

FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

BILL ANALYSIS

This bill analysis was prepared by nonpartisan committee staff and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.

BILL #: [HB 4007](#)

TITLE: Martin County

SPONSOR(S): Snyder

Committee References

[Intergovernmental Affairs](#)

15 Y, 0 N

[Health Care Facilities & Systems](#)

14 Y, 0 N

[State Affairs](#)

23 Y, 0 N

SUMMARY

Effect of the Bill:

The bill revises several provisions related to the funding of indigent care in Martin County, including:

- Requiring the Martin County Board of County Commissioners to establish a process for the distribution of funds from the County Health Care Fund (Fund) to be disbursed between all licensed hospitals in Martin County.
- Providing criteria to qualify as an indigent resident who is eligible for services paid for by the Fund.
- Repealing provisions regarding the County Health Care Review Board.

The bill also repeals a special act that authorizes the county to seek repayment for indigent care and other welfare services by placing a lien on the real and personal property of recipients of those funds.

Fiscal or Economic Impact:

None.

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ANALYSIS

EFFECT OF THE BILL:

The bill revises several provisions related to the funding of indigent care in Martin County. The bill requires the Martin County Board of County Commissioners to create an ordinance establishing a process for the distribution of funds from the [County Health Care Fund \(Fund\)](#) to be disbursed between all licensed hospitals in Martin County. This process would replace the current procedure by which the board of county commissioners receives recommendations from the [County Health Care Review Board \(Review Board\)](#) concerning which indigent residents should receive assistance from the Fund for hospitalization and other healthcare costs. (Section [2](#))

The bill provides criteria to qualify as an indigent resident eligible for services paid for by the Fund. Specifically, the bill provides that the applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Be a resident of Martin County for at least six months before the applicant's hospitalization;
- The applicant's family unit does not exceed the household gross income equivalent to 150 percent of the federal poverty guidelines;
- Be ineligible for Medicaid or another third-party payor program; and
- Have liquid assets of \$8,000 or less. (Section [2](#))

The bill repeals provisions regarding the Review Board. (Section [2](#))

The bill also repeals [a special act that authorizes the county to seek repayment for indigent care and other welfare services](#) by placing a lien on the real and personal property of recipients of those funds. (Section [1](#))

The bill provides an effective date of upon becoming a law. (Section [3](#))

STORAGE NAME: h4007e.SAC

DATE: 1/22/2026

RELEVANT INFORMATION

SUBJECT OVERVIEW:

Martin County Health Care Fund (Fund)

Current law authorizes the Martin County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to levy an ad valorem of at least 0.25 mills, but no more than two mills, for the purpose of providing funds to pay for health care services in Martin County.¹ The proceeds of this tax are paid into the Fund, which the BOCC may use to pay for:

- Hospitalizations of indigent residents that occur within the county;
- Administrative costs and costs of doctors' services related to in-county hospitalizations of indigent residents;
- Any health care programs that state law requires counties to fund;² and
- Other health care programs based upon a level of service to be determined by the BOCC.³

Any unspent monies in the Fund at the end of the budget year remain in the Fund.⁴

The BOCC's use of Fund proceeds to pay for hospitalizations is based on recommendations from the County Health Care Review Board (Review Board).⁵ The Review Board consists of five members:

- Two members of the BOCC, appointed by the BOCC chairperson;
- Two current or former members of the Martin Memorial Health Systems Board, or members of an affiliated board or committee, appointed by the chairperson of the Martin Memorial Health Systems Board; and
- One member appointed by a majority of the other four members.⁶

The county's adopted ad valorem tax rate for the Fund for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 is 0.3046 mills, which is estimated to generate \$11.4 million in revenue.⁷ This amount is a 7.97 percent decrease in the millage rate from the previous year, although the dollar amount of ad valorem taxes collected increased by approximately \$400,000.⁸ The county estimates 391 residents received services through the Fund in FY 2024-25.⁹

Liens for Indigent Care and Other Welfare Services

Martin County is currently authorized to seek repayment for indigent care and other welfare services by placing a lien on the real and personal property of recipients of those funds.¹⁰ The county calculates the amount expended on each recipient and files a statement of expenditures with the clerk of the circuit court.¹¹ The filing of the statement creates a lien on the real and personal property of the recipients that operates in the same manner as a mortgage lien and are effective for 20 years.¹² The BOCC may discharge liens that cause undue hardship or unreasonable monetary loss.¹³ Martin County reports significant outstanding liens totaling approximately \$2.8 million.¹⁴

¹ Ch. 65-1906, s. 1, Laws of Fla., as amended by [ch. 2001-295, s. 1, Laws of Fla.](#)

² See e.g. [ch. 154, Part IV, F.S.](#) (Florida Health Care Responsibility Act, which requires each county to pay certain costs for indigent care for residents of that county who receive medical services in another county) and [s. 409.915, F.S.](#) (required county contributions to Medicaid).

³ Ch. 65-1906, s. 2, Laws of Fla., as amended by [ch. 2001-295, s. 1, Laws of Fla.](#)

⁴ Ch. 65-1906, s. 1, Laws of Fla., as amended by [ch. 2001-295, s. 1, Laws of Fla.](#)

⁵ Ch. 65-1906, s. 4, Laws of Fla., as amended by [ch. 2001-295, s. 1, Laws of Fla.](#)

⁶ Ch. 65-1906, s. 3, Laws of Fla., as amended by [chs. 2001-295, s. 1](#) and [2011-247, s. 1, Laws of Fla.](#)

⁷ Martin County Board of County Commissioners, [FY 2026 Tentative Budget](#), p. 50 (last visited Nov. 7 2025).

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ *Id.* at 131.

¹⁰ Ch. 67-1702, s. 1, Laws of Fla.

¹¹ Ch. 67-1702, s. 2, Laws of Fla.

¹² Ch. 67-1702, ss. 3-4, Laws of Fla.

¹³ Ch. 67-1702, s. 5, Laws of Fla.

¹⁴ Email from Sarah Powers, Legislative Coordinator, Martin County, RE: Martin County Questionnaire-Final (Nov. 20, 2025) (on file with Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee).

Hospital Charity Care

Hospitals in Florida regularly provide charity care, which consists of free or discounted medically necessary services provided to patients who cannot afford to pay and who meet the income-based eligibility for financial hardship.¹⁵ Hospitals may provide charity care to both uninsured patients and insured patients with limited financial resources. Although federal and state laws establish general parameters, each hospital adopts its own charity care policy that outlines its eligibility criteria, application procedures, and the level of assistance available.¹⁶ Hospitals absorb the cost of these services, as uncompensated charity care, although portions may be covered by state and federal supplemental payment programs or through county funded indigent care programs.¹⁷

Florida Medicaid Program

Medicaid is the health care safety net for low-income Floridians. Medicaid is a partnership of the federal and state governments established to provide coverage for health services for eligible persons. The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) is responsible for administering the Medicaid Program, licensing and regulating health facilities, and providing health care quality and price information to Floridians.¹⁸ The Department of Children and Families makes Medicaid eligibility determinations.¹⁹

The structure of each state's Medicaid program varies, but what states must pay for is largely determined by the federal government, as a condition of receiving federal funds.²⁰ The federal government also sets the minimum mandatory benefits to be covered in every state's Medicaid program.²¹

Medicaid reimburses hospitals for services delivered to enrolled beneficiaries and also administers supplemental payments to support hospitals that serve large volumes of Medicaid patients and uninsured patients through the Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) Program and the Low Income Pool (LIP) Program.

State and Federal Reimbursements

Disproportionate Share Hospital Program

Florida's Medicaid DSH Program provides supplemental payments to hospitals that treat a high volume of Medicaid patients and low-income uninsured or underinsured individuals.²² The formula for these payments includes uncompensated charity care charges reported to AHCA which are used to determine each hospital's share of available DSH funds.²³

Low Income Pool Program

The terms and conditions of Florida's Medicaid Managed Medical Assistance Waiver created the LIP Program to be used to provide supplemental payments to providers who provide services to Medicaid and uninsured patients.²⁴ The LIP Program is funded through county and other local tax dollars that are transferred to the state and used to draw federal match.²⁵ Local dollars transferred to the state and used in this way are known as "intergovernmental transfers" or IGTs. The local taxing authorities commit to sending these funds to the state in the form of an executed

¹⁵ Zachary Levinson, Scott Hulver, and Tricia Neuman, KFF, [Hospital Charity Care: How It Works and Why It Matters](#) (last visited November 18, 2025).

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ *Id.*

¹⁸ Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, [Agency for Health Care Administration](#) (last visited Nov. 18, 2025).

¹⁹ Fla. Dept. of Children and Families, [Florida's Medicaid Redetermination Plan](#) (last visited Dec. 19, 2025).

²⁰ 42 U.S.C. §§ 1396-1396w -5; 42 C.F.R. Parts 430-456 (§§ 430.0-456.725).

²¹ S. 409.905, F.S. Florida Medicaid Managed Care Program sets a minimum benefit package that build on top of the federal minimum benefits package. Ss. 409.906 and [409.973, F.S.](#)

²² S. 409.911, F.S.

²³ S. 409.911(4)(b), F.S.

²⁴ Agency for Health Care Administration, [Florida Medicaid Managed Medical Assistance Waiver Annual Report July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019](#), p. 33 (last visited Dec. 19, 2025).

²⁵ *Id.*

Letter of Agreement with AHCA. In order for AHCA to make timely payments to hospitals, AHCA must know which local governments will be submitting IGTs and the amount of the funds prior to using the funds to draw the federal match.

Local Bill Forms

The Florida Constitution prohibits the passage of any special act unless a notice of intention to seek enactment of the bill has been published as provided by general law or the act is conditioned to take effect only upon approval by referendum vote of the electors in the area affected.²⁶ A legal advertisement of the proposed bill must be placed in a newspaper of general circulation or published on a publicly accessible website²⁷ at least 30 days prior to the introduction of the local bill in the House or Senate.²⁸ The bill was noticed in the [Treasure Coast Newspapers on September 19, 2025](#).

The House local bill policy requires a completed and signed Local Bill Certification Form and Economic Impact Statement Form be filed with the Clerk of the House at the time the local bill is filed or as soon thereafter as possible.²⁹ Under the policy, a committee or subcommittee may not consider a local bill unless these forms have been filed. The following forms have been submitted for the bill:

- [Local Bill Certification Form](#)
- [Economic Impact Statement Form](#)

BILL HISTORY

COMMITTEE REFERENCE	ACTION	DATE	STAFF DIRECTOR/ POLICY CHIEF	ANALYSIS PREPARED BY
Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee	15 Y, 0 N	11/18/2025	Darden	Burgess
Health Care Facilities & Systems Subcommittee	14 Y, 0 N	12/2/2025	Lloyd	Aderibigbe
State Affairs Committee	23 Y, 0 N	1/22/2026	Williamson	Burgess

²⁶ [Art. III, s. 10, Fla. Const.](#)

²⁷ [S. 50.0311\(2\), F.S.](#)

²⁸ [S. 11.02, F.S.](#) If there is no newspaper circulated throughout or published in the county and no publicly accessible website has been designated, notice must be posted for at least 30 days in at least three public places in the county, one of which must be at the courthouse.

²⁹ Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee, [Local Bill Policies and Procedures Manual](#), p. 11 (last visited Nov. 7, 2025).