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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** January 29, 2021  
**SUBJECT:** Weekly Update

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We have completed our second interim committee week. Multiple committees met on implementation updates from past major initiatives, and a few bills were heard. Next week, a full slate of bills will be heard in both the House and Senate.

Governor DeSantis released his budget recommendations for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. The \$96.6B budget is an increase of \$4.3 billion over the current fiscal year, \$2.6 billion accounts for various expenditures related to the state's COVID-19 pandemic response and its impacts on Floridians.

Briefly, highlights are:

- A reduction of over \$1 billion over the current fiscal year
- An overall increase to the Medicaid budget of \$3 billion. (The Medicaid system faces an estimated 19% increase in # of Floridians who qualify for the program.)
  - The recommended budget does not include cuts to rates for nursing homes and hospitals
- Overall education budget = \$22.8B overall, including a \$123 increase in base student allocation; \$550M to continue increasing teacher pay
- No increase in tuition at Florida universities and colleges
- Retention of \$6.6B in reserves
- \$110M for mental health service in the schools, as well as \$43.5M for Title I school recognition

At this time, 951 bills have been filed. Included below are those bills where we are actively engaged and those we are monitoring on your behalf. Please review and notify us if you have questions, or if there are

other issues you would like us to add to the tracking. The full text of each bill is available on the legislative web sites ([www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov) and [www.myfloridahouse.com](http://www.myfloridahouse.com).)

**COVID Update:**

**By the Numbers:**

Total numbers of cases since the pandemic started: 1,687,594

Deaths of Florida Residents: 26,035

Percentage of available hospital beds statewide. 18.82%

Percentage of available adult intensive-care unit beds statewide. 15.98%

***Vaccine Update as of 1/28/21***

First dose: 1,319,822

Series Completed: 247,330

**State Action:**

- As previously noted, the Governor’s executive order prioritizing seniors age 65+, and those healthcare providers with direct patient contact are the absolute priorities for vaccine distribution. While there are inconsistencies between the counties on allocations and the supply does not cover the demand, our care givers fall within the 4 corners of the executive orders and are eligible for the vaccine. Care workers should contact their County Health departments, hospitals or community partners to schedule timing for appointments. As vaccines are available in the community, partners will go back through the lists and schedule those appointments.
  - Home care workers were specifically addressed by Deputy Secretary Roberson in the Senate Health Policy Committee on Wednesday as members of the health care provider community eligible in this first 1a grouping.
  - For a comprehensive list of DOH vaccine information please visit:
    - <https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/covid-19-vaccines-in-florida/>
  - If one is experiencing issues with getting vaccinated, please email: [Provider.covid19@flhealth.gov](mailto:Provider.covid19@flhealth.gov)
- Governor Ron DeSantis announced that by February 1<sup>st</sup>, the COVID-19 vaccine will have been offered to every resident and staff member to Florida’s nearly 700 nursing homes and over 3,000 assisted living facilities.

**Interim Committee Meetings:**

**Monday 2/1/21**

**Tuesday 2/2/21**

- S Appropriations 9:00-11:30
  - <https://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/AP/ExpandedAgenda/4965>

**Wednesday 2/3/21**

- H Appropriations 10:00-12:00
  - <https://myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Committees/meetingnotice.aspx?MeetingId=12737&CommitteeId=3084>
- S Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services 12:30-3:00
  - <https://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/AHS/ExpandedAgenda/5015>
- H Health & Human Services 1:15-3:15

- <https://myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Committees/meetingnotice.aspx?MeetingId=12727&Committeed=3085>
- H Pandemics & Public Emergencies Committee 1:15-3:15
  - HB 7 Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19
  - <https://myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Committees/meetingnotice.aspx?MeetingId=12722&Committeed=3102>

#### Thursday 2/4/21

- S Health Policy 8:30-11:00
  - <https://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/HP/ExpandedAgenda/5004>
- S Select Committee on Pandemic Preparedness and Response 11:30-1:30
  - <https://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/PPR/ExpandedAgenda/5000>

#### Legislation to Monitor:

- **HB 007 Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19 (McClure)**
  - On Agenda for 2/3 in H Pandemics & Public Emergencies

Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19: Provides requirements for civil action based on COVID-19-related claim; provides that plaintiff has burden of proof in such action; provides statute of limitations; provides retroactive applicability. Effective Date: upon becoming a law
- **HB 9 Protecting Consumers Against Fraud During a Pandemic (Zika)**

Prohibits dissemination of false or misleading vaccine information with a specified intent; provides authority and criminal penalties, authorizes civil remedies. Effective Date: upon coming law

  - Passed favorably 16-0 in the Pandemics and Public Emergencies Committee and is now in Criminal Justice & Public Safety Subcommittee.
- **SB 0072 Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID (Brandes)**

Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19; Providing requirements for a civil action based on a COVID-19-related claim; providing that the plaintiff has the burden of proof in such action; providing a statute of limitations; providing severability; providing retroactive applicability, etc. Effective Date: This act shall take effect upon becoming a law and shall apply retroactively. However, the provisions of this act shall not apply in a civil action against a particularly named defendant, which is commenced before the effective date of this act

  - Passed Judiciary 7-4 and is now in Commerce and Tourism
- **HB 309 Dementia related Staff Training (Byrd)**

Dementia-related Staff Training: Requires certain entities, as condition of licensure, to provide dementia-related training for new employees; provides requirements for training; requires employees to receive additional training developed or approved by DOEA under certain circumstances; authorizes department to develop curriculum for training; encourages DOEA to consult certain nationally recognized organizations to develop registration process for training providers & assessments. Effective Date: July 1, 2021
- **SB 634 Dementia related Staff training (Gibson)**

Dementia-related Staff Training: Requires certain entities, as condition of licensure, to provide dementia-related training for new employees; provides requirements for training; requires employees to receive additional training developed or approved by DOEA under certain circumstances; authorizes department to develop curriculum for training; encourages DOEA to

consult certain nationally recognized organizations to develop registration process for training providers & assessments. Effective Date: July 1, 2021

- SB 700 Telehealth (Rodriguez, A)  
Requiring AHCA to reimburse the use of telehealth in certain limitation; revising the term telehealth; authorizing nonphysician health care 15 practitioners to satisfy a certain supervision 16 requirement through telehealth; authorizing out-of-17 state physician telehealth providers to engage in 18 formal supervisory relationships with certain 19 nonphysician health care practitioners in this state; revising the 23 definition of the term “pharmacy”; authorizing registered 26 pharmacy technicians to compound and dispense 27 medicinal drugs under certain circumstances

**Other Legislative issues of Note:**

Agencies will present the Governor’s recommended budget at the appropriations meetings next week.