



POLICY BRIEF | HB 1367 PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Americans strive to live sustainable, prosperous, and happy lives – it's the American Dream. **HB 1367** is an important step to help struggling Florida families get off welfare and closer to the life of their dreams.

HB 1367 (Tomkow) PUBLIC ASSISTANCE: directs the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) to seek federal approval to add a work requirement for Florida Medicaid recipients, revises penalties related to temporary cash assistance (TCA), and provides agencies direction for working with individuals receiving TCA to help them prepare for employment.

- **Medicaid Work Requirement:**

- For healthy working-age adults, Medicaid should be a temporary safety net while they work toward overcoming the financial challenges that led them to seek help. However, some have come to rely on welfare and, as a result, remain in a seemingly unbreakable cycle of poverty.
- Employment is the solution – a job provides a person the self-esteem needed to inspire them to believe a better life is within reach.
- The proposed work requirements are consistent with those in the temporary cash assistance (TCA) program.
 - The same exceptions would apply – the work requirements would not apply to children, the elderly, the disabled, or single parents of infants.
 - Hardship and medical exemptions are also available.
 - Some Medicaid recipients also receive TANF cash assistance, so are already subject to these work requirements.
- The work requirements are contingent on federal approval. AHCA will work with the federal Medicaid agency to determine what is possible, and the Florida Legislature will have the opportunity to approve the changes.
- This bill would affect about 501,000 able-bodied, working-age adults. **HB 1367** could make all the difference by helping to break the vicious cycle of poverty.
- Medicaid exists to protect children, the elderly and disabled individuals. **HB 1367** will help free up resources for those who this program was intended to serve and help able-bodied Floridians get back on their feet and on the path to a better, more prosperous life.

- **Temporary Cash Assistance:**

- **HB 1367** also revises TCA work requirement sanctions to align them with sanctions in the food assistance program.
 - It increases the minimum penalties for the first three instances of noncompliance with work requirements, and creates a sanction for the fourth instance.
 - It allows children in the family to continue receiving benefits during the penalty period, and indefinitely after the fourth sanction.
- The bill gives the Department of Economic Opportunity, DCF, and CareerSource Florida specific direction for working with individuals receiving TCA to make plans to prepare them for work so they are better able to find employment and avoid sanctions.
- The bill includes these commonsense Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card measures to encourage personal responsibility and discourage fraud:
 - It would require EBT card holders to pay a penalty for the cost of replacing lost EBT cards for the fifth card requested in a 12-month period, and for any subsequent cards in that period. The penalty amount may be deducted from the EBT cardholder's benefits.
 - The bill allows DCF to waive the penalty upon a showing of good cause, such as card malfunction or extreme financial hardship.
 - The bill prohibits EBT cards from being used at medical marijuana treatment centers; cigar stores and stands, pipe stores, smoke shops, and tobacco shops; and body piercing, branding, or tattooing establishments.

Please refer to the [bill text and staff analyses](#) for further information.