



Policy Agenda 2026

*Protecting Health Equity, Economic Security, and
Opportunity for All Floridians*

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How These Policies Advance Our Mission



Overview

Florida Impact's Policy Agenda 2026 outlines a set of policy priorities designed to advance health equity, economic security, and human dignity for communities across Florida. These priorities reflect the lived experiences of families, children, seniors, immigrants, and workers who continue to face barriers to essential resources and opportunities.

This agenda focuses on strengthening access to affordable health care, quality education and childcare, nutrition assistance, housing stability, and fair treatment for immigrant communities. Together, these policy areas form a comprehensive approach to improving well-being while promoting long-term community resilience and economic stability statewide.

The policies outlined in this agenda are grounded in evidence, community needs, and Florida Impact's longstanding mission to ensure that every Floridian has the opportunity to live a healthy, dignified, and secure life.

What You'll Find in This Agenda

- Policy recommendations to expand access to health care and preventive services
- Strategies to strengthen education, childcare, and workforce stability
- Protections for nutrition assistance and safety net programs
- Approaches to housing affordability and homelessness prevention

The following sections provide a detailed overview of each policy area, current conditions in Florida, and recommended actions.

Improving Health & Well-Being for All Floridians



Expand Medicaid to Adults Ages 19–64

Where Florida Stands:

Florida is one of only 10 states that has not expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, leaving a gap for low-income adults with no access to Medicaid or Marketplace subsidies.

Impact:

- Hundreds of thousands of working adults lack access to affordable health coverage, leading to worse health outcomes and preventable hospitalizations.
- States that expand Medicaid see improved access to preventive care, lower uncompensated care costs for hospitals, and better chronic disease management.

How Expansion Benefits Florida:

- Federal funds cover at least 90% of costs for newly eligible adults — bringing federal tax dollars back to Florida's economy.
- Improved health outcomes, stronger safety net, and potential state budget savings.

Policy Recommendation:

- Support legislative and/or ballot initiatives to expand Medicaid eligibility to adults up to 138% of the federal poverty level.

Implement Medicaid School-Based Services (HB 81)

Where Florida Stands

Florida does not consistently provide Medicaid-funded health services directly in schools for eligible students.

Why It Matters

School-based health services, including screenings and mental health care, help reduce absenteeism and improve academic performance.

Early access to care supports positive long-term health and educational outcomes for children.

Policy Recommendation

Enact HB 81 to allow school districts to bill Medicaid for eligible school-based health services.





Improving Health & Well-Being for All Floridians

Oppose Cuts & Harmful Changes to Medicaid & CHIP

Current Challenges

Federal changes under HR 1 could result in funding reductions and new eligibility restrictions.

HB 693, which seeks to implement HR 1 at the state level, includes provisions that would significantly limit access for lawfully present immigrant children.

Impact

Reductions to Medicaid and CHIP would decrease coverage for vulnerable children, families, seniors, people with disabilities, and immigrant communities.

Policy Recommendation

Oppose state adoption of harmful restrictions and work to protect eligibility for Medicaid and CHIP, including for immigrant families.

Support Florida KidCare Expansion

Where Florida Stands

Florida passed HB 121 to expand KidCare eligibility from 200% to 300% of the federal poverty level, potentially extending coverage to thousands of additional children.

Implementation has stalled due to disputes over federal continuous coverage requirements.

How It Can Be Improved

Advance implementation using available federal compliance pathways.

Remove premium and administrative barriers that prevent eligible families from enrolling.

Why It Matters

Expanding KidCare helps insure children whose families earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but cannot afford private coverage.





Improving Access to Quality Education & Childcare

Increase Eligibility for Subsidized Childcare & Extend VPK to 8 Hours

Where Florida Stands

Eligibility for subsidized childcare is limited, leaving many working families facing high out-of-pocket costs.

Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) is widely available but often limited to a half-day schedule.

Why It Matters

Affordable childcare enables parents to work, pursue education, and maintain economic stability.

Full-day VPK supports early learning, school readiness, and consistent care for young children.

Expanded access improves parental employment and strengthens overall state economic productivity.

Policy Recommendations

Raise income eligibility limits for subsidized childcare programs.

Extend VPK to a full 8-hour day to better support working families.



Invest in K-12 Public Education & Teacher Pay

Where Florida Stands

Florida ranks mid-to-low nationally in teacher pay and public school funding, creating challenges for recruitment and retention. (National context; Florida-specific data citation needed.)

How It Can Be Improved

Increase per-student funding, restore prior funding cuts, and establish competitive teacher salaries.

Why It Matters

Well-funded schools attract and retain qualified educators, improve student outcomes, and support long-term economic growth for the state.



Strengthening Safety Net Programs



Oppose Funding Cuts & Restrictive Implementations

Challenge:

- Federal law HR 1 alters SNAP/TANF administration; state proposals threaten to reduce benefits and tighten eligibility.

Policy Priorities:

- Implement HR 1 without reducing access to SNAP, TANF, or safety net supports.
- Provide robust oversight and accountability for DCF to reduce administrative errors while protecting access.
- Support elimination of federal SNAP barriers for college students enrolled more than half-time.

Why It Matters:

- Access to SNAP and TANF reduces food insecurity, supports economic stability, and strengthens educational outcomes.

Advocate for State Participation in Summer EBT

Why It Matters:

- Summer EBT provides food benefits to children when school meals are unavailable, reducing child hunger and improving health and academic readiness.

Repeal the TANF Family Cap

Why It Matters:

- Family cap policies harm the poorest families and do not improve outcomes.
- Repealing the cap supports family stability and child well-being.

Lift SNAP/TANF Bans for People with Drug Felony Convictions

Why It Matters:

- These outdated bans deny basic supports to people re-entering the community, increasing barriers to employment and stability.
- Eliminating bans supports successful re-entry and reduces recidivism.



Improving State Approach to Immigration



Increase Visibility & Oversight for “Alligator Alcatraz”

Issue:

The South Florida Detention Facility nicknamed “Alligator Alcatraz” operates in the Everglades for immigrant detention and has faced criticism over conditions, due process concerns, and environmental impacts.

Why It Matters:

- Detainee welfare, transparency, and humane treatment must be prioritized.
- Facilities must comply with environmental and civil rights standards.

Policy Recommendation:

- Advocate for independent oversight, transparency, and humane standards at all immigrant detention facilities.

Oppose Further Restrictions to Safety Net Access for Immigrants

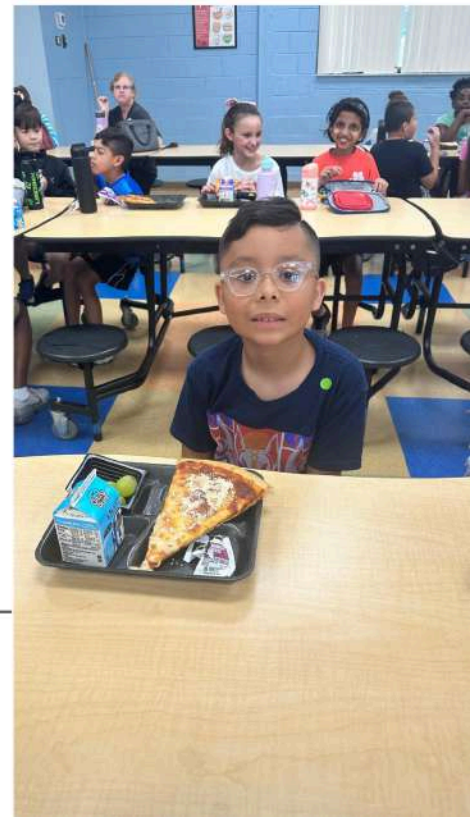
Why It Matters:

- Extending bans or limits harms immigrant families’ ability to access basic needs and health care.

Reinstate In-State Tuition for Students Without Documented Status

Why It Matters:

- “Dreamers” contribute to Florida’s communities and workforce — in-state tuition supports higher education access, economic mobility, and workforce development.



Improving Housing Access & Reducing Homelessness

Strengthen & Expand the Live Local Act

Why It Matters:

- Live Local provides local governments with incentives and funds for affordable housing development.

Encourage Local Housing Development

Why It Matters:

- Increasing housing supply in communities reduces cost burdens and supports workforce stability.

Protect Sadowski Trust Funds

Current State:

Sadowski Trust Funds are dedicated sources for affordable housing programs (SHIP, SAIL).

Why It Matters:

- Diverting Sadowski funds reduces resources for affordable housing solutions.
- Protecting these funds ensures investment in sustainable, community-based housing programs.

