



HEALTH, SAFETY, & JUSTICE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Community, Health and Human Services Policy

County officials recognize the importance of adequately providing for quality health and human services to protect and assist citizens in need. As a critical link in the federal/state/county human services partnership, counties must be included in formulating and implementing policies that protect the health, safety, and welfare of all the citizens of the state.

- HSJ 1. The Florida Association of Counties supports allowing for flexibility in the delivery of health and human services within communities to achieve the desired level of services based on local needs and priorities.
- HSJ 2. The Florida Association of Counties supports expanding health care access and believe that efforts to refine and enhance state and local programs that provide access to affordable health care are essential.
- HSJ 3. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies that increase access to acute care behavioral health services for individuals and families.
- HSJ 4. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies that increase supportive housing, jail diversion, and employment and education initiatives for people with mental health, substance abuse issues, behavioral health issues and/or disabilities.
- HSJ 5. The Florida Association of Counties supports diverting, medically assisting, or treating the mentally ill outside of the criminal justice process through alternative programs, such as Crisis Intervention Teams.
- HSJ 6. The Florida Association of Counties supports Medicaid reform initiatives to ensure that persons with substance abuse and mental health treatment needs are appropriately served.
- HSJ 7. The Florida Association of Counties supports the implementation of discharge protocols and/or procedures for hospitals, correctional facilities, and mental health facilities when releasing homeless persons.
- HSJ 8. The Florida Association of Counties supports the development of policies that would allow local governments to work with the state and federal government to serve target populations: the chronically homeless, veterans, and families and children, with emphasis on children aging out of the foster care system.
- HSJ 9. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies that promote continued coordination with the state's Council on Homelessness, specifically as it recommends policies and practices in support of the Federal Strategic Plan to End Homelessness.



- HSJ 10. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies that lessen fragmentation, inefficient operation, and costly duplication of transportation disadvantaged services.
- HSJ 11. The Florida Association of Counties supports the implementation of guidance and regulations of Opportunity Zones tax benefits that prevent abuse, encourage developments that provide public benefits in low-income areas within the identifiable zone, and protect local governments and stakeholders.

Community, Health and Human Services Funding

While most health and human service programs and the laws that govern these programs are established by federal and state governments, many of these services are being provided through community-based services at the local level. Given the varying capacity and funding capabilities of counties, adequate federal and state funding to ensure uniformity in the human services continuum.

- HSJ 12. The Florida Association of Counties supports, when feasible, directing existing funding from institutional care to community-based care programs.
- HSJ 13. The Florida Association of Counties supports increased funding for core and crisis mental health services, including beds, statewide.
- HSJ 14. The Florida Association of Counties supports life-saving interventions, including medication-assisted treatment, residential treatment, twelve-step recovery and detoxification programs, and diversions from the criminal justice system.
- HSJ 15. The Florida Association of Counties supports increased funding of the Criminal Justice Mental Health and Substance Abuse Reinvestment Grant Program with recurring dollars in a trust fund.
- HSJ 16. The Florida Association of Counties supports sustainable matching state funds to counties that have received both planning and implementation Reinvestment Grant funds.
- HSJ 17. The Florida Association of Counties supports a system for distributing Low Income Pool dollars that ensures IGT-donor counties are able to direct the federal matching dollars generated by their local IGT contributions to best meet the health care needs of their constituents, rather than having those dollars redistributed throughout the state.
- HSJ 18. The Florida Association of Counties supports adequate funding for the Community Care for the Elderly Program, which provides cost efficient diversion from nursing home placement for impaired elders.



- HSJ 19. The Florida Association of Counties supports funding Graduate Medical Education programs to meet the healthcare needs of the state and its local communities, with an emphasis on programs that provide for specialties in need, as well as the development of physicians to practice in medically underserved areas.
- HSJ 20. The Florida Association of Counties supports funding for the Florida Healthy Start and Healthy Families program.
- HSJ 21. The Florida Association of Counties opposes policies that further shift state Medicaid costs to counties.
- HSJ 22. The Florida Association of Counties supports the continued evaluation of the county- state Medicaid cost-share arrangement, taking into consideration the impacts of state policies designed to contain growth in Medicaid costs, including statewide Medicaid managed care and diagnosis related group reimbursement for hospitals.
- HSJ 23. The Florida Association of Counties supports increasing state general revenue funding for county health departments (CHDs) and opposes any state reductions to the CHD Trust Funds.
- HSJ 24. The Florida Association of Counties supports maintaining a coordinated system of CHDs that is centrally housed within the Department of Health (DOH).
- HSJ 25. The Florida Association of Counties supports preserving the ability of CHDs to provide primary care and direct patient care services, particularly in communities without adequate substitutes or alternative providers for these services.
- HSJ 26. The Florida Association of Counties supports a dedicated state funding source for homeless programs.
- HSJ 27. The Florida Association of Counties supports the continuation of the Medically Needy program.
- HSJ 28. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies that allocate state funds to hire Veterans Services Officers in counties in order to increase services and federal benefits for Florida veterans.
- HSJ 29. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies that protect the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) trust fund, as well as dedicated state funding for the TD program, including funding to address unmet TD needs in rural areas.
- HSJ 30. The Florida Association of Counties supports continuing enhanced state funding for cultural historic initiatives.



Public Safety and Emergency Services

Providing for public safety is one of the core functions of county governments. Counties provide for safety through support of first-responder services from sheriffs' offices, ambulance services, fire and rescue, and emergency management centers that protect the public during natural or man-made disasters, terrorism, emergencies, and public health threats.

- HSJ 31. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies that maintain and enhance established trauma care funding, including incentives for the development of new trauma centers.
- HSJ 32. The Florida Association of Counties opposes policies that shift the state's financial responsibility for the trauma system to counties or divert trauma care funding for purposes other than those intended by the existing legislation.
- HSJ 33. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies that protect the ability of counties to provide for coordinated, countywide systems of emergency medical services through the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity Process, and not limit the ability of ambulance and other emergency medical transportation providers to be reimbursed for their services.
- HSJ 34. The Florida Association of Counties opposes sentencing of state inmates to county jails, but supports counties' ability to contract with the Department of Corrections for housing state inmates.
- HSJ 35. The Florida Association of Counties supports funding for capital improvements to county courthouses and other court-related facilities, including jails.
- HSJ 36. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies designed to prevent human trafficking, protect victims, prosecute human traffickers, and create partnerships across all levels of government, the private sector, and state agencies to provide training opportunities for local government employees and their agents to recognize the signs of human trafficking including government inspectors, law enforcement, criminal justice, health care, transportation and public transit, educational partners, and employees working with vulnerable populations.
- HSJ 37. The Florida Association of Counties opposes policies that would shift funds or impede counties from building and maintaining an interoperable radio communication system as authorized by statute.
- HSJ 38. The Florida Association of Counties supports increased funding for locally-operated crime analysis laboratories.



- HSJ 39. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies and funding targeted at enhancing the quality of volunteer firefighting services in rural and unincorporated communities, including providing state incentives for completion of certification requirements in fiscally constrained counties.
- HSJ 40. The Florida Association of Counties supports the provision of state matching funds for all disaster-related / emergency management projects deemed eligible and approved by FEMA including, but not limited to, backup generators for facilities for elders.
- HSJ 41. The Florida Association of Counties supports continued state funding for county EOCs to ensure each is able to meet the minimum structural survivability and operational space criteria established by the state and federal government.
- HSJ 42. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies and funding that provide enhanced training and education opportunities for County Emergency Management employees.

Criminal Justice System

Florida's counties also play a critical role in state's criminal justice system, providing prevention, pre-trial, and reintegration services, juvenile programs, victims' assistance, and jail funding throughout the state. Success of such programs hinges on a comprehensive and coordinated approach across local agencies, jurisdictions, and with state and federal partners. When determining appropriate programming and funding, Florida's counties work to encourage improved outcomes for system participants and communities while also seeking cost reductions and efficiencies. Public safety and criminal justice services continue to have increased funding needs, however, as counties and their public safety partners face new and evolving threats to the safety and welfare of their communities and counties must be empowered to adequately address funding of necessary services. Furthermore, considering the interconnected nature of many of these threats, increased federal and state funding is essential to ensure that effective public safety systems are provided throughout Florida.

- HSJ 43. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies preserving counties' ability to provide risk assessment pretrial release services that prevent new offenses and ensures appearance as obligated.
- HSJ 44. The Florida Association of Counties opposes policies limiting the discretion of the first appearance judges.
- HSJ 45. The Florida Association of Counties opposes policies that restrict pretrial services to only indigent defendants.
- HSJ 46. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies that reduce county jail expenses, including juvenile and adult diversion programs.



- HSJ 47. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies that provide Medicaid eligibility for persons incarcerated in county jails while waiting disposition of their cases and to ensure that existing Medicaid benefits are not terminated during incarceration.
- HSJ 48. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies and initiatives which reduce juvenile detention through prevention, civil citation, treatment, and rehabilitation services.
- HSJ 49. The Florida Association of Counties supports state investments in juvenile facilities to improve the conditions of secure confinement for detained youth without such costs being shifted to the counties.
- HSJ 50. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies that ensure that adequate safety, supervision, and facility maintenance is provided at juvenile residential assessment centers and secure detention facilities.
- HSJ 51. The Florida Association of Counties supports state funding of Juvenile Assessment Centers throughout Florida to strive to achieve equal treatment of youth offenders.
- HSJ 52. The Florida Association of Counties supports policies that increase judicial oversight and authority for charging and sentencing juvenile defendants as adults without creating additional county service requirements.
- HSJ 53. The Florida Association of Counties supports increased state funding for the state corrections system to address compensation, retention, and recruitment of state correctional staff. As the state reviews the current prison system, the Florida Association of Counties supports monitoring DOC review of state-operated facilities with particular focus on any recommendations that may impact local community employment and revenue sharing, as well as other local impacts and supports minimizing any affects to local employment and revenue sharing resulting from DOC reviews.