

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

## STATEMENT OF AGENCY ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION

June 2025

This statement of agency organization and operation has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of rule 28-101.001, Florida Administrative Code, and is available to any person upon request.

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### AGENCY HEAD

The head of the Department of Health (Department) is the State Surgeon General. The State Surgeon General is appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate to be the Department's chief administrator, managing the day-to-day operations of the Department. The State Surgeon General must be a physician licensed under Chapter 458 or Chapter 459, Florida Statutes, who has advanced training or extensive experience in public health administration. The State Surgeon General serves at the pleasure of the Governor.

The Governor has delegated many of the duties and responsibilities of the Department to the State Surgeon General, including:

- Being the state's leading advocate for wellness and disease prevention in Florida.
- Performing all administrative activities required to direct, supervise, and carry out the day-to-day duties of the Department as authorized by law or by the Governor and Cabinet acting as the head of the agency.
- Conducting planning and budgeting activities.
- Entering contracts and other agreements as authorized by law.
- Carrying out rulemaking and formal hearing responsibilities.
- Designating an official to accept service of process on behalf of the Department.

The law creating the Department and setting forth its responsibilities is contained in section 20.43, Florida Statutes.

## ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Department includes a State Health Office in Tallahassee with statewide responsibilities; Florida's 67 county health departments; 8 Children's Medical Services regional offices; 12 Medical Quality Assurance regional offices; 9 Disability Determinations regional offices; and 3 public health laboratories.

Per section 20.43, Florida Statutes, the Department is organized into eight divisions:

Administration  
Emergency Preparedness and Community Support Disease  
Control and Health Protection  
Community Health Promotion Children's  
Medical Services  
Public Health Statistics and Performance Management Medical  
Quality Assurance  
Disability Determinations

An organizational chart is provided in Appendix A.

## DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION

The Division of Administration reports to the Deputy Secretary for Operations, appointed by the State Surgeon General. The mission of this division is to provide high quality administrative support through efficient resource management and accountability.

The Division of Administration is made up of three bureaus. The Bureau of Finance and Accounting establishes and monitors accounting policies and procedures as well as accounting-oriented training. In addition, the bureau processes agency payables, prepares the Department's year-end financial statement, and monitors internal controls and prompt payment compliance. The bureau also handles federal compliance and audit management.

The Bureau of General Services is the most diverse bureau in the division, handling an extensive variety of services. These services include purchasing; design and construction; leasing; insurance; safety; and property, fleet and records management. This bureau also develops policies and procedures in its respective areas, as well as developing and conducting training.

The Bureau of Personnel and Human Resource Management provides expertise and guidance in the areas of classification, recruitment, benefits, payroll, leave and attendance and labor relations. In addition, the bureau promulgates human resource policies and procedures, conducts human resource-oriented training and handles People First system issues.

## **DIVISION OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

The purpose of the Division of Emergency Preparedness and Community Support is to strengthen the health and medical response system for improved outcomes during times of emergency. This division reports to the Deputy Secretary for Health, appointed by the State Surgeon General. The division comprises four bureaus.

The Bureau of Emergency Medical Oversight includes the Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Program, Trauma, Emergency Medical Services, and Health Information and Policy Analysis sections. These sections create a continuum of care model with multiple linkages, statutory responsibilities, and a mutual quality focus. Internal and external stakeholders and partners are all part of a cohesive health care and injury prevention community.

The Bureau of Preparedness and Response provides departmental expertise and leadership in the public health and medical component of all-hazards planning, preparation (including training and exercising), coordination and provision of funding, staff and material support for potential catastrophic events, natural or man-made, that may threaten the health of our citizens and compromise our ability to deliver needed health care services. This bureau is responsible for the submission, management and dissemination of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Cooperative Agreement and the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, Hospital Preparedness Program Cooperative Agreement. The bureau develops and annually updates the Department of Health Emergency Operations Plan and its multiple annexes, as well as oversees the development, evaluation, and approval of emergency plans from the county health departments and all other departmental entities. The bureau provides training for State Health Office and field staff related to all facets of the Emergency Operations Plan. Other core functions of the bureau are public health preparedness information dissemination, cache management, strategic planning, and project management. During activation of the State Emergency Response Team, the bureau provides the Department's primary support for the Emergency Support Function 8 (Health and Medical), including procuring goods and services needed to respond to an event, tracking costs and applying for Federal Emergency Management Agency public assistance when applicable.

The Bureau of Radiation Control is charged, through Chapter 404, Florida Statutes, to institute and maintain a program to permit development and utilization of sources of radiation for purposes consistent with the health and safety of the public. The bureau activities include responding to radiation incidents, inspecting facilities that contain radiation sources, issuing certificates and licenses to businesses and individuals who possess and use radiation sources, conducting environmental sampling and radiochemistry, training first responders and law enforcement to use radiation detectors and partnering with law enforcement and other radiation protection agencies to monitor for, and prevent the use of, a dirty bomb or other radiological/nuclear device.

The Bureau of Public Health Pharmacy partners with county health departments, Department program offices and other health service entities by providing supplies for clinical provisions and pharmaceutical needs. Pursuant to section 381.0203, Florida Statutes, the mission and responsibility of the bureau is to support pharmaceutical services provided by county health departments, including pharmaceutical repackaging, dispensing, and the purchase and distribution of immunizations and other pharmaceuticals.

## **DIVISION OF DISEASE CONTROL AND HEALTH PROTECTION**

The Division of Disease Control and Health Protection works to prevent, control and protect Florida's citizens from disease. Reporting to the Deputy Secretary for Health, this division includes four bureaus.

The Bureau of Communicable Diseases is focused on prevention, surveillance (monitoring of cases), disease investigation, public education and preparedness. Bureau service areas include the statewide programs for HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), viral hepatitis and tuberculosis (TB).

The Bureau of Environmental Health works to prevent disease of environmental origin and to promote and improve the health of all people in Florida. Environmental health services are delivered to the residents and visitors in Florida through integration with the Department's 67 county health departments and our county and community partners. Bureau core programs include water, facilities, onsite sewage (in county health departments), public health toxicology and the environmental health database. The bureau supports the Department's statewide activities through technical and programmatic guidance, policy development, rulemaking, multiagency coordination, program evaluations and training.

The Bureau of Epidemiology directly provides and supports the provision of the core public health functions and services that prevent, detect, investigate and control all reportable diseases and conditions (other than HIV/AIDS, STDs and TB). This bureau also administers the Refugee Health Program, providing culturally sensitive health services to persons who have recently resettled in the United States. The Bureau of Epidemiology also promotes immunization in Florida as the state's resource for immunization awareness, implementation and education.

The Bureau of Public Health Laboratories contributes to a healthier Florida by providing diagnostic screening, monitoring, reference, research and emergency public health laboratory services to county health departments and other official agencies, physicians, hospitals and private laboratories. In addition, the bureau is charged with protecting the public health, safety and welfare of the people of Florida from the hazards of improper performance of environmental laboratory tests through regulating environmental laboratories.

## **DIVISION OF COMMUNITY HEALTH PROMOTION**

The Division of Community Health Promotion is dedicated to helping Floridians make healthy choices that protect, promote and improve their health. The division accomplishes this goal through the administration and coordination of a wide variety of programs that address health issues throughout the lifespan. This division reports to the Deputy Secretary for Health and comprises five bureaus and the Public Health Research Unit.

The Bureau of Child Care Food Programs administers the Child Care Food Program and two related programs, the Afterschool Meals Program and the Homeless Children Nutrition Program. The purpose of these programs is to improve the health of children through nutritious meals and nutrition education. These programs provide nutritious meals and snacks to children through public-private partnerships with organizations committed to caring for children. All three programs are funded wholly by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service.

The Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention works to prevent and reduce the impact of chronic diseases and disabling conditions by addressing associated modifiable risk factors. Chronic diseases, including heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and asthma, are among the most common, costly and preventable of all health problems in Florida. The bureau develops, implements and evaluates health promotion activities, primary and secondary prevention services and community-based health interventions across the state. In addition, the bureau partners with state and local agencies, health systems and community partners to encourage best practices statewide. The bureau also focuses on increasing health equity and promotes the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all program activities.

The Bureau of Family Health Services works to improve oral health, prevent violence and unintended injuries, prevent unplanned pregnancies and improve maternal and child health services. These programs cover the lifespan and emphasize comprehensive, family centered, culturally and linguistically appropriate services. The Bureau of Family Health Services actively engages in public health program development, instruction on policy implementation, and technical assistance to county health departments, local community-based coalitions, and other private sector providers. A major goal of the bureau is to assist communities in developing and implementing systems of care for children and families that are necessary, complete and accessible. The programs within the Bureau of Family Health Services are funded by a variety of federal grants, state and local revenue.

The Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida manages programs and services related to preventing tobacco use, promoting tobacco-use cessation among current users and reducing exposure to secondhand smoke among the people of Florida. The bureau also manages the Clean Indoor Air Act and includes the Florida Cancer Program. The bureau manages a comprehensive media campaign aimed at decreasing the number of tobacco users in the state. The cessation program with the area health education centers provides "quit smoking" classes statewide. The bureau offers three ways to quit: phone, text or class. Tobacco Free Florida also participates in the legislatively-mandated Tobacco Advisory Council (section 381.84, Florida Statutes), which offers advice to the State Surgeon General on the direction and scope of the Comprehensive Statewide Tobacco Education and Use Prevention Program. The bureau also administers SWAT (Students Working Against Tobacco), Florida's statewide youth organization working toward a tobacco free future. The cancer program works with county health departments to provide breast and cervical screenings, comprehensive cancer control and colorectal screenings.

The Bureau of WIC Program Services administers the federally funded Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (also known as WIC) in Florida. WIC is a short-term intervention program designed to impact a targeted, high-risk population during critical stages of growth and development as well as influence lifetime nutrition and health behaviors. WIC provides benefits to low and moderate income pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women, as well as infants and children under the age of 5 who have been determined to have a nutritional need for the program. Benefits include specific nutritious foods, nutrition counseling and education, breastfeeding promotion and support and referrals to health care.

The Public Health Research Unit administers biomedical research grants and manages the Department's Institutional Review Board. The unit also houses major chronic disease, environmental health, injury, occupational health and substance abuse epidemiology and surveillance programs including Environmental Public Health Tracking and the statewide cancer and birth defects registries. The Biomedical Research Program administers grant funding programs for research involving tobacco-related disease, cancer, pediatric cancer, and Alzheimer's disease; coordinates designations for the Cancer Centers of Excellence Program; conducts the annual Research Excellence Initiative employee training program and ensures ethical conduct of research as required by federal and state law.

## **DIVISION OF CHILDREN'S MEDICAL SERVICES**

The Division of Children's Medical Services (CMS) provides a continuum of health services for eligible children including essential preventive, evaluative, and early intervention services for children who are at risk for, or who have special health care needs, in order to prevent or reduce long-term disabilities. The division reports to the Deputy Secretary for Children's Medical Services and comprises two bureaus: Bureau of Early Steps and Newborn Screening and Bureau of Child Protection and Special Technologies.

The purpose of the Bureau of Early Steps and Newborn Screening is to ensure early identification, treatment, and access to follow-up services for newborns and to provide early intervention services to eligible infants and toddlers. The Early Steps Program, established in sections 391.301-308, Florida Statutes, serves children birth to thirty-six months of age, who have a developmental disability, a developmental delay, or are at risk for developmental delay. The Bureau's Early Steps Program oversees fifteen Local Early Steps Programs throughout Florida to provide early intervention services. Services are provided to the family and child where they live, learn and play, to enable the family to implement developmentally appropriate learning opportunities during everyday activities and routines. Newborn Screening is a population-based, preventive public health program that is provided in every state in the United States and in many countries throughout the world. The Department of Health administers the Newborn Screening Program through the Division of Disease Control and Health Protection, State Public Health Laboratory in Jacksonville and the Division of CMS, Newborn Screening Follow-Up Program in Tallahassee. The intent of the Florida Newborn Screening Program, established in sections 383.14, 383.025(1)(a), 383.145, and 391.055(4), Florida Statutes, is to screen, identify, diagnose, and manage newborns at risk for selected disorders that, without detection and treatment, can lead to permanent developmental and physical damage, including death.

The purpose of the Bureau of Child Protection and Special Technologies is to administer the Child Protection Team Program and the Sexual Abuse Treatment Program. The Child Protection Teams, as directed by section 39.303, Florida Statutes, assist the Department of Children and Families and local sheriff's offices which are responsible for child protective investigations, to assess allegations of abuse and neglect through the provision of multidisciplinary assessments, including medical evaluations and other clinical assessments. The bureau provides technology services statewide and support for telemedicine medical examinations. The Sexual Abuse Treatment Program provides individual and family therapy to children who have been sexually abused, their siblings, and non-offending caregivers. The Bureau also provides oversight to the Child Abuse Death Review (CADR) system within the state of Florida. This program includes a Statewide CADR Committee and local CADR committees located in each judicial circuit throughout the state. The local committees review child fatality cases and identify contributing factors to develop prevention strategies aimed at reducing preventable child death and the Statewide CADR Committee provides guidance to the local committees.

## **DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH STATISTICS AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

The Division of Public Health Statistics and Performance Management provides Florida with the latest public health data and vital statistics, coordinates the Department's strategic planning and accreditation processes, and facilitates data monitoring, analysis and quality improvement functions of the performance management system. This division reports to the Deputy Secretary for Health and comprises three bureaus.

The Bureau of Community Health Assessment coordinates the health improvement and strategic planning processes for the state; delivers accessible health data including health profiles, individual indicators, maps and query systems at the community level and statewide through FLHealthCHARTS, the Department's web-based health statistics portal; coordinates local, state and federal resources to improve primary care access and health professional workforce availability in medically underserved communities throughout Florida.

The Bureau of Vital Statistics provides for the statewide registration of all Florida vital record events, which includes all Florida births, deaths, fetal deaths, marriages and divorces. The bureau issues more than 2.8 million certified copies annually. A centralized database allows all 67 counties to issue birth certifications, 1860 to present; and death and fetal death certifications, 2009 to present. Marriages and divorces, 1970 to present, are available for certification from the state office. The bureau maintains more than 22.5 million vital records.

The Bureau of Performance Assessment and Improvement works to ensure that the Department meets national standards as it delivers essential public health services to communities throughout Florida. The bureau assists the State Health Office and county health departments in setting quality improvement goals and objectives.

## **DIVISION OF MEDICAL QUALITY ASSURANCE**

Reporting to the Deputy Secretary for Operations, the Division of Medical Quality Assurance (MQA) is established under section 20.43, Florida Statutes, and is responsible for regulatory activities of various health care practitioners, facilities, and businesses. Legislative intent and statutory authority for MQA are set forth in Chapter 456, Florida Statutes. MQA includes three bureaus and the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP).

The Bureau of Enforcement is tasked with performing inspections, analyzing complaints, conducting complex investigations, issuing emergency restriction/suspension orders and monitoring compliance, and educating the public. The bureau has long-standing partnerships with law enforcement, state attorney's offices, and other state agencies to enforce health care practitioner regulations and to prosecute individuals practicing without a license.

The Bureau of Health Care Practitioner Regulation is responsible for the rulemaking and programmatic activities related to licensure of health care practitioners and regulated facilities. The bureau includes a bureau chief and seven board offices under the supervision of executive directors. The board offices credential and license designated health care practitioners. The bureau regulates seven types of facilities and over 200 license types in over 40 health care professions through coordination with 22 boards and four councils. The executive directors serve in an administrative liaison capacity to the designated boards and councils, whose responsibilities include approving or denying applicants for licensure and reviewing cases related to pending disciplinary action against health care practitioners and permittees. Board members share authority with the Department for developing rules for licensure, establishing exams, setting fees, establishing guidelines for discipline, and reducing the unlicensed practice of health care professions. The board offices evaluate applications for licensure and examination, conduct board meetings, administer policies, draft communications to licensees and other interested parties, and other administrative duties.

The Bureau of Operations provides operation and infrastructure support to MQA and the health care regulatory boards and councils. The bureau provides background screening and practitioner notification services, licensure support services, operational support services, and system support services.

The PDMP, known as E-FORCSE® (Electronic-Florida Online Reporting of Controlled Substance Evaluation Program), was created by the 2009 Florida Legislature in an initiative to encourage safer prescribing of controlled substances and administers the Prescription Drug Monitoring System (PDMS). This web-based system facilitates the collection, storage, maintenance, and analysis of controlled substance dispensing data reported by pharmacies and dispensing health care practitioners. Information stored in the PDMS is made available for consultation by prescribers and dispensers. Law enforcement and investigative agencies may request and receive information from the PDMS to use in cases involving the prescribing or dispensing of controlled substances.

## **DIVISION OF DISABILITY DETERMINATIONS**

The Division of Disability Determinations (DDD) is responsible for making the determination of medical eligibility for Florida citizens who apply for disability benefits under the federal Social Security Administration disability programs (Social Security Disability-Title II and Supplemental Security Income-Title XVI), and under the state Medically Needy program. It is also responsible for the periodic Continuing Disability Review (CDR) of all SSA disability beneficiaries to



determine if they continue to meet medical eligibility criteria.

Applications for Social Security disability benefits are filed at the claimant's local Social Security Administration (SSA) field office or online at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov). Applications for benefits under the Medically Needy program are made at a local office of the Department of Children and Families. For both programs the application is forwarded to the Division of Disability Determinations for a determination of medical eligibility. The claim is then returned to either the Social Security Administration or the Department of Children and Families for a final determination of technical (non-medical) eligibility and effectuation of any benefits due the claimant.

DDD has a total of nine offices located in Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Orlando, Tampa, Pensacola, and Miami.

## OFFICE OF COUNTY HEALTH SYSTEMS

The Office of County Health Systems oversees all 67 of Florida's county health departments (CHDs) which are responsible for creating and maintaining conditions that keep people healthy. Each of the CHDs investigate health problems and health threats and lead planning and response activities for public health emergencies. CHDs prevent, minimize and contain adverse health effects from communicable diseases, disease outbreaks from unsafe food and water, chronic diseases, environmental hazards, injuries and risky health behaviors. The office is under the guidance of the Deputy Secretary for County Health Systems.

Each CHD is led by a director or administrator, holding the health officer role, who reports to the Deputy Secretary for County Health Systems.

The Public Health Practice Unit serves as an integration point for program and clinical support for the CHDs. Primary functions include CHD performance reviews and clinical practice technical assistance. The Public Health Practice Unit is a valuable resource for assisting CHD staff to address public health services, promoting leadership development, identifying and supporting best practices, and improving statewide communication among clinical staff.

The Administrative Services Field Team provides seamless assistance to the CHDs and provides consistent consultation and promotes uniformity in business practices.

The Department's medical directors assist in maintaining clinically proficiency in CHDs. The medical directors coordinate work between CHDs and state and local programs to implement departmental policies for consistent standards and service in the CHDs and in the areas related to health equity and the social determinants of health. Similarly, nursing directors work in CHDs to provide direction in the areas of policy, program development, operation, research and evaluation to the statewide public health nursing programs.



## OBTAINING OTHER INFORMATION

### Telephone Assistance

#### *Florida Department of Health Tallahassee:*

State Health Office	850-245-4444
Medical Quality Assurance/Licensure Services	850-488-0595

#### *Additional contact numbers:*

Office of the State Surgeon General	850-245-4210
Chief of Staff	850-617-1560
Office of the General Counsel	850-245-4005
Office of the Inspector General	850-245-4141
Office of Legislative Planning	850-245-4006
Office of Communications	850-245-4111

### Mailing Address

Florida Department of Health  
4052 Bald Cypress Way  
Bin #A00  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1701

For additional mailing addresses or phone numbers, visit our website contact page: <https://wa-oit-contactus-prd.azurewebsites.net/>

## AGENCY CLERK

The Office of the Agency Clerk is responsible for accepting, filing and maintaining all legal documents received by the Department of Health. This office responds to requests for copies of documents from the files of the clerk's office; prepares, certifies and transmits the record on appeal when the Department acts as the lower tribunal; prepares Final Orders of the agency; and accepts service of process and subpoenas for the Department of Health.

Wanda D. Range, Agency Clerk  
Office of the General Counsel  
Phone: (850) 245-4005  
Email: [Wanda.Range@flhealth.gov](mailto:Wanda.Range@flhealth.gov)

## Filing with the Agency Clerk

All notices, petitions and other documents required by law to be filed with the Agency Clerk must be submitted by hand delivery, regular mail, facsimile transmission or e-filing. Filing shall be sent to the Agency Clerk at the following address:

### Mailing Address

Agency Clerk  
Office of the General Counsel  
Florida Department of Health 4052  
Bald Cypress Way, Bin A-02  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

### Physical Address

Agency Clerk  
Office of the General Counsel Florida  
Department of Health  
2585 Merchants Row Blvd  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

The Agency Clerk's office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET each business day.

The Agency Clerk is not open and does not accept filings after 5:00 pm ET or on weekends, recognized state holidays or during administrative state office closures. Any document received after 5:00 p.m. ET will be filed on the next regular business day.

**E-filing:** [Filing with the Agency Clerk](#)

**Facsimile:** 850-413-8743

### When Faxing a Document

A party who files a document by facsimile transmission represents that the original signed document will be retained by that party for the duration of the proceeding and for any subsequent appeal or subsequent proceeding in that cause, and that the party will produce the original upon request of other parties.

A party who elects to file a document by facsimile transmission shall be responsible for any delay, disruption or interruption of the electronic signals and accepts the full risk that the document may not be properly filed with the agency as a result.

The filing date for a document transmitted by facsimile shall be the date the agency received the complete document, or if received after 5:00 p.m. ET, the document will be deemed filed as of 8:00 a.m. on the next regular business day.

**NOTE:** A party who elects to file a document by fax transmission or e-filing shall be responsible for any delay, disruption, or interruption of the electronic signals and accepts the full risk that the document may not be properly filed with the agency as a result.

**Index of Final Orders**

The Department used the Florida Administrative Law Reports as its official reporter for all Agency final orders rendered prior to January 8, 2013, that were required to be indexed pursuant to section 120.53, Florida Statutes. Copies of the Florida Administrative Law Reports may be obtained from local public libraries or by contacting the Florida Administrative Law Reports at Post Office Box 6020, Gainesville, Florida 32627, (352) 375-8036, [fafr@fafr.com](mailto:fafr@fafr.com). The Department currently uses the website of the Division of Administrative Hearings as its official reporter for all Department final orders required to be indexed pursuant to section 120.53, Florida Statutes, that have been rendered since January 8, 2013. The Division of Administrative Hearings' website can be found at <http://www.doah.state.fl.us/>.

**Variances and Waivers**

Section 120.542, Florida Statutes, provides that state agencies may grant variances and waivers to requirements of their rules.

<http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/>

**Declaratory Statements**

Any substantially affected person may seek a declaratory statement regarding an agency's opinion as to the applicability of a statutory provision, or of any rule or order of the agency, as it applies to the petitioner's particular set of circumstances. This statutory provision is found at section 120.565, Florida Statutes.

**Laws**

The Florida Statutes may be accessed at <http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/>.

Chapter 28 of the Florida Administrative Code contains the rules that outline the procedures for filing administrative petitions. The Florida Administrative Code may be accessed at:

<https://www.flrules.org/gateway/browse.asp?toType=r>.

## APPENDIX A: ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



6/13/2025

