



**Florida Academy of Family Physicians  
2024 Legislative Session Interim Legislative Update  
December Report**

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The legislature wrapped up their final series of interim committee meetings before the start of the 2024 legislative session, which runs January 9 through March 8, 2024. So far 882 bills have been filed for consideration by the legislature in the 2024 session.

**“Live Healthy” Legislation**

The legislative package containing Senate President Kathleen Passidomo’s “Live Healthy” Initiative is contained in Senate Proposed Bills (SPB) 7016 and 7018. Both bills passed unanimously in the Senate Health Policy committee this week.

[SPB 7016](#) revises or creates numerous provisions of Florida law and makes appropriations relating to the state's health care workforce, health care practitioner licensure and regulation, health care facility licensure and regulation, the Medicaid program, and health-care-related education programs. The bill also provides that Florida will enter into the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact, and the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact.

The bill revises:

- The Dental Student Loan Repayment Program (DSLRL Program);
- The Florida Reimbursement Assistance for Medical Education (FRAME) Program;
- The Telehealth Minority Maternity Care Program;
- The Statewide Medicaid Residency Program (SMRP); and
- The Access to Health Care Act.

The bill amends statutes relating to:

- The definition of and standards for clinical psychologists;
- The definition of and standards for psychiatric nurses;
- Mobile response team standards;
- Licensure for foreign-trained physicians;
- Certification of foreign medical schools;
- Medical faculty certificates;
- Autonomous-practice nurse midwives;
- The Florida Center for Nursing's annual report;
- Developmental research laboratory schools; and
- The Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund.

The bill creates:

- The Health Care Screening and Services Grant Program;
- An advanced birth center designation;
- The Training, Education, and Clinicals in Health (TEACH) Funding Program;
- Emergency department diversion requirements for hospitals and MCOs;

- A requirement for AHCA to produce an annual report entitled “Analysis of Potentially Preventable Health Care Events of Florida Medicaid Enrollees”;
- A requirement for AHCA to seek federal approval to implement acute hospital care at home programs in Florida Medicaid;
- Limited licenses for graduate assistant physicians; and
- Temporary certificates for physician assistants (PA) and advanced practice registered nurses (APRN) to practice in areas of critical need.

[SPB 7018](#) creates the Health Care Innovation Council, a 15-member council within the Department of Health (DOH) to facilitate public meetings across the state to lead discussions with innovators, developers, and implementers of technologies, workforce pathways, service delivery models, or other solutions. Based on public input and information gathered at public meetings, the bill requires the council to create best practice recommendations and focus areas for the advancement of the delivery of health care in Florida, with an emphasis on:

- Increasing efficiency in the delivery of health care;
- Reducing strain on the health care workforce;
- Increasing public access to health care;
- Improving patient outcomes;
- Reducing unnecessary emergency department visits; and
- Reducing costs for patients and the state without reducing the quality of patient care.

The bill creates a revolving loan program within the DOH to provide low-interest loans to Applicants. The council will review loan applications and submit to DOH a prioritized list of proposals recommended for funding. Loan recipients enter into agreements with DOH for loans of up to 10-year terms for up to 50 percent of the proposal costs, or up to 80 percent of the costs for an applicant that is located in a rural or medically underserved area and is either a rural hospital or a nonprofit entity that accepts Medicaid patients.

### **House Health Care Appropriations**

The [House Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee](#) met Thursday to discuss the Governor’s 2024-2025 budget recommendations for the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), Persons with Disabilities, the Department of Children and Families (DCF), the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Elder Affairs, and the Department of Veteran Affairs. The committee also heard presentations on the Medicaid Achieved Savings Rebate - a profit-sharing mechanism used to share the profit that the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care plans keep – and Florida’s Canadian Prescription Drug Importation Program administered through ACHA. Budget briefing and presentation materials can be found [here](#).

The FAFP and its lobbying team at MHD will be monitoring the progression of this legislation and the associated appropriations closely to ensure all elements are aligned with family medicine’s legislative priorities.

### **FAFP Priority Legislation**

**Invalid Restrictive Covenants with Physicians** – [HB 11](#) by Rep. Dr. Joel Rudman (R-Navarre) and [SB 458](#) by Sen. Jason Brodeur (R-Lake Mary) provide restrictive covenants which prohibit physician from practicing medicine within specified area for certain period of time are void and unenforceable. The FAFP is working with the sponsors to ensure appropriateness and address any concerns and misinformation used to prevent passage.

### **Legislation of Interest to Family Medicine (listed alphabetically)**

**Access to Appropriate Medications for Serious Mental Illness / Step-Therapy Protocols** – [HB 491](#) by Rep. Karen Gonzalez Pittman (R-Tampa) and [SB 268](#) by Sen. Gayle Harrell (R-Stuart) require the Agency for Healthcare Administration (AHCA) to approve certain drug products for Medicaid recipients for treatment of serious mental illness without step-therapy prior authorization.

**Anaphylaxis in Public Schools** – [SB 52](#) by Sen. Linda Stewart (D-Orlando) and [HB 65](#) by Rep. Rita Harris (D-Orlando) and Rep. Dotie Joseph (D-North Miami) require the Department of Education to publish on its website each district school board’s anaphylaxis policy, require each district school board to adopt an anaphylaxis policy, and require a certain percentage of specified school personnel to receive certain training.

**Autonomous Practice for Certified Psychiatric Nurses** – [HB 771](#) by Rep. Webster Barnaby (R-Deland) and [SB 936](#) by Sen. Ana Maria Rodriguez (R-Doral) authorize advanced practice registered nurses who are certified as psychiatric nurse practitioners to engage in autonomous practice under certain circumstances.

**Autonomous Practice by a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist** – [HB 257](#) by Rep. Mike Giallombardo (R-Cape Coral) and [SB 810](#) by Sen. Blaise Ingoglia (R-Springhill) authorize certified registered nurse anesthetists to practice autonomously and authorize participation in the Medical Education Reimbursement and Loan Repayment Program.

**Cardiac and Medical Emergencies on School Grounds** – [SB 432](#) by Sen. Corey Simon (R-Tallahassee) and [HB 441](#) by Rep. Taylor Michael Yarkosky (R-Clermont) create the “HeartCharged Act,” require each public school to have at least one automated external defibrillator on school grounds, encourage each charter school and private school to have at least one defibrillator on school grounds and to comply with specified requirements, provide immunity from liability for school employees and students under the Good Samaritan Act and the Cardiac Arrest Survival Act, and require the Commissioner of Education, at his or her sole discretion, to create and disseminate specified protocols and plans relating to the use of defibrillators in schools.

**Congenital Cytomegalovirus Screenings** – [SB 168](#) by Sen. Tina Polsky (D-Boca Raton) and [HB 499](#) by Rep. Lauren Melo (R-Naples) require certain hospitals to administer congenital cytomegalovirus screenings on newborns admitted to the hospital under specified circumstances, provides coverage under the Medicaid program for the screenings and any medically necessary follow-up reevaluations, and requires that newborns diagnosed with congenital cytomegalovirus be referred to a primary care physician for medical management, treatment, and follow-up services.

**Coverage for Mammograms and Supplemental Breast Cancer Screenings** - [SB 670](#) by Sen. Tracie Davis (D-Jacksonville) and [HB 711](#) by Rep. Diane Hart (D-Tampa) define the terms “mammogram” and “supplemental breast cancer screening,” require the Agency for Health Care Administration to provide Medicaid coverage for annual mammograms and supplemental breast cancer screenings for certain women and require insurers to cover supplemental breast cancer screening.

**Coverage for Skin Cancer Screenings** – [SB 56](#) by Sen. Gayle Harrell (R-Stuart) and [HB 241](#) by Rep. Dr. Ralph Massullo (R-Inverness) require certain health insurance companies, to provide coverage and payment for annual skin cancer screenings performed by a licensed dermatologist without imposing any cost-sharing requirement.

**Declarations of a Public Health Emergency** – [SB 402](#) by Sen. Clay Yarborough (R-Jacksonville) and [HB 459](#) by Rep. Dr. Joel Rudman (R-Navarre) provide that the administration of vaccines is not

included within the meaning of the terms “treat,” “treated,” or “treatment” as they relate to public health emergencies, authorize an individual to refuse examination, testing, or treatment under a State Health Officer’s order during a public health emergency by submitting a written refusal to the State Health Officer, and delete the State Health Officer’s authority to use any means necessary to treat an individual who poses a danger to public health.

**Designation of a Diagnosis on Motor Vehicle Registrations** – [HB 341](#) by Rep. Michelle Salzman (R-Cantonment) and [SB 288](#) by Sen. Ana Maria Rodriguez (R-Doral) authorizes a motor vehicle owner or registrant to designate on his or her application form for motor vehicle registration that he or she has been diagnosed with, or is parent or legal guardian of child or ward who has been diagnosed with, developmental disability or psychiatric disorder. The bills also authorize removal of such designation upon request.

**Emergency Refills of Insulin and Insulin-related Supplies or Equipment** – [HB 201](#) by Rep. Melanie Bell (R-Fort Meade) authorizes emergency refill of specified amounts of insulin and insulin-related supplies or equipment.

**End-of-life Options** – [HB 561](#) by Rep. Daryl Campbell (R-Fort Lauderdale) establishes the procedure to allow an adult who has mental capacity and who has terminal condition and who makes a fully informed decision that he or she no longer wants to live.

**Exemptions from Immunization Requirements** - [SB 636](#) by Sen. Ileana Garcia (R-Miami) authorizes persons to claim an exemption from any immunization requirement if there is no FDA-approved vaccine that meets specified criteria. The bill also prohibits employers, school districts, the Department of Health, and certain public entities from requiring a person to meet any other conditions to claim the exemption.

**Health Insurance Cost Sharing** – [SB 228](#) by Sen. Tom Wright (R-Port Orange) and [HB 363](#) by Rep. Lindsay Cross (R-St. Petersburg) and Rep. Dr. Joel Rudman (R-Navarre) define the term “cost-sharing requirement” and require specified individual health insurers and their pharmacy benefit managers to apply payments by or on behalf of insureds toward the total contributions of the insureds’ cost-sharing requirements.

**Intravenous Vitamin Treatment** – [HB 227](#) by Rep. Alina Garcia (R-Miami) and [SB 672](#) by Sen. Alexis Calatayud (R-Miami) provide requirements for persons administering intravenous vitamin treatment and require the Board of Nursing, and Board of Medicine & Board of Osteopathic Medicine to adopt rules establishing procedures to administer intravenous vitamin treatment and emergency protocols.

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**Motor Vehicle Insurance** – [SB 464](#) by Sen. Erin Grall (R-Fort Peirce) and Sen. Darryl Rouson (D-St. Petersburg) and [HB 653](#) by Rep. Danny Alvarez (R-Riverview) repeal the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law (PIP).

**Naturopathic Medicine** - [HB 843](#) by Rep. David Smith (R-Winter Springs) and [SB 898](#) by Sen. Ileana Rodriguez (R-Doral) create the Board of Naturopathic Medicine within the Department of Health (DOH). The bills require the board, in conjunction with DOH, to establish disciplinary training program for board members, prohibit certain unlicensed persons from practicing

naturopathic medicine or promoting, identifying, or describing themselves using specified titles or abbreviations, provide for licensure by examination and by endorsement, respectively, of naturopathic physicians, require DOH and the board to use DOH's investigative process to ensure that applicants meet applicable criteria, revise requirements for licensure renewal and continuing education requirements for naturopathic physicians, provide financial responsibility requirements as condition of licensure, establish Naturopathic Medical Formulary Council, and require the council to establish Naturopathic Medical Formulary. [HB 845](#) also by Rep. David Smith and [SB 900](#) by Sen. Ileana Rodriguez require the Board of Naturopathic Medicine to establish certain fees licensure by examination and licensure by endorsement, respectively, of naturopathic physicians.

**Patient-directed Doctor's Orders** – [HB 219](#) by Rep. Susan Plasencia (R-Winter Park) and [SB 390](#) by Sen. Joe Gruters (R-Sarasota) establish the PDDO Program within the Department of Health and authorize EMTs and certain health care professionals to withhold or withdraw cardiopulmonary resuscitation or other medical interventions if presented with PDDO form that contains order not to resuscitate. [HB 221](#) also by Rep. Plasencia and [SB 392](#), also by Sen. Gruters, create an exemption from public records for personal identifying information held in database for Patient-directed Doctor's Order forms and authorize disclosure of such information to certain entities and individuals under specified conditions.

**Pharmacy** – [SB 444](#) by Sen. Jay Collins (R-Tampa) and [HB 493](#) by Rep. Spencer Roach (R-North Fort Myers) authorize registered pharmacy technicians to dispense medicinal drugs under certain circumstances, define the terms “supervising pharmacy” and “telepharmacy,” provide requirements for remote-site pharmacies, exempt registered pharmacists serving as prescription department managers for remote-site pharmacies from certain practice limitations.

**Proprietorship by Nonphysicians** – [SB 316](#) by Sen. Bobby Powell (D-West Palm Beach) and [HB 345](#) by Rep. Kelly Skidmore (D-Delray Beach) prohibit specified acts by persons or entities other than licensed physicians and licensed entities.

**Protection of Medical Freedom** – [SB 680](#) by Sen. Joe Gruters (R-Sarasota) prohibits the Department of Health from requiring enrollment in the state’s immunization registry or otherwise requiring persons to submit to immunization tracking, prohibits business entities from requiring individuals to provide proof of vaccination or post infection recovery from any communicable disease to gain access to, entry upon, or service from such entities, adds a person’s vaccination and immunity status to the prohibited forms of discrimination by local housing assistance plans, prohibits employers from discriminating against an individual solely on the basis of vaccination or immunity status, prohibits places of public accommodation from discriminating on the basis of vaccination or immunity status, and prohibits the Department of Health from requiring, as a school-entry requirement, that children receive immunizations approved only for emergency use.

**Recovery of Damages in Claims for Medical Negligence** – [HB 77](#) by Rep. Spencer Roach (R-North Fort Myers), [HB 129](#) by Rep. Vicki Lopez (R-Coral Gables) and Rep. Mike Beltran (R-Apollo Beach), [SB 442](#) by Sen. Lauren Book (D-Plantation); [SB 248](#) by Sen. Clay Yarborough (R-Jacksonville) and [SB 310](#) by Sen. Jonathan Martin (R-Fort Myers) remove a provision that prohibits parents of adult child from recovering certain damages in medical negligence suits.

**Short-acting Bronchodilator Use in Public and Private Schools** – [HB 883](#) by Rep. Traci Koster (R-Tampa) and [SB 962](#) by Sen. Ed Hooper (R-Clearwater) authorize certain public & private school students to carry short-acting bronchodilators & components; provides school district, public school, private school, and parental requirements.

**Sickle Cell Care Management and Treatment Education for Physicians** – [HB 349](#) by Rep. Felicia Simone Robinson (D-Miami Gardens) and [SB 552](#) by Sen. Darryl Rouson (D-St. Petersburg) require education on sickle cell care management and treatment protocols for physicians to renew a license and requires the Department of Health to evaluate physician survey results and annually report to Governor and Legislature on patient outcomes as result of such education.

**Sudden Cardiac Arrest Informational Posters** – [SB 124](#) by Sen. Linda Stewart (D-Orlando) requires the Department of Health to create an informational poster relating to the treatment of sudden cardiac arrest.