LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA

ONE HUNDRED THIRD LEGISLATURE

SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 898

Introduced by Legislative Performance Audit Committee: Harms, 48, Chairperson; Adams, 24; Dubas, 34; Krist, 10; Mello, 5; Watermeier, 1; Wightman, 36.

Read first time January 14, 2014

Committee: Health and Human Services

A BILL

1 FOR AN ACT relating to the Department of Health and Human Services;

2 to require reports regarding the delivery system for

3 public benefit programs as prescribed.

4 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,
Section 1. (1) In order to monitor the Department of Health and Human Services service delivery system for public benefit programs and to ensure compliance with federal and state law, the Department of Health and Human Services shall develop and submit electronically to the Clerk of the Legislature a quarterly report which shall include, but not be limited to, the following information:

(a) The number of days in increments that it takes to process applications, both approval and denial, for aid to dependent children, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, assistance to the aged, blind, or disabled, and the child care subsidy program, overall and broken down by county;

(b) The number of days in increments that it takes to process applications for medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program, separating the data for applicants not applying on the basis of disability from applicants applying on the basis of disability, overall and broken down by county;

(c) The reasons for benefit application processing delays, including department, client, and third-party reasons, for all applications that are processed beyond federal and state timeliness in aid to dependent children, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, assistance to the aged, blind, or disabled, medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program statewide, and the child care subsidy program, overall and broken down by county. This shall include the number of cases for each respective reason;
(d) The number of case closures in medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, aid to dependent children, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, assistance to the aged, blind, or disabled, and the child care subsidy program, and the reason for the closure statewide, overall and broken down by county;

(e) The number of case closures due to failure to recertify benefits, including failing to timely provide information, failing to perform a case review, or failing to appear for an appointment, overall and broken down by county;

(f) The total number of first-time applicants for benefits, categorized by state and county, and by month;

(g) The percentage of applications that are reapplications, categorized by state and county, and by month;

(h) The percentage of individuals whose cases are closed who reapply for benefits within thirty days and sixty days after case closure, categorized by state and county, and by month;

(i) For medicaid and economic assistance calls:

(A) The overall average wait time for call center response, and the average and maximum wait times for each queue available in the menu option. The data shall be presented by month and day. The average wait time shall start when the call is transferred to the customer service center to the time when the worker answers the call;

(B) The number of client call terminations that occur prior to speaking with a staff member, and the average wait time
prior to call abandonment which shall be defined as the time a call is transferred to the customer service center to the time when the caller terminates the call. This data shall be presented by month and day;

(C) The number of clients who receive a busy signal when all call lines are full; this data shall be presented by month and day, showing the specific hours when all lines are full; and

(D) The total number of work tasks created each month and day; the total number of work tasks completed each month and day; the average number of days to complete work tasks broken down by type or priority of the task; and the total number of work tasks older than five days.

(2) The department shall also electronically submit a quarterly report to the Clerk of the Legislature that includes the following monthly information for workers in the public benefit programs call centers, in the department’s web site called ACCESS Nebraska, and in local offices: The number of social service workers, eligibility technicians, and social service lead workers and the number of vacancies in these positions at the beginning of each month; the number of these positions vacated within a month; and the number of these positions filled within a month.