*Welcome to LLA Reports, a podcast produced by the Louisiana Legislative Auditor’s office. This podcast is intended to be an oral representation of the written report it highlights and is primarily for the use of the Louisiana Legislature.*

This is Chris Magee. I’m the data analytics manager for LLA’s Performance Audit Services. This episode of LLA Reports focuses on our new report titled “Progress Report: Deceased Medicaid Beneficiaries.”

The report provides the results of the progress the Louisiana Department of Health – or LDH – has made with its processes to identify and remove Medicaid coverage for beneficiaries who are deceased and therefore no longer qualify for the program.

We conducted this analysis as a follow-up to a November 2017 LLA report in which we identified Medicaid beneficiaries who were deceased.

In addition, we analyzed whether additional third-party data sources could identify deceased Medicaid beneficiaries who are not identified through LDH’s current processes.

We also conducted this review, in part, to further the goals of the Governor’s Fiscal Responsibility Program, also known as LA DOGE.

LDH administers the Medicaid program, which is designed to provide health and medical services for uninsured and medically-indigent citizens.

Under LDH’s current full-risk prepaid managed care model, it pays a fixed per-member per-month – or PMPM – fee to the managed care organizations – or MCOs – for the administration of health benefits and payment of all claims.

However, LDH is responsible for determining the eligibility of Medicaid beneficiaries, enrolling eligible applicants in the program, removing ineligible beneficiaries, and recovering any PMPMs made after the date of a beneficiary’s death.

From July 2016 to March 2025, the number of Medicaid beneficiaries in Louisiana rose 12.8 percent, from approximately 1.4 million to 1.6 million.

Overall, we found that LDH appears to be identifying and removing deceased Medicaid beneficiaries from the program through the various state and federal sources it currently uses.

We also found that LDH could identify additional deceased Medicaid beneficiaries if it included additional third-party data sources such as obituaries, the Social Security Administration’s Death Master File, and other states’ Vital Records databases.

We found as well that, between February 2019 and March 2025, LDH made approximately $9.6 million dollars in PMPM payments for 1,072 beneficiaries for Medicaid coverage after their date of death. These beneficiaries were identified as deceased through various datasets.

We identified 511 of these beneficiaries through obituaries, 210 through LDH Vital Records data, 168 through the Social Security Administration’s Death Master File, 133 through a combination of LDH Vital Records data and third-party sources, and 50 through Vital Records databases from 13 other states.

LDH officials said that, as of June 26, 2025, they planned to withhold approximately $4 million dollars in PMPMs from the MCOs during the next monthly payment to recoup the fees previously paid on behalf of beneficiaries after their date of death.

As a result of our report, we developed one recommendation.

We recommended that LDH determine whether to use additional third-party data sources as part of its eligibility determination process to identify deceased Medicaid beneficiaries.

As part of its response, which is included in the report as Appendix A, LDH agreed with our recommendation.

*We hope you found this podcast informative, and that you’ll follow future episodes of LLA Reports.*

*This podcast was created as part of the audit report just discussed and is intended primarily for the use of the Louisiana Legislature. Both the full report and the podcast can be found on the LLA’s website at* [*www.lla.la.gov*](http://www.lla.la.gov)*.*

*Thank you for listening.*