

2024 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 164

BY SENATOR ABRAHAM

GROUP BENEFITS PROGRAM. Provides relative to Office of Group Benefits health coverage programs for certain employees. (gov sig)

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 42:851(V), relative to the Office of Group Benefits; to provide relative to  
3 eligibility; to provide relative to health coverage programs for certain employees; to  
4 provide relative to employer premium contributions; to provide for limitations; and  
5 to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 42:851(V) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

8 §851. Authority for employee benefit programs; payroll deduction for payment of  
9 premiums

10 \* \* \*

11 **V.(1) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, any person**  
12 **who previously participated in health coverage programs sponsored by the**  
13 **Office of Group Benefits as a dependent spouse of a deceased retiree**  
14 **immediately prior to enrolling in Office of Group Benefits health coverage as**  
15 **an active employee, shall, upon termination from state service, be eligible to**  
16 **obtain Office of Group Benefits health coverage as a surviving spouse provided**  
17 **all of the following conditions are met:**

1                    (a) The person is enrolled in Office of Group Benefits health coverage as  
2                    an active employee as of July 1, 2024.

3                    (b) The person remains enrolled in Office of Group Benefits health  
4                    coverage continuously until immediately prior to the date of termination.

5                    (c) The person would have had surviving spouse coverage at the time of  
6                    death of the retiree spouse but for his or her eligibility for coverage in a group  
7                    health plan other than Medicare.

8                    (d) The person pays the requisite premiums.

9                    (e) The person complies with any other applicable Office of Group  
10                   Benefits rules.

11                   (2) Any person eligible to obtain Office of Group Benefits coverage as a  
12                   surviving spouse pursuant to this Subsection shall be entitled to receive, in state  
13                   contribution to premiums, the same percentage of the total premium as a  
14                   surviving dependent of the deceased retiree spouse.

15                   (3) Employer premium contributions for a person eligible to obtain  
16                   Office of Group Benefits coverage as a surviving spouse pursuant to this  
17                   Subsection shall be the responsibility of the school board, state agency, or  
18                   political subdivision from which the deceased retiree spouse originally retired.

19                   (4) The dependent children of a person eligible to obtain Office of Group  
20                   Benefits coverage as a surviving spouse pursuant to this Subsection may  
21                   continue coverage in accordance with applicable rules promulgated by the  
22                   Office of Group Benefits.

23                   Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not  
24                   signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature  
25                   by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If  
26                   vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become  
27                   effective on the day following such approval.

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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Curry Lann.

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DIGEST

SB 164 Original 2024 Regular Session Abraham

Proposed law provides that any person who previously participated in health coverage programs sponsored by the Office of Group Benefits as a dependent spouse of a deceased retiree immediately prior to enrolling in Office of Group Benefits health coverage as an active employee, shall, upon termination from state service, be eligible to obtain Office of Group Benefits health coverage as a surviving spouse provided all of the following conditions are met:

- (1) The person is enrolled in Office of Group Benefits health coverage as an active employee as of July 1, 2024.
- (2) The person remains enrolled in Office of Group Benefits health coverage continuously until immediately prior to the date of termination.
- (3) The person would have had surviving spouse coverage at the time of death of the retiree spouse but for his or her eligibility for coverage in a group health plan other than Medicare.
- (4) The person pays the requisite premiums.
- (5) The person complies with any other applicable Office of Group Benefits rules.

Proposed law provides that any person eligible to obtain Office of Group Benefits coverage as a surviving spouse pursuant to proposed law is entitled to receive, in state contribution to premiums, the same percentage of the total premium as a surviving dependent of the deceased retiree spouse.

Proposed law provides that employer premium contributions for a person eligible to obtain Office of Group Benefits coverage as a surviving spouse pursuant to proposed law shall be the responsibility of the school board, state agency, or political subdivision from which the deceased retiree spouse originally retired.

Proposed law provides that dependent children of a person eligible to obtain Office of Group Benefits coverage as a surviving spouse pursuant to proposed law may continue coverage in accordance with applicable rules promulgated by the Office of Group Benefits.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 42:851(V))