



# COUNTIES ON THE FRONTLINE



FLORIDA  
ASSOCIATION OF  
COUNTIES  
*All About Florida*





Florida's counties are on the front lines of our state's response to the coronavirus pandemic. During this unprecedented public health emergency and the aftermath of an economic crisis, counties are committed to strong intergovernmental cooperation to mitigate COVID-19 and its far-reaching impacts on the health of Floridians and the state's economic drivers.

## COMMUNITY, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



**\$3.5  
BILLION**

Florida counties spent \$3.5 billion on health and human services in FY 2016-17, accounting for 8 percent of total county expenditures.

These expenditures reflect the cost of providing services for medical care and treatment, public health, and for the welfare of the community as a whole and its individuals. This spending includes mental health and substance abuse, physical health, public assistance programs, developmentally disabled and interrelated programs such as the provision of health care for indigent persons.

As unemployment numbers hit an all-time high of over 300,000, county residents will turn to human services agencies in unprecedented numbers to access safety net programs. At the same time, general revenue funds — which counties often use to supplement federal and state funding for human services programs — are declining dramatically.

The state of Florida mandates that counties contribute to the non-federal share of Medicaid, an amount that generally grows year over year; this growth will only be exacerbated as Medicaid enrollment grows due to increased unemployment.

**\$302  
MILLION**

The counties' total contribution to the Medicaid program in FY 2019-20 is \$302 million.

Through the Health Care Responsibility Act, Florida law requires counties to cover the costs of their indigent residents' out-of-county emergency hospital care. Counties' total financial liability under the Act in FY 2018 was \$81.8 million.



Florida counties support 19 hospitals, 7 long-term care facilities, and local county health departments in all 67 counties.





Florida counties collectively spent \$10,378,085,500 in FY 16-17 on public safety related functions, which encompass law enforcement, detention and correction services, ambulance services and fire rescue, and emergency management and disaster relief. Public safety expenditures make up the largest share of county spending, accounting for nearly a quarter of county spending, on average, statewide.

- Florida’s 67 counties operate 911 call centers.
- Counties provide essential public safety services including law enforcement, emergency medical services, and medical examiners.
- Counties invested \$6.7 billion on law enforcement and detention in FY 2016-17 to operate sheriffs’ departments.
- Counties operate local jails, with approximately 29,215 total admissions each year, and an average daily jail population of 55,381 inmates.
- There are 58 county emergency medical service providers (including fire department-based services) throughout the state. In general, the majority of emergency ambulance transport in Florida is provided by local governments.
- Florida counties spent \$85.7 million in FY 2016-17 to aid district medical examiners’ offices throughout the state.



**\$315.3  
MILLION**

Florida counties play a unique role in disaster response activities, and collectively spent \$315.3 million on emergency and disaster relief in FY 2016-17 to provide for disaster response and recovery.

Every county has an emergency management agency that has jurisdiction over and serves the entire county, including municipalities.

Counties serve as liaisons for and coordinators of municipalities’ requests for state and federal assistance during and after an emergency event.

County emergency response teams include a wide range of county personnel, including public and community health professionals, sheriffs, 911 operators, firefighters, EMT/paramedics, EOC experts, coroners/medical examiners, child welfare and aging service providers, substance abuse and mental health counselors, veterans service officers, homelessness program coordinators and jail administrators.





FLORIDA COUNTIES EMPLOY:



140,303

PEOPLE ON A REGULAR/  
PERMANENT BASIS



4,563

PEOPLE ON A SEASONAL/  
TEMPORARY BASIS



377

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS/  
COUNCILMEMBERS

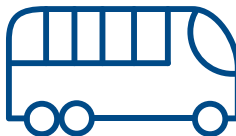
Florida counties play a critical role in the state’s transportation system as major partners in the maintenance and development of transportation infrastructure, collectively spending \$5.14 billion on transportation in FY 16-17. To fund and finance infrastructure, counties use a combination of federal, state and local dollars, including user fees and tax-exempt municipal bonds



Twenty-six Florida counties spent \$1.26 billion in FY 16-17 to support the state’s public airports.



Florida counties maintain 70,372 miles of roads throughout the state; the counties collectively spent \$2.05 billion on road and street facilities in FY 16-17.



Thirty-three Florida counties spent \$1.28 in FY 16-17 on public transit systems that connect people, communities, and economies.



More than 140,000 building permits for private housing units were issued by local governments in 2018.



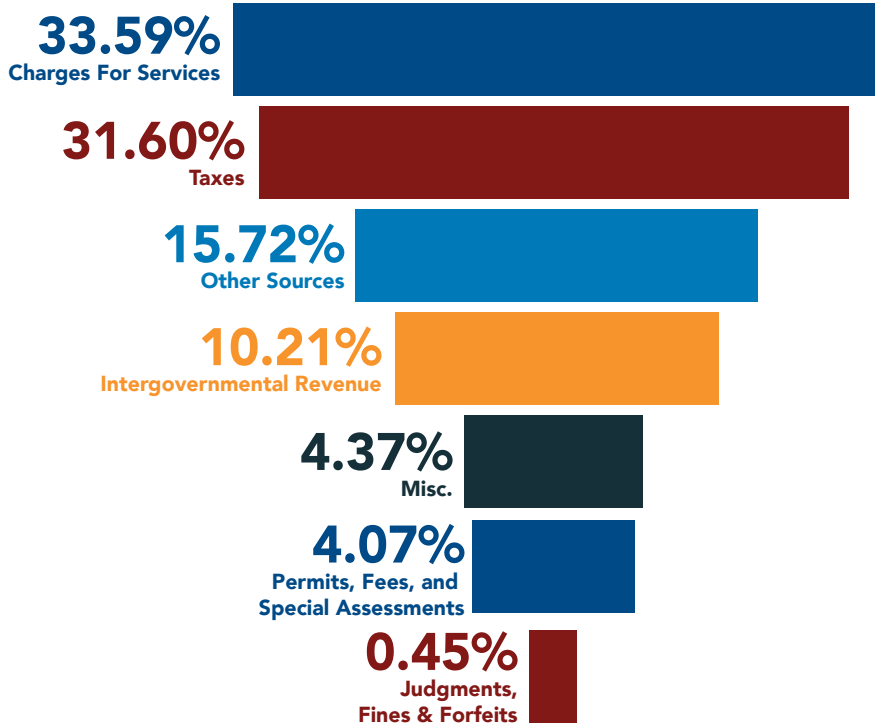


# COUNTY REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES – IMPACTS OF COVID-19

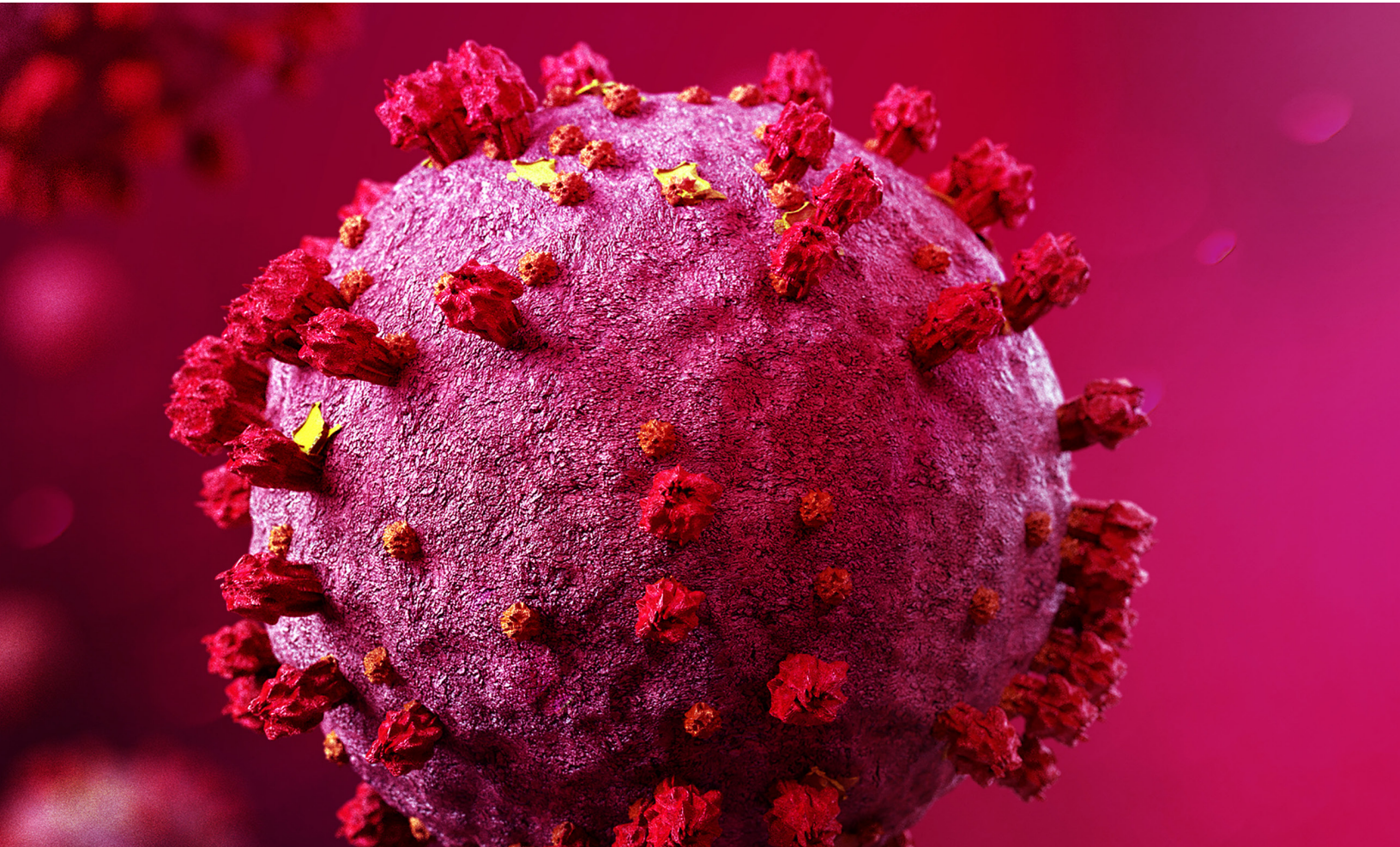
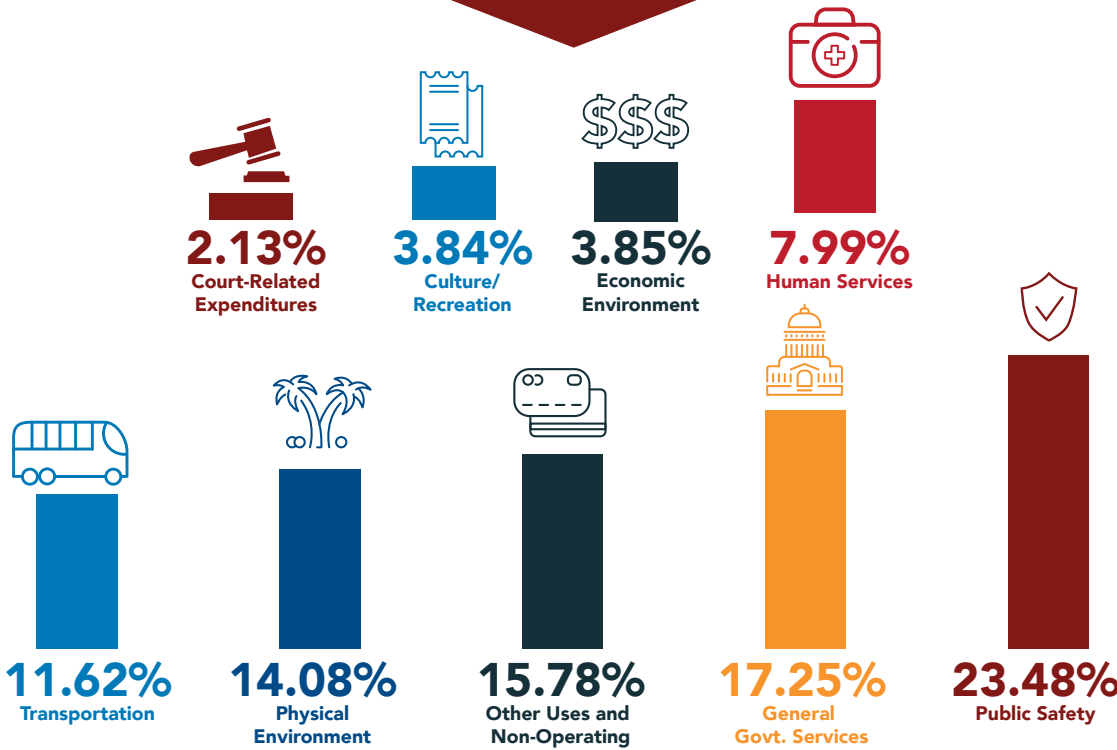
Counties continue to incur unforeseen costs while working to provide emergency response functions to address the COVID-19 pandemic and mitigate further spread; they also face the very real threat of severe budgetary impacts that may linger for months or years. The economic impacts of COVID-19 will cut into local government revenues in both the short and long-term, as sales tax collections slow due to stalled tourism and retail sectors. An economic downturn will also likely impact future property tax revenues, which account for a significant portion of Florida county budgets. Lost revenues will inevitably force counties to make difficult choices regarding their expenditures and services provided to residents, which run the gamut from public health and law enforcement to wastewater treatment to parks and libraries.

Expenditures for public safety and human services, which already account for a substantial share of county budgets, may need to increase due to changing circumstances. However, without additional relief and flexibility in how counties use recovery funds, this will be impossible unless counties make other budgetary sacrifices, ultimately at the expense of the residents. More than ever, it is important for all levels of government to work together to mitigate the long-term economic impacts of this pandemic. Counties need the continued support of our state and federal partners in order to continue providing fundamental services to our common residents.

## WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM? 2017 COUNTY REVENUES



## WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO? 2017 COUNTY EXPENDITURES STATEWIDE







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