



RS 29:761



§761. Purpose

A. Because the government must do all that is reasonable and necessary to protect the health and safety of its citizens; because new and emerging dangers, including emergent and resurgent infectious diseases and incidents of civilian mass casualties, pose serious and immediate threats; because a renewed focus on the prevention, detection, management, and containment of public health emergencies is essential; and because emergency health threats, including those caused by bioterrorism, may require the exercise of extraordinary government powers and functions, the state must have the ability to respond, rapidly and effectively, to potential or actual public health emergencies. The purposes of this Chapter are:

(1) To require the development of a comprehensive plan that operates within the framework of the State Emergency Operations Plan and that provides for a coordinated, appropriate response in the event of a public health emergency.

(2) To suspend administrative policies and procedures to the extent the governor deems necessary within the parameters of the Louisiana Emergency Assistance and Disaster Act of 1993, as amended (R.S. 29:701 et seq.),¹ and in the interest of providing for the following priorities in the context of a public health emergency:

- (a) The protection of human life.
- (b) Controlling the spread of human disease.
- (c) Meeting the immediate emergency needs of the people of Louisiana, specifically medical services, shelter, food, water, and sanitation as outlined in Annex M of the State Emergency Operations Plan.
- (d) Restoring and continuing operations of facilities and services essential to the health, safety, and welfare of the people of Louisiana.
- (e) Preserving evidence for law enforcement investigations and prosecutions.

(3) To grant state and local officials the authority to provide care, treatment, and vaccination to persons who are ill or who have been exposed to contagious diseases, and to separate affected individuals from the population at large to interrupt disease transmission.

B. It is further declared to be the purpose of this Chapter and the policy of the state of Louisiana that all health emergency powers of the state be coordinated to the maximum extent possible with the comparable functions of the federal government, other states and localities, and private agencies of every type, to the end that the most effective preparation and use may be made of the resources and facilities available for dealing with any public health emergency or bioterrorism event that may occur.

Acts 2003, No. 1206, §1.

¹See now the Louisiana Homeland Security and Emergency Assistance and Disaster Act (R.S. 29:721 et seq.)

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