

August 2024

Economic Impact Statements for Proposed Rules

The corresponding proposed rule to each of the statements below may be viewed in its entirety in the August 20, 2024 *Louisiana Register*. Each *Louisiana Register* edition is published on the 20th of each month.

Promulgating Agency	Proposed Rule Title	Estimated Costs and/or Economic Benefits to Directly Affected Persons, Small Businesses, or Nongovernmental Groups
Board of Veterinary Medicine	Veterinary Practice	The proposed rule change will help better protect the public and animals of Louisiana from the unlicensed practice of veterinary medicine and by requiring an in-person, physical exam for the establishment of the Veterinarian-Client-Patient-Relationship.
Department of Agriculture and Forestry	Weights and Measures Fee Structure	The proposed metrology rule changes are estimated to increase costs to affected businesses a total of \$8,775. The proposed subsequent inspection fees are estimated to affect approximately 312 businesses per year. The total estimated impact will be \$63,355 (based on Act 210 of the 2024 RS).
Tuition Trust Authority	START Saving Program	The proposed rule changes adopt actual interest rates for deposits and earnings enhancements for the year ending December 31, 2023. As determined by the State Treasurer, the interest rate earned for the 2023 calendar year by the Louisiana Education Tuition and Savings Fund was 1.43%, and by the Savings Enhancements Fund was 2.86%. These interest rates are higher than the actual rates realized in the previous year and are the property of the account owners.
Office of the Governor	Electronic Monitoring Service Providers	There is no estimated cost and/or economic benefit to directly affected persons, small businesses, or non-governmental groups.
Office of the Governor	Peace Officer Training	There is an economic cost to those persons who conduct Level 1 basic training, as the compensation received for conducting this training (\$500 to \$800 per officer) may be received over a period of three years (instead of one year). Also, there is an economic benefit to those prospective officers who participate and complete the Level 1 basic training, to the extent that those who are required to assume the costs for training (\$500 to 800 per prospective officer) are able to spread those costs over a three-year period (instead of one year).

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<p>Department of Health</p>	<p>Standards of Practice and General Provisions</p>	<p>The proposed enactment of L.A.C. 46:XXV.325 provides for inactive status allowing licensed social workers not providing services to clients to maintain their license in an inactive status for up to five consecutive years up to a maximum of ten cumulative years. Social workers with licenses in inactive status will be required to complete only one-half of the 20 hours of continuing education required for licensed social workers. A reduction in the number of hours of continuing education hours could provide an economic benefit to social workers with inactive status.</p> <p>The proposed enactment of L.A.C. 46:XXV.327 provides for emeritus (retired) status for licensed social workers who are disabled or who are at least 60 and have been credentialed for at least 30 years and reduces the required continuing education hours from 20 hours to 10 hours, which may reduce the costs associated with obtaining continuing education. Social workers with emeritus status will be required to complete only one-half of the 20 hours of continuing education required for licensed social workers and will be required to pay only one-half of the applicable license renewal fee. Reductions in the number of hours of continuing education and license fees could provide an economic benefit to social workers with emeritus status.</p> <p>Social workers claiming emeritus status will benefit economically because their renewal fee is half of the renewal fee of someone without emeritus status. This benefit applies to a social worker with a valid registration, certification, or license.</p> <p>Social workers may benefit economically by being able to carry over up to ten surplus hours of continuing education from one collection period into a subsequent collection period. Additionally, social workers will have the option to obtain continuing education by attending meetings of the board and its committees.</p> <p>Licensed Master Social Workers (LMSW) applying for a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) credential may benefit from the proposed rules because they would be able to take the examination six months earlier and secure a job while completing their required courses for licensure. This would eliminate the waiting time for these social workers to complete the examination before accepting a job within their field.</p> <p>Additionally, social workers may benefit economically due to the decrease in the number of hours needed for supervised postgraduate social work practice from 5,760 hours to 3,000 hours.</p>
<p>Department of Health</p>	<p>Managed Care for Physical and Behavioral Health—Hospital Directed Payments</p>	<p>This proposed rule amends the provisions governing Medicaid managed care organizations (MCOs) to update and align language in the administrative rule with the preprints that are approved by the Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services that qualified hospitals with a balance owed as a result of reconciliation shall pay the amounts owed to the MCOs or the department. Implementation of this rule is not anticipated to result in any costs to providers in FY 24-25, FY 25-26, or FY 26-27.</p>
<p>Department of Health</p>	<p>Pharmacy Benefits Management Program—Vaccine Administration and Fees</p>	<p>This proposed rule amends the provisions governing the Pharmacy Benefits Management Program in order to align the language in the Louisiana Administrative Code relative to vaccine administration and fees for Medicaid coverage with the CMS-approved State Plan amendment. Implementation of this proposed rule will result in increased Medicaid payments to pharmacy providers, and small businesses of approximately \$2,644,941 in FY 24-25, \$2,644,941 in FY 25-26, and \$2,644,941 in FY 26-27.</p>
<p>Department of Health</p>	<p>Rural Health Clinics—Licensing Standards</p>	<p>It is anticipated that this proposed rule will likely result in reduced costs to RHCs, since RHCs will only be required to provide patient care services at least 50 percent of the time RHCs operate in FY 23-24, FY 24-25, and FY 25-26.</p>

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Department of Health	Code of Ethics Requirement	<p>Applicants for provisional licensure who have completed their ethics education requirements using a course that does not qualify under the proposed rule changes will need to take a newer ethics course which meets the proposed requirement. The Licensed Professional Counselors Board of Examiners estimates that between 5% and 15% of applicants submit outdated ethics coursework.</p> <p>Any applicants who completed their ethics coursework prior to 2014 (when the most recent Code of Ethics was published) will need to take either a preapproved continuing education ethics course or an ethics course provided by an academic program. The board reports that preapproved continuing education ethics courses cost \$350 on average, while tuition for an ethics course provided through an academic program will vary by university.</p> <p>The proposed rule change may increase revenue for accredited providers of continuing education coursework or academic institutions.</p>
Department of Public Safety and Corrections	Disciplinary Rules and Procedures for Adult Inmates	<p>There is an economic benefit for directly affected inmates who previously would have their incentive wages adversely impacted under Schedule B sanctions. For those who commit violations recategorized as Schedule A violations, there may be a minimal benefit from not having incentive pay reduced.</p>
Department of Revenue	Tobacco Tax	<p>Stamping agents purchasing tax stamps and opting to obtain insurance on the shipment of stamps from the stamp provider may incur some additional costs. Any additional costs for completion and submission of the required paperwork of this proposed rule are expected to be minor.</p>
Department of Wildlife and Fisheries	Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program	<p>Crab fishers who utilize the areas proposed for closure will experience lost fishing time during the designated period and encounter additional costs to temporarily remove their traps. These crab fishers must either move their traps to open fishing areas or remove their traps from the water for the duration of the closure. Traps that are not removed from waters in the closed areas within the allotted time may be destroyed, potentially creating an additional cost to replace the traps for noncompliant fishers.</p> <p>Local seafood dealers, processors and consumers may experience a slight decrease in the availability of fresh crabs during the closures, resulting in a slightly higher price for fresh crabs in the short term. However, the crab resource will not be lost or harmed in any way and will be available for harvest when the closed area is reopened.</p> <p>The removal of abandoned crab traps should provide improved fishing and reduced fishing costs for recreational saltwater fishers, commercial fishers and individuals who operate vessels within the designated areas by reducing encounters with abandoned traps that often result in lost fishing time and damage to the vessel's lower unit or fishing gear.</p> <p>The removal of abandoned crab traps will reduce the mortality and injuries to crabs and by-catch that become ensnared and die in these traps, benefiting crab harvesters.</p> <p>The overall impact of the proposed area closure is anticipated to be minimal because the closure would occur during the time of the year with the lowest harvests and adjacent waters will remain open for crab fishers to continue to fish.</p>
Workforce Commission	Plumbers—Licenses and Continuing Professional Education Programs	<p>The proposed rule change may result in an economic benefit for individual tradesmen who, under a Residential Plumber's license, will be allowed to perform a greater scope of work under the proposed rule change.</p> <p>The board estimates the proposed rule change will only affect 20 individuals. The proposed rule change may also allow their companies to utilize them on more jobs in the plumbing field.</p>