



**State of Louisiana**  
Louisiana Department of Health  
Office of the Secretary

July 10, 2020

**Via Statutorily Prescribed Email**

**To:** The Honorable Fred H. Mills, Jr., Chairman, Senate Health & Welfare Committee  
The Honorable Larry Bagley, Chairman, House Health & Welfare Committee

**From:** Dr. Courtney N. Phillips  
Secretary

**Re:** Second Report on Proposed Amendments to LAC 48:I.9505 –Hospital Licensing Standards – Obstetrical and Newborn Services

*Cindy Rives*

Pursuant to the Louisiana Administrative Procedure Act, the Louisiana Department of Health, Health Standards Section, submits its second report regarding the proposed – Hospital Licensing Standards – Obstetrical and Newborn Services rule amendment. A Notice of Intent on the proposed amendments was published in the March 20, 2020, issue of the *Louisiana Register* (LR 46:470). Written comments were received during the public comment period and an agency response was issued to the comments. A public hearing was held on May 28, 2020, persons from the public attended the hearing, however, no oral testimony was given at the hearing. Additionally, no substantive changes were made to the proposed amendments since the report provided for in R.S. 49:968B-C was submitted.

Unless otherwise directed, the Department anticipates adopting the March 20, 2020, Notice of Intent as a final rule when it is published in the August 20, 2020, issue of the *Louisiana Register*.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Cecile Castello, BSN, RN, LDH Deputy Assistant Secretary, Health Standards Section, at [cecile.castello@la.gov](mailto:cecile.castello@la.gov).

**Cc:** Brenda Blanchard, BSN, RN, LNCC, Health Standards Section, LDH  
Cecile Castello, BSN, RN, LDH Deputy Assistant Secretary, Health Standards Section, LDH  
Veronica Dent, Medicaid Program Manager, Policy and Waivers, LDH  
Anita Dupuy, Legislative Liaison, LDH  
Catherine Brindley, *Louisiana Register* Editor, Office of the State Register

**NOTICE OF INTENT**

**Department of Health  
Bureau of Health Services Financing**

**Hospital Licensing Standards  
Obstetrical and Newborn Services  
(LAC 48:I.9505)**

The Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing proposes to amend LAC 48:I.9505 as authorized by R.S. 36:254 and 40:2109. This proposed Rule is promulgated in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, R.S. 49:950 et seq.

The Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing proposes to amend the provisions governing the licensing of hospitals in order to allow an exception to the requirement that the level of care on the neonatal intensive care unit match or exceed the level of obstetrical care for each level of obstetric service for any hospital which has a current cooperative endeavor agreement linking the hospital to a public-private partnership with the state.

**Title 48**

**PUBLIC HEALTH—GENERAL**

**Part I. General Administration**

**Subpart 3. Licensing and Certification**

**Chapter 93**

**Subchapter S. Obstetrical and Newborn Services (Optional)**

**§9505. General Provisions**

A. This Subchapter S requires that the level of care on the neonatal intensive care unit shall match or exceed the level of obstetrical care for each level of obstetric service, except for free standing children's hospitals and for any hospital which has a current cooperative endeavor agreement linking the hospital to a public-private partnership with the state. All hospitals with existing obstetrical and neonatal services shall be in compliance with this Subchapter S within one year of the promulgation date of this Rule. All new providers of obstetrical and neonatal services shall be required to be in compliance with this Subchapter S immediately upon promulgation.

\*\*\*

B. - G. ...

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 40:2100-2115.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of the Secretary, Bureau of Health Services Financing, LR 29:2427 (November 2003), amended LR 33:284 (February 2007), amended by the Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing, LR 43:75 (January 2017), LR 46:

#### **Family Impact Statement**

In compliance with Act 1183 of the 1999 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, the impact of this proposed Rule on

the family has been considered. It is anticipated that this proposed Rule will have no impact on family functioning, stability and autonomy as described in R.S. 49:972.

#### **Poverty Impact Statement**

In compliance with Act 854 of the 2012 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, the poverty impact of this proposed Rule has been considered. It is anticipated that this proposed Rule will have no impact on child, individual, or family poverty in relation to individual or community asset development as described in R.S. 49:973.

#### **Small Business Analysis**

In compliance with Act 820 of the 2008 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, the economic impact of this proposed Rule on small businesses has been considered. It is anticipated that this proposed Rule will have no impact on small businesses, as described in R.S. 49:965.2 et seq.

#### **Provider Impact Statement**

In compliance with House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 170 of the 2014 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, the provider impact of this proposed Rule has been considered. It is anticipated that this proposed Rule will have no impact on the staffing level requirements or qualifications required to provide the same level of service, no direct or indirect cost to the provider to provide the same level of service, and will have

no impact on the provider's ability to provide the same level of service as described in HCR 170.

#### **Public Comments**

Interested persons may submit written comments to Cecile Castello, Health Standards Section, P.O. Box 3767, Baton Rouge, LA 70821. Ms. Castello is responsible for responding to inquiries regarding this proposed Rule. The deadline for submitting written comments is at 4:30 p.m. on April 29, 2020.

The department will conduct a public hearing at 9:30 a.m. on April 29, 2020 in Room 118 of the Bienville Building, which is located at 628 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA. All interested persons are invited to attend and present data, views, comments, or arguments, orally or in writing. Parking is available to the public in the Galvez Parking Garage which is located between North Sixth and North Fifth/North and Main Streets (cater-corner from the Bienville Building). Validated parking for the Galvez Garage may be available to public hearing attendees when the parking ticket is presented to LDH staff at the hearing.

Stephen R. Russo, JD

Interim Secretary

**John Bel Edwards**  
GOVERNOR



**Dr. Courtney N. Phillips**  
SECRETARY

**State of Louisiana**  
Louisiana Department of Health  
Bureau of Health Services Financing

**PUBLIC HEARING CERTIFICATION**  
**May 28, 2020**  
**9:30 a.m.**

RE: Hospital Licensing Standards  
Obstetrical and Newborn Services  
Docket # 05282020-02  
Department of Health  
State of Louisiana

**CERTIFICATION**

In accordance with LA R.S. 49:950 et seq., the attached public hearing agenda, together with one digital recording of the public hearing conducted on May 28, 2020 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana constitute the official record of the above-referenced public hearing.

*Robert K. Andrepoint*

Medicaid Policy and Compliance  
Section

05/28/20

Date



## SUMMARY OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

**Proposed Rule:** Hospital Licensing Standards - Obstetrical and Newborn Services  
**Public Hearing Date:** May 28, 2020  
**Docket No. :** 05282020-02  
**Conducted By:** Louisiana Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing Staff

Written Comments Received From	Mode of Receipt	Summary of Comments
Steven Spedale, MD FAAP P. Scott Barrilleaux, MD FACOG Joseph R. Biggio, Jr, MD FAAP	Email to LDH Deputy Assistant Secretary, Health Standards Section	Submitting comments as practicing clinicians providing specialty care coverage for multiple Louisiana facilities and to express concern and seek clarification regarding the Notice of Intent. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is currently an LDH workgroup charged with reviewing existing Health Standards facility rules for obstetrical levels of care, their relationship to neonatal levels of care and potential alignment with American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG) guidelines. It is of concern that LDH is proposing this rule change at this time rather than waiting for and considering recommendations of the LDH workgroup.</li> <li>2. Neither of the two active LDH clinical quality subcommittees was asked to participate in discussions of the proposed rule nor to offer clinical guidance.</li> <li>3. The proposed rule creates a different system of care for those select public-private partnership hospitals within the state.</li> <li>4. The Fiscal and Economic Impact Statement could be interpreted to mean that all neonatal level of care standards explicitly stated in the current rule would be inapplicable to these particular facilities.</li> </ol>



**From:** Steve Spedale <[Steve.Spedale@infamedics.com](mailto:Steve.Spedale@infamedics.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 12, 2020 10:41 AM  
**To:** Cecile Castello <[Cecile.Castello@LA.GOV](mailto:Cecile.Castello@LA.GOV)>  
**Cc:** Scott Barrilleaux <[pscottbx@yahoo.com](mailto:pscottbx@yahoo.com)>; Dr. Joseph Biggio ([joseph.biggio@ochsner.org](mailto:joseph.biggio@ochsner.org))  
<[joseph.biggio@ochsner.org](mailto:joseph.biggio@ochsner.org)>  
**Subject:** Comments - Notice of Intent  
**Importance:** High

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** Please do not click on links or attachments unless you know the content is **safe**.

Ms. Castello –

Please find attached comments regarding the Notice of Intent – Hospital Licensing Standards, Obstetrical and Newborn Services (LAC 48:I.9505).

Thank you for your consideration.

Steve Spedale

Steven B. Spedale MD FAAP  
President, Infamedics  
PO Box 45171  
Baton Rouge, LA 70895-4171  
Office 225-928-2555  
Cell 225-405-2265

**From:** Cecile Castello <[Cecile.Castello@LA.GOV](mailto:Cecile.Castello@LA.GOV)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 9, 2020 8:54 AM  
**To:** [Steve.Spedale@infamedics.com](mailto:Steve.Spedale@infamedics.com); Joseph Biggio <[joseph.biggio@ochsner.org](mailto:joseph.biggio@ochsner.org)>; 'Scott Barrilleaux' <[pscottbx@yahoo.com](mailto:pscottbx@yahoo.com)>  
**Cc:** Cecile Castello <[Cecile.Castello@LA.GOV](mailto:Cecile.Castello@LA.GOV)>  
**Subject:** FW: Comments - Notice of Intent  
**Importance:** High

Good morning

Thank you for your comments in response to the Notice of Intent for Hospital Licensing Standards – Obstetrical and Newborn Services which was published in the March 20, 2020 edition of the *Louisiana Register*.

The Department seriously considers all comments relative to proposed Regulations. Currently, the regulation requires that the level of care on the neonatal intensive care unit shall match or exceed the level of obstetrical care for each level of obstetric service, except for free standing children's hospitals. This rule revision is a change to the above which will allow an exception for any hospital which has a current cooperative endeavor agreement linking the hospital to a public-private partnership with the state.

Respectfully,

*Cecile*

Cecile Castello  
Deputy Assistant Secretary, Health Standards Section  
225-342-4997  
225-342-5073 (fax)  
[Cecile.castello@la.gov](mailto:Cecile.castello@la.gov)  
P. O. Box 3767  
628 N 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bienville Building  
Baton Rouge, LA 70801



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**State of Louisiana**  
Louisiana Department of Health  
Office of the Secretary

July 10, 2020

**Via Statutorily Prescribed Email**

**To:** The Honorable Fred H. Mills, Jr., Chairman, Senate Health & Welfare Committee  
The Honorable Larry Bagley, Chairman, House Health & Welfare Committee

**From:** Dr. Courtney N. Phillips  
Secretary *Cindy Rives*

**Re:** Second Report on Proposed Amendments to LAC 50:V.111 – Inpatient Hospital Services Coverage of Donor Human Breast Milk

Pursuant to the Louisiana Administrative Procedure Act, the Louisiana Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing, submits its second report regarding the proposed Inpatient Hospital Services Coverage of Donor Human Breast Milk rule amendment.

A Notice of Intent on the proposed amendments was published in the May 20, 2020 issue of the *Louisiana Register* (LR 46:732). Written comments were received, however, there was no request for a public hearing were received during the notice period. Because there were no requests for a public hearing, one was not held for these proposed amendments. Attached with this report are copies of the written comments for the record. Additionally, no substantive changes were made to the proposed amendments since the report provide for in R.S. 49:968B-C was submitted.

Unless otherwise directed, the Department anticipates adopting the May 20, 2020, Notice of Intent when it is published as a final rule in the August 20, 2020, issue of the *Louisiana Register*.

Please contact Jen Katzman, Deputy Medicaid Director at [jennifer.katzman@la.gov](mailto:jennifer.katzman@la.gov), if you have any questions or require additional information about this matter.

**Cc:** Jen Katzman, Deputy Medicaid Director, Louisiana Department of Health  
Veronica Dent, Medicaid Program Manager, Policy and Waivers  
Anita Dupuy, Legislative Liaison, Louisiana Department of Health  
Catherine Brindley, *Louisiana Register* Editor, Office of the State Register

**NOTICE OF INTENT**

**Department of Health  
Bureau of Health Services Financing**

**Inpatient Hospital Services  
Coverage of Donor Human Breast Milk  
(LAC 50:V.111)**

The Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing proposes to adopt LAC 50:V.111 in the Medical Assistance Program as authorized by R.S. 36:254 and pursuant to Title XIX of the Social Security Act. This proposed Rule is promulgated in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, R.S. 49:950 et seq.

The Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing proposes to adopt provisions governing reimbursement outside of the inpatient hospital per diem for donor human breast milk provided to hospitalized premature newborns in order to ensure access to an effective treatment to reduce the incidence of severe complications.

**Title 50**

**PUBLIC HEALTH MEDICAL ASSISTANCE  
Part V. Hospital Services  
Subpart 1. Inpatient Hospitals Services**

**Chapter 1. General Provisions**

**§111. Coverage of Donor Human Breast Milk**

A. The Medicaid Program shall provide reimbursement to acute care hospitals for donor human breast milk provided to hospitalized infants.

B. Reimbursement. Hospitals shall be reimbursed for donor human breast milk when obtained from a member bank of the Human Milk Banking Association of North America. Reimbursement will be made as an add-on service in addition to the hospital payment for the inpatient hospital stay.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 36:254 and Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing, LR 46:

Implementation of the provisions of this Rule may be contingent upon the approval of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), if it is determined that submission to CMS for review and approval is required.

#### **Family Impact Statement**

In compliance with Act 1183 of the 1999 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, the impact of this proposed Rule on the family has been considered. It is anticipated that this proposed Rule will have a positive impact on family functioning, stability and autonomy as described in R.S. 49:972 by ensuring

that premature newborns have access to an effective treatment to prevent serious complications.

**Poverty Impact Statement**

In compliance with Act 854 of the 2012 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, the poverty impact of this proposed Rule has been considered. It is anticipated that this proposed Rule will have a positive impact on child, individual, or family poverty in relation to individual or community asset development as described in R.S. 49:973 ensuring that premature newborns have access to an effective treatment to prevent serious complications.

**Small Business Analysis**

In compliance with Act 820 of the 2008 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, the economic impact of this proposed Rule on small businesses has been considered. It is anticipated that this proposed Rule will have no impact on small businesses, as described in R.S. 49:965.2 et seq.

**Provider Impact Statement**

In compliance with House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 170 of the 2014 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, the provider impact of this proposed Rule has been considered. It is anticipated that this proposed Rule will have no impact on the staffing level requirements or qualifications required to provide the same level of service, no direct or indirect cost to

the provider to provide the same level of service, and will have no impact on the provider's ability to provide the same level of service as described in HCR 170.

#### **Public Comments**

Interested persons may submit written comments to Ruth Johnson, Bureau of Health Services Financing, P.O. Box 91030, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-9030. Ms. Johnson is responsible for responding to inquiries regarding this proposed Rule. The deadline for submitting written comments is at 4:30 p.m. on June 29, 2020.

Interested persons may submit a written request to conduct a public hearing by U.S. mail to the Office of the Secretary ATTN: LDH Rulemaking Coordinator, Post Office Box 629, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-0629; however, such request must be received no later than 4:30 p.m. on June 9, 2020. If the criteria set forth in R.S. 49:953(A)(2)(a) are satisfied, LDH will conduct a public hearing at 9:30 a.m. on June 25, 2020 in Room 118 of the Bienville Building, which is located at 628 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA. To confirm whether or not a public hearing will be held, interested persons should first call Allen Enger at (225) 342-1342 after June 9, 2020. If a public hearing is to be held, all interested persons are invited to attend and present data, views, comments, or arguments, orally or in writing. In the event of a hearing, parking is available to the

public in the Galvez Parking Garage, which is located between North Sixth and North Fifth/North and Main Streets (cater-corner from the Bienville Building). Validated parking for the Galvez Garage may be available to public hearing attendees when the parking ticket is presented to LDH staff at the hearing.

Dr. Courtney N. Phillips

Secretary





2700 Napoleon Avenue  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70115  
A Campus of Ochsner Medical Center  
*Neonatal Intensive Care*

June 22, 2020

Louisiana Department of Health  
c/o Ms. Ruth Johnson, Medicaid Executive Director  
Bureau of Health Services Financing  
Post Office Box 91030  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821-9030

***Re: Inpatient Hospital Services Coverage of Donor Human Breast Milk  
(LAC 50:V.111)***

Dear Director Johnson:

As the Section Head of neonatology for Ochsner Health and a practicing neonatologist in Louisiana for 33 years, I am pleased to see that our State has decided to support the use of donor human milk for our newborns whose mothers are unable to provide this source of nutrition for their baby (or babies). While being the medical director of the Mothers' Milk Bank of Louisiana prevents me from being completely objective, I can state unequivocally that the use of human milk has been proven to be superior to commercial formula and potentially a lifesaving therapy. When discussing human milk feedings with the parents of babies in the Ochsner Baptist NICU, I refer to human milk as the equivalent of an immunization as we know it can prevent illness. The use of commercial formula has been directly linked to an increased rate of necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC), a life-threatening intestinal disease, which may result in the loss of a portion or all the small or large bowel of the newborn. Should the baby develop and survive the acute phase of NEC, surgery may be required for removal of the diseased part of the affected intestine. The baby may experience what is known as short bowel syndrome. The hospitalization is significantly extended and may result in digestive problems for the patient which may be lifelong. In the worst cases the entire bowel is lost and the baby, who previously may have been a normal, growing, premature infant, is unable to survive.

Section Head, Neonatology  
Medical Director, Neonatal ICU  
Harley G. Ginsberg, M.D.  
504 842-3656

Unit Director, Neonatal ICU  
Paula Simon, BSN, RNC  
504 842-4930

Manager, Neonatal ICU  
Kimberly Mayfield, MSN, RNC-NIC

Judith S. Graham  
Administrative Assistant  
504 842-3658

Neonatologists:  
Victor E. Lunyong, M.D.  
504 842-6248

Omotola O. Uwaifo, M.D.  
504 842-3625

Ulana Pogribna, M.D.  
504 842-4832

Stacey Soileau, M.D.  
504 894-2024

Amanda England, M.D.  
504 894-2619

Lead Neonatal Nurse  
Practitioner  
Cielena Houck, MN, APRN  
504 842-3664

Supervisor/Clinical Coordinator  
Christine Ferry, MN, RNC-NIC  
504 842-3187

Social Worker  
Tasha Johnson, LCSW  
504 842-4777

Jamie Johnson, LMSW  
504 894-2469

Neonatal Discharge Coordinator  
Karen Roy, RN  
504 842-3138

Palliative Care Nurse  
Thad Hicks, RNC, CPLC  
504 842-3666

Lactation Consultant  
Elizabeth Licata, RN, CLC, IBCLC  
504 894-2183

Reading through the *Notice of Intent*, it was gratifying to see that the donor human milk was specifically referenced as being covered if it was obtained from a member bank of the Human Milk Banking Association of North America (HMBANA). Like blood donations, human milk from a HMBANA bank is acquired from donor mothers and strictly regulated. Our milk bank must be reaccredited annually and is subject to unannounced inspection. The use of donor human milk throughout Louisiana and the United States has been impacted by its cost of processing. I have spoken to many of our State's neonatologists who have found hospitals reluctant to purchase donor human milk due to its expense. The benefits to and long-term wellbeing of our babies clearly outweigh the cost of this vital nutritional support.

I am excited to see this proposed rule which will undoubtedly promote better neonatal outcomes, decrease both infant morbidity and mortality, and place us alongside many states including our neighbor Texas, who proactively support this therapy. Similar to immunizations, funds invested on donor human milk will result in savings to our Medicaid program. I appreciate your consideration and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with any interested parties.

Very respectfully submitted,



Harley G. Ginsberg, MD, FAAP  
Medical Director, Mothers' Milk Bank of Louisiana  
Medical Director, Ochsner Baptist Neonatal Intensive Care Unit  
Section Head, Neonatal Medicine  
504 842-3656 (Office)  
504 583-8614 (Cell)

**John Bel Edwards**  
GOVERNOR



**Dr. Courtney N. Phillips**  
SECRETARY

**State of Louisiana**  
Louisiana Department of Health  
Bureau of Health Services Financing

Harley G. Ginsberg, MD, FAAP  
Medical Director, Mothers' Milk Bank of Louisiana  
Medical Director, Ochsner Baptist Neonatal Intensive Care Unit  
Section Head, Neonatal Medicine  
July 2, 2020

Dear Dr. Ginsberg:

Thank you for writing in support of providing Medicaid coverage for donor human breast milk to premature newborns. Like you, a key mission of the Louisiana Department of Health is to promote the health of children in Louisiana and reduce health disparities.

We agree with your assessment of the evidence on the immediate and long-term positive health benefits of donor human breast milk. Further, we also agree that rigorous quality control standards are necessary to protect the health of newborns and ensure a quality treatment.

Thank you again for your letter of support and for your service and commitment to the health and wellbeing of Louisianan newborns and their families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ruth Johnson".

Ruth Johnson  
Medicaid Executive Director  
Louisiana Medicaid Program  
Louisiana Department of Health



Louisiana Department of Health  
c/o Ms. Ruth Johnson, Medicaid Executive Director  
Bureau of Health Services Financing  
P.O. Box 91030  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-9030

June 23, 2020

Dear Ms. Johnson:

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed rule concerning coverage of donor human breast milk for inpatient hospital services as published in the May issue of the Louisiana Register. We applaud the Department's efforts to support this important policy.

Louisiana has the second highest preterm birth rate (13%) in the US. For preterm infants, an exclusive human milk diet of mother's own milk and donor human milk if needed can reduce the incidence of necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC), a deadly intestinal infection, by 50%. Mothers of preterm infants can experience difficulties providing milk for their infant due to their own medical conditions. Donor human milk is the next best feeding option for it retains 50-90% of the immune components that serve to protect these infants from infections such as NEC. Medicaid covers 80% of all preterm infants in Louisiana. For every dollar spent on donor human milk, up to \$11 in medical costs can be saved. More importantly, there is potential to save 40 preterm infant lives annually.

In the United States, nine states (Texas, Florida, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Utah, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Illinois) and the District of Columbia provide Medicaid coverage for utilization of pasteurized donor human milk. Another three states (Maine, Nevada, and New Mexico) are currently considering Medicaid coverage.

The mission of the Mothers' Milk Bank of Louisiana is to ensure the equitable access to mother's own milk and donor human milk if needed. This proposed rule is a major step in reducing health disparities among Louisiana women and infants.

Thank you again for your recognition and support of this important policy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shelley Thibeau".

Shelley Thibeau  
Mothers' Milk Bank of Louisiana, Director

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christy Migaud".

Christy Migaud  
CFO, Ochsner Baptist

**John Bel Edwards**  
GOVERNOR



**Dr. Courtney N. Phillips**  
SECRETARY

**State of Louisiana**  
Louisiana Department of Health  
Bureau of Health Services Financing

Christy Migaud  
Chief Financial Officer  
Ochsner Baptist

Shelley Thibeau  
Director  
Mothers' Milk Bank of Louisiana  
July 2, 2020

Dear Ms. Migaud and Ms. Thibeau,

Thank you for writing in support of providing Medicaid coverage for donor human breast milk to premature newborns. We agree with your assessment of the benefits of providing this treatment. We have advanced this coverage policy because we believe it will help to reduce deadly complications such as necrotizing enterocolitis and improve the health and wellbeing of newborns and their families. In addition, we believe it will help to address a key health disparity in Louisiana.

Beyond the significant health benefits, as you mention, there is evidence that coverage of donor human breast milk has economic benefits to families, the Medicaid Program, and the state.

Thank you again for your letter of support and for your commitment to the health and wellbeing of newborns and their families in Louisiana.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ruth Johnson".

Ruth Johnson  
Medicaid Executive Director  
Louisiana Medicaid Program  
Louisiana Department of Health