, *Bulletin 118—Statewide Assessment Standards and Practices*, a testing irregularity and/or test security violation committed by an educator in order to alter student or school assessment results in violation of Bulletin 118, LAC 28:XI Chapter 53. The determination is made by the LDE in consultation with the LEA.

Clear Credential—designation on an educator certification record signifying the educator was fingerprinted for certification under the LDOE Originating Agency Identifier for the purposes of credentialing/licensing. The criminal background check (CBC) provided was free of disqualifying conviction, or the educator was cleared by BESE in accordance with records review provisions in accordance with §1919 of this Chapter.

Convicted or Conviction—any proceedings in which the accused person pleads guilty or no contest, and those proceedings that are tried and result in a judgment of guilty. Convictions also include matters that have been granted expungement and/or deferred disposition under Louisiana CCP Article 893 or 894.

Credential—documentation issued by the LDOE to validate educator qualifications including but not limited to certification, authorization, permit, or license.

Criminal Background Check (CBC)—bureau of criminal identification and information criminal history records and identification files, including Federal Bureau of Investigation