



Florida Leads the Nation

Statewide Overview and Taxes

Florida is leading among states as our nation reemerges from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Unlike other states that engaged in mass lockdowns and closed down their schools and businesses, Governor DeSantis allowed science and data to drive informed policies that prioritized our state's most vulnerable and put Seniors First, while protecting the right to earn a living, opening schools and keeping our economy and society functioning.

Although the public health emergency caused declines in revenue collection in both the 2019-20 and 2020-21 fiscal years, as well as revisions to projected future revenue collections, the policies of Governor Ron DeSantis and his administration have led to Florida beating expectations for revenues, jobs and economic growth.

Thanks to Governor DeSantis' leadership, Florida continues to outpace the nation in job growth and closed out 2020 with eight consecutive months of job growth, gaining over 748,000 private sector jobs from May through December. Florida's future remains bright and continues to lead the nation in many policy areas.

The following fiscally responsible budget protects taxpayer dollars while being mindful that the state is still engaged in an all-hands-on-deck response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Accordingly, this budget ensures the State maintains significant funding in reserves, including General Revenue, while safeguarding our K-12 education system and supporting our teachers, as well as continuing our commitment to Florida's environmental resources.

The Governor's total recommendation for the Fiscal Year 2021-22 budget is \$96.6 billion. The General Revenue portion is \$35.8 billion. Florida's total reserves are \$6.6 billion, more than 6 percent of the total recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2021-22, leaving ample resources for unforeseen expenditures related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2021 hurricane season.

\$2.6 billion, more than half of the \$4.3 billion increase over Fiscal Year 2020-21, is for various expenditures related to the COVID-19 pandemic response or impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic on Floridians.

Budget Savings

The Governor's budget makes strategic reductions of more than \$1 billion over two years, of which \$876.3 million is in General Revenue and \$228.3 million is in trust funds, and a reduction of 169 positions. Notable savings contained in the Governor's budget include:



- Administrative and operational efficiencies of \$408.2 million;
- Debt service savings of \$40.8 million;
- Contract and lease savings are \$16 million;
- Bonded savings are \$64.2 million;
- Medicaid and KidCare savings due to FMAP enhancement of \$554.7 million;
- Workload reduction of \$16.5 million; and
- Reduced excess budget authority of \$4.3 million.

Florida Reserves

- \$2.2 billion in unallocated General Revenue
- \$1.7 billion in the Budget Stabilization Fund
- \$1.7 billion in unallocated Trust Funds
- \$1.0 billion in Tobacco reserves
- \$6.6 billion in Total Reserves

Florida Retirement System

Pension Unfunded Liability – The unfunded actuarial liability (UAL) of the Florida Retirement System (FRS) Defined Benefit Program amounted to \$36.0 billion on June 30, 2020. Based on an actuarial liability of \$200.3 billion and an actuarial value of assets of \$164.3 billion, the program is 82.0 percent funded as of June 30, 2020.

The Governor’s Fiscal Year 2021-22 recommended budget includes \$52.9 million to implement the recommendations of the independent actuary and fully fund the recommended contributions to the UAL for state employees. This helps Florida continue to have one of the best funded pension plans of the largest states in the nation.

Taxpayer Savings

Governor DeSantis is committed to continuing to ease Floridians’ tax burden. The budget proposes to cut taxes by \$65 million. Florida’s per capita state tax burden of \$1,917 is currently the fourth lowest among all states. Governor DeSantis believes in keeping taxes low to help Florida’s future generations. The Governor’s \$65 million tax cut package includes funding for:

- **An 8-day Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday to Save Florida Families \$56 Million** – The holiday covers clothing up to \$60, school supplies up to \$15, and computers priced at \$1,000 or less
- **A 10-day Disaster Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday to Save Florida Families \$9 Million** – The holiday covers items needed during disasters including generators priced at \$750 or less



Florida Leads on Education

Florida's students, families, and teachers faced significant disruptions and challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the circumstances, Florida remains committed to providing the best education possible for our students, as well as a continued commitment to choice for families. Our state's schools remain open, our teachers continue to inspire, and our students continue to learn. Governor DeSantis proclaimed 2020 the "Year of the Teacher," and this upcoming fiscal year we remain steadfast in our commitment to Florida's educators and the Governor's goal of providing a world class education to all.

Several key investments include:

- An additional \$50 million, for a total of \$550 million, in funding to continue raising the minimum K-12 teacher salary to the goal of \$47,500, as well as salary increases for other eligible teachers and instructional personnel.
- \$1.4 billion in funding for early child education, including \$405 million for Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK).
- K-12 public schools have the highest total and state funding of all time with \$22.8 billion in total funding and \$12.9 billion in state funding.
 - This brings K-12 per student funding to \$8,019, which exceeds the current year's record funding by \$233 per student.
- The Florida College System is appropriated \$1.2 billion in state operating funding.
- The State University System is appropriated \$2.7 billion in state operating funding.

Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)

The budget provides a total of more than \$405 million for Florida's VPK program; a quality, free education initiative, which serves more than 157,000 four and five-year olds. VPK prepares each child for kindergarten by focusing on developing early literary skills and building a strong foundation for school.

School Readiness

The budget includes \$100 million in federal funds to maintain the provider rate increases provided to early learning coalitions in Fiscal Year 2020-21.

In addition, the following initiatives that support early learning are included:

- T.E.A.C.H. – \$10 million for early childhood teacher scholarships;
- Help Me Grow – \$1.8 million to connect children and families with information, resources and developmental services to enhance health, behavior and learning in the development of young children;
- Teacher Training – \$3 million for statewide professional development to improve childcare instructor quality;



- Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) – \$3.9 million to deliver high-quality School Readiness curriculum directly to parents so they may strengthen the cognitive and early literacy skills of at-risk children.

In addition to the funding provided through the state budget for early learning, \$223.6 million from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and over \$624 million from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation (CRRSA) Act were provided to ensure access to childcare and early education services during the pandemic.

K-12 Public Education

The budget invests a record \$22.8 billion in total funding for the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). This is a per student funding amount of \$8,019, an increase of \$233 per student. The base student allocation grows by \$132 per student.

To achieve the \$22.8 billion in total funding, the budget includes \$12.9 billion in state funding and \$9.9 billion in local funding. In total, the budget includes an increase of \$285.5 million in the FEFP, of which \$217.1 million is local funding.

Highlights of the FEFP increases include:

- \$132 increase in the Base Student Allocation (BSA);
- \$10 million increase, for a total of \$110 million for mental health initiatives;
- \$50 million increase, for a total of \$550 million, to continue increasing the minimum teacher salary for full-time public classroom teachers and to raise the salaries of other eligible teachers and instructional personnel.
- \$43.5 million to establish the Title I School Recognition Program to provide financial awards to Title I schools based on their student performance.

In addition to the funding provided through the state budget, school districts received over \$693 million from the CARES Act and over \$2.8 billion from the CRRSA Act. These funds are available for districts to utilize to ensure educational continuity for students and teachers.

School Safety

The Governor is committed to ensuring Florida's students and teachers are in a safe and secure learning environment.

- The budget includes funding for the following school safety initiatives:
 - \$180 million in recurring funding for the safe schools component of the FEFP.
 - \$1 million in recurring funding for screening-related and training-related costs and to provide stipends of \$500 to school guardians who participate in the Coach Aaron Feis Guardian Program.



- \$5.5 million in recurring funding to continue the Youth Mental Health Awareness and Assistance Training.
- \$640,000 in recurring funding for the Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool. The tool is used to assist school officials with identifying threats, vulnerabilities and appropriate safety controls.
- \$3 million in recurring funding to continue providing a centralized integrated data repository and data analytics resources to improve access to timely, complete and accurate information integrating data from: social media; Department of Children and Families; the Department of Law Enforcement; the Department of Juvenile Justice; and local law enforcement.
- \$42 million in funding for school safety grants.
- \$6.4 million in recurring funding for school districts to continue to implement a mobile panic alert system that is capable of connecting multiple first responder agencies.

Protecting Florida's Jewish Day Schools

To continue to address safety concerns for Florida's Jewish communities, Governor DeSantis recommends \$2.5 million in funding for additional security to ensure children at Florida's Jewish Day Schools can learn and thrive in a safe environment. This funding will help provide security and counter-terrorism upgrades such as video cameras, fences, bullet-proof glass, alarm systems and other safety equipment.

Promoting Computer Science

The budget maintains \$10 million to get teachers certified to teach computer science courses, and to provide bonuses to teachers who hold educator certificates or industry certifications in computer science.

Higher Education

In higher education, Florida boasts five of the Top 100 public universities in the country, including one in the Top 10, and another in the Top 20, while maintaining the second lowest tuition in the country for public four-year institutions. The most recent *U.S. News and World Report* has ranked Florida's higher education system the best in the nation for three consecutive years.

The budget invests a total of \$1.2 billion in state operating funding for Florida's colleges and a total of \$2.7 billion for Florida's universities.

The budget establishes the Florida Postsecondary Academic Library Network to provide essential services for libraries and virtual learning resources for institutions. This initiative invests \$9 million to the Florida College System and \$11.8 million to the State University System.



In addition to the funding provided through the state budget, Florida's higher education institutions received over \$873.9 million from the CARES Act and \$1.26 billion from the CRRSA Act. These funds are available to Florida's public state colleges and universities, eligible private institutions, and eligible technical colleges and centers to utilize to ensure educational continuity for students and teachers.

Holding the Line on Tuition

The budget prohibits tuition increases for Florida's colleges and universities. It is imperative for students and families to not face any additional burdens during these difficult times.

Performance Funding

The budget maintains the following performance funding at career technical centers, state colleges, and state universities:

- \$6.5 million for students earning industry certifications in high-skill, high-demand areas at career technical centers;
- \$14 million for students earning industry certifications in high-skill, high-demand areas at Florida colleges;
- \$30 million in performance funding for state colleges through the 2+2 Student Success Incentive Fund and the Work Florida Student Success Incentive Fund; and
- \$560 million in performance funding for state universities.

Workforce Initiatives

The budget includes nearly \$510 million in state and federal funding to support workforce education programs to ensure Florida students are prepared to fill high-demand, high-wage jobs.

This includes maintaining \$10 million for the Governor's Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant Program to establish or expand pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs for high school and college students.

In addition to the funding provided through the state budget, the following workforce initiatives received funding from the CARES Act:

- \$35 million for Rapid Credentials to enroll and complete students in in-demand, high-value, short term career and technical education credentialing programs.
- \$11 million for infrastructure and equipment grants for K-12 schools or technical colleges to support in-demand Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs of study for K-12 students.



Historically Black Colleges and Universities

The budget includes \$119 million for Florida's Historically Black Colleges and Universities:

- \$16.96 million in operating funds to Bethune-Cookman University.
- \$7.4 million in operating funds Edward Waters College.
- \$7 million in operating funds to Florida Memorial University.
- \$87.7 million in operating funds to Florida A&M University.

Education Infrastructure

The budget includes more than \$318.5 million in education capital outlay funding:

School Safety Grants

- \$42 million for school safety grants is provided to school districts to assist with costs associated with improving the physical security of K-12 school buildings.

Maintenance

- \$180 million for public charter school maintenance, funding the necessary infrastructure for public charter schools without utilizing any local funds from school districts.
- \$7.7 million for lab school maintenance.
- \$2.7 million for the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind maintenance.
- \$6 million for public broadcasting stations to correct health and safety issues and building deficiencies, and to complete renovations at public broadcasting stations.

Construction

- \$34.1 million for three Special Facility Construction projects, which funds critical infrastructure needs in Baker, Bradford, and Levy counties.
- \$46 million in budget authority to the State University System to spend collected student fees on a list of student-approved facility projects.



Florida Leads on the Environment

Florida's environmental resources are vital to our state's prosperity. Since taking office, Governor DeSantis has implemented major reforms to achieve more for Florida's environment. Under the Governor's leadership, record funding for Everglades restoration and the protection of water resources has been appropriated, and the Fiscal Year 2021-22 budget builds upon these significant investments to prioritize our important natural resources.

The environment remains a key focus of the budget, with significant investments made for Fiscal Year 2021-22. As part of more than \$4.3 billion in funding to protect our environment, agriculture and natural resources, the budget includes \$2.2 billion specifically for the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Further Protection of our Valuable and Vulnerable Coastlines

Upon taking office, Governor DeSantis set forth to develop resilience goals for the state to help protect Florida's coastal communities and fortify its pathway to continued prosperity. To establish these goals, the Governor appointed the state's first Chief Resilience Officer (CRO) with the direction to coordinate a statewide response to better prepare for the environmental, physical and economic impacts of sea level rise, intensified storms events, and localized flooding. The Governor's appointment of the CRO was the first tangible step towards strong, coordinated leadership on resiliency.

The Governor's recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2021-22 takes the next tangible step to address the challenges of sea level rise, intensified storm events, and localized flooding by establishing the Resilient Florida program. The Resilient Florida program will provide \$1 billion over four years to provide grants to state and local government entities to fund projects to adapt regionally significant assets to address the impacts of sea level rise, intensified storms and localized flooding.

Specifically, in Fiscal Year 2021-22, the Governor's recommended budget includes \$12.1 million to close the gap for statewide sea level rise/vulnerability assessments. These funds would allow DEP to grant up to \$100,000 to all remaining coastal counties, coastal municipalities, and inland counties who have not completed vulnerability assessments. Additionally, the Governor's recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2021-22 includes more than \$165 million for the first of four years of the Resilient Florida program.

The Governor's budget includes \$25 million from existing Documentary Stamp Tax revenue for the Resilient Florida program, and recommends increases each year by \$25 million until reaching \$100 million by the 2024-2025 fiscal year. Taking advantage of historically low interest rates, these funds are provided as debt service to bond more than \$1 billion in total program funding for grants.



Protecting Florida's 1,300 miles of coastline is important for our growing economy and quality of life, as millions travel from around the world to visit our world-renowned beaches. The budget includes \$50 million in beach nourishment funding to continue addressing shoreline erosion.

The budget includes \$10 million for the Resilient Coastlines Program within the Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection within DEP. This program helps prepare Florida's communities and habitats for changes resulting from sea level rise by providing funding and technical assistance and continuing to promote and ensure a coordinated approach to planning among state, regional and local agencies. The funding for coastal resiliency grants will also help protect Florida's coral reefs which serve as the state's first line of defense from storm surge. They are a major tourism attraction and support emergency sand placement to help fortify coastal areas ahead of storms.

Continued Improvements for Water Quality, Quantity and Supply

In Executive Order 19-12, among other major environmental reforms, Governor DeSantis called for \$2.5 billion to be invested over four years for Everglades restoration and the protection of water resources, an increase of \$1 billion over the previous four years. After two years in office, Florida is over halfway to reaching that goal by securing over \$1.25 billion. The Fiscal Year 2021-22 budget continues this investment, dedicating more than \$625 million for Everglades restoration and the protection of water resources.

The budget includes more than \$473 million for Everglades restoration projects, including \$32 million for Restoration Strategies, \$311 million for the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, \$50 million for the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Restoration Project, and \$80 million for the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program.

This level of funding will put Florida on track to complete the C-44 Reservoir and stormwater treatment area, the C-43 Reservoir, and additional projects over the next two years. These projects will provide 700,000 acre-feet of storage and remove more than 365,000 pounds of total phosphorus annually, a major source of nutrient pollution. The budget includes \$64 million for the EAA Reservoir to continue the momentum of this critical project to reduce harmful discharges and help send more clean water south of the Everglades.

The budget also includes \$145 million for targeted water quality improvements to achieve significant, meaningful and measurable nutrient reductions in key waterbodies across the state and to implement the initial recommendations of the Blue-Green Algae Task Force. This includes:



- \$100 million for cost-share grant funds for water quality improvements, including septic conversions and upgrades, other wastewater improvements, and rural and urban stormwater system upgrades.
- \$45 million to accelerate projects to meet scientific nutrient reduction goals (called Total Maximum Daily Loads), which may include green infrastructure investments or land conservation to protect our water resources.

On top of the investment in targeted water quality improvements, the budget includes \$50 million to restore Florida's world-renowned springs. This funding may also be used for land acquisition to protect springsheds and is crucial to supporting homeowners and local communities as they work with the state to achieve nutrient reduction requirements.

The budget supports a \$25 million investment to improve water quality and combat the effects and impacts of harmful algal blooms, including blue-green algae and red tide. The budget includes the following:

- \$10 million for innovative technologies and short-term solutions to aid in the prevention, cleanup and mitigation of harmful algal blooms.
- \$10.8 million to increase water quality monitoring, support the Blue-Green Algae Task Force, and to improve and maintain the water quality public information portal. This portal is focused on accountability and transparency, providing monitoring data for all of Florida's outstanding springs and key waterbodies, as well as allow the public to track the investment in projects and progress in attaining water quality goals.
- \$4.2 million to continue supporting the Center for Red Tide Research within the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), and to support the Harmful Algal Bloom Task Force and partnerships for mitigation and technology development with a renewed focus on red tide.

\$40 million is included for the alternative water supply grant program to help communities plan for and implement vital conservation, reuse and other alternative water supply projects. DEP will continue to engage local governments, industry, universities and water management districts to identify and research all viable alternative water supply sources and is working to provide an assessment of funding needs critical to supporting Florida's growing economy.

Investing in Clean Lands and Air

The budget includes \$67 million for the cleanup of contaminated sites with a focus on promoting redevelopment of these areas once cleanup has been completed. Working with federal and local partners, cleanup and redevelopment of these sites will ensure Florida's new businesses and growing communities can safely develop and our economy can continue to grow. Specific investments include:

- \$60 million for Petroleum Tanks Cleanup;



- \$4 million for Dry Cleaning Solvent Contaminated Site Cleanup;
- \$2 million for Hazardous Waste Contaminated Site Cleanup; and
- \$1 million for Cleanup of State-Owned contaminated sites.

The budget also includes \$30 million for the implementation of the State Mitigation Plan for the \$166 million Volkswagen Clean Air Act settlement. The plan addresses diesel emission reduction, including funds for electric vehicle infrastructure and electric buses.

A Commitment to Florida's Prized Properties and Waters

The budget includes \$82 million to protect our prized properties and waters in Florida. This funding will ensure all Floridians have access to enjoy our pristine natural environment, while protecting these unique natural resources and investing in the management of our state-owned lands.

As land acquisition is vital to both our economic growth and environmental protection, the budget includes \$50 million for the Florida Forever Program, the state's premier conservation and recreation land acquisition program for the Division of State Lands to acquire land with a focus on protecting our water resources for Floridians and visitors.

Florida's State Parks won the National Gold Medal a record four times for having the best park system nationally. The budget dedicates \$32 million to infrastructure improvements and resource management with the goal of maintaining this high standard, and ensuring all visitors and residents alike have access to these prized properties for generations to come.

Investing in Florida's Agriculture

The budget includes more than \$1.7 billion for Florida's agricultural industry. In order to preserve Florida's iconic citrus industry, the budget invests \$20.2 million for citrus research, the Citrus Health Response Program and for consumer awareness marketing efforts. Additionally, recognizing the importance of effectively combatting wildfires, the budget includes \$3.3 million for wildfire suppression equipment and \$4 million for road and bridge maintenance to allow for better access for land management and wildfire suppression activities.



Florida Leads on Transportation and Economic Development

Effectively managing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the needs of Floridians remains Governor DeSantis' top priority. In order to guarantee continued growth, aid economic recovery and ensure that Floridians are able to work and learn, millions of dollars have been invested in economic and rural development throughout the state. A large part of Florida's economy is derived from the state's robust tourism industry, which has been heavily impacted by the pandemic. Governor DeSantis remains committed to making sure there are resources and support available for businesses to succeed with COVID-19 safety measures.

At the beginning of the pandemic, with fewer people on the roads, Governor DeSantis directed the Florida Department of Transportation to expedite key projects, resulting in great strides being made in improving Florida's infrastructure. Governor DeSantis continues to recommend investments to maintain our roadways and promote public safety. Additionally, Florida's future remains bright as millions of dollars in investments for cybersecurity and critical infrastructure becomes a reality.

Ensuring Housing Availability and Affordability for Florida's Families

Governor DeSantis has recommended that Florida's primary affordable housing programs be fully funded in each of his budget recommendations since taking office. The Governor's budget provides \$423.3 million to fully fund workforce and affordable housing programs. This amount includes \$126.7 million for the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) Program, and \$296.6 million for the State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program (SHIP). These programs are administered by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC) from a portion of the revenues received from documentary stamp taxes on real estate transfers.

The SAIL Program, funded by the State Housing Trust Fund, provides low-interest loans on a competitive basis to affordable rental housing developers. SAIL funds serve to bridge the gap between primary financing and the total cost of the development. This allows developers to obtain the full financing needed to construct or rehabilitate affordable multifamily units.

The SHIP Program, funded by the Local Government Housing Trust Fund, provides funds to local governments as an incentive to create partnerships that produce and preserve affordable homeownership and multifamily housing for very low, low and moderate income families. SHIP dollars may be used to fund emergency repairs, new construction, rehabilitation, down payment and closing cost assistance, impact fees, construction and gap financing, mortgage buy-downs, acquisition of property for affordable housing, matching dollars for federal housing grants and programs, and homeownership counseling.



Disaster Recovery/Emergency Management

The Governor has continued to make disaster recovery and mitigation a top priority of his administration. Florida communities continue to recover from substantial hurricane strikes in recent years, most notably Hurricanes Irma and Michael. The Governor's budget provides significant funding for disaster recovery/mitigation and emergency management, including:

Division of Emergency Management

- **Open Federally Declared Disasters – Funding to Communities/State Operations**

\$1.9 billion in federal and state funding is provided so that communities can respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies as well as mitigate against future disasters or emergencies.

- \$265 million in federal and state assistance is included to leverage the work associated with the state operations relating to federally declared disasters for the Public Assistance, Hazard Mitigation, and Disaster Activity programs.
- The budget includes \$383 million to continue Florida's response efforts for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Department of Economic Opportunity

- **Community Development Block Grant**

The budget includes federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds directed toward local hurricane recovery and hardening efforts throughout the state. These funds include several CDBG programs, including CDBG Disaster Recovery Program for all named hurricanes since 2017 and CDBG Mitigation Program.

- **Revolving Loan Fund Program**

The budget includes \$15 million to support the Rebuild Florida Revolving Loan Program in Hurricane Michael affected counties. This program, supported by an additional \$8 million award from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration, assists businesses with disaster related economic changes, and can be used to address capital needs and help businesses implement plans for resiliency to protect against future storms.

Economic Recovery and Development

The impact of COVID-19 on Florida's economy has been substantial, yet Florida's economic recovery is well underway. With each passing month, our state continues to see Floridians returning to work and businesses growing. To further support Florida on its current path of economic recovery, job growth, and business development, the Governor's budget provides significant funding for economic expansion initiatives, including:



- \$50 million for the Job Growth Grant Fund to support local infrastructure and job training projects targeted towards economic recovery and development.
- \$5 million for Enterprise Florida, Inc. to engage in targeted campaigns that market the opportunities available in Florida for businesses to realize economic and job growth in our state.
- \$50 million for VISIT FLORIDA’s marketing programs, the same amount as in the current fiscal year, to continue showcasing that Florida is once again open and safe for tourists from throughout the U.S. and the world.
- \$50 million for the Economic Development Transportation Fund, also known as the “Road Fund”. This will provide funding for projects to facilitate economic development by eradicating location specific transportation problems (e.g., access roads, signalization, road widening, etc.)

Rural Recovery and Development

In addition to being the backbone of Florida’s agricultural industry, the state’s rural communities hold increased potential for businesses and infrastructure that will be a key component of Florida’s continued economic growth. The Governor’s budget wholeheartedly supports Florida rural development initiatives, including:

- \$5 million for the Rural Infrastructure Fund to support local rural infrastructure projects such as broadband, roads, storm and wastewater systems, and telecommunications facilities.
- \$1.17 million for the Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Program to provide local governments with access to financial assistance to further promote the economic viability of Florida’s rural communities.
- \$3.2 million to fund a new program that will study broadband accessibility and provide grants to Florida rural communities to assist them with expanding broadband capability and availability. Legislation was passed in 2020 establishing an Office of Broadband within the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) to increase the availability and effectiveness of broadband internet throughout the state, specifically in small and rural communities.

Ensuring Fair, Free, and Safe Elections

Although Florida elections are administered at the local level, the state plays an important role in ensuring elections are conducted fairly and accurately. The state helps to make sure that Florida’s voting and registration systems are safe from cybersecurity threats. It is imperative that investments continue to be made in order to ensure Florida’s elections are fair, free, and safe.

- The Governor’s budget includes \$16.7 million for state-level election oversight activities, with a focus on cybersecurity enhancements to Florida’s election system. This amount includes:
 - \$3 million for the Supervisors of Elections to continue cybersecurity initiatives and improvements to their systems.



- \$2 million for Election Legacy Hardware for security improvements and enhancements in election technology.

Infrastructure

Florida is a top destination to live, work and visit, which makes significant investments in our state's critical transportation infrastructure even more important. The Governor's budget includes \$10.4 billion for the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). This investment will provide for the retention or creation of more than 148,500 jobs. Every dollar invested in transportation is estimated to result in a return of up to \$4 in user and economic benefits to Florida's residents and businesses, and also helps diversify Florida's economy.

Within this amount the Governor's budget provides \$9.47 billion for the State Transportation Work Program, which is an ongoing five-year plan for the implementation and completion of transportation infrastructure projects. These projects include construction and maintenance of Florida's roads, bridges, rails, seaports and other public transportation systems that grow the state's economy and improve the quality of life for our citizens. Within the Governor's budget the Work Program includes:

- \$2.5 billion for highway construction to include 210 new lane miles.
- \$1 billion in resurfacing to include 2,689 lane miles.
- \$122.6 million in seaport infrastructure improvements.
- \$331 million for aviation improvements of which \$199.6 million is for Spaceports.
- \$516 million in scheduled repairs for 89 bridges and replacement of 18 bridges.
- \$717 million investment in rail/transit projects.
- \$172.2 million for safety initiatives.



Florida Leads on Health and Human Services

Governor DeSantis hopes that all Floridians are able to lead long, healthy and productive lives and understands the importance of helping those in need, including our most vulnerable who are unable to help themselves. This past year we have seen how the impacts of COVID-19 have altered the lives of our residents and their family members. We have seen individuals and families struggle daily with the impacts of the pandemic on employment and the health and welfare of their loved ones. The Governor's Fiscal Year 2021-22 recommended budget supports Florida's epidemiological infrastructure and promotes strategies to reduce minority morbidity and mortality.

The budget supports an increase in child welfare funding to protect those who are unable to protect themselves. The Governor's budget also provides funding for mental health and includes additional funding to help fight the opioid epidemic and to assist our veterans through employment opportunities and community outreach programs. Additionally, the budget provides funding to individuals with disabilities who have the greatest need. The Governor's recommended budget will continue to make significant investments in improving the lives and prioritizing the wellness and safety of all Floridians.

Improving Health Outcomes

The Governor recommends \$9 million in funding to support the Office of Minority Health and Health Equity to develop strategies to reduce health disparities and advance health equity. More than \$2.8 million in funding is provided to support additional Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN) for medication administration to reduce the spread of HIV in the state.

Child Welfare

The Governor's budget includes \$32.9 million to provide funding for services to children and families who receive services through Florida's child welfare system. The budget invests \$11.9 million for maintenance adoption subsidies to support post-adoption services for children who are adopted from foster care. Governor DeSantis understands the impact adoption can have on children's lives because every child deserves to be happy and healthy in a loving and caring environment.

The recommended budget includes \$20.9 million to support foster care parents who serve as caregivers for children who have been removed from their home, early intervention services for substance affected infants and evidence-based practices statewide for mental health, substance abuse and in-home parenting program to comply with the Family First Prevention Services Act.



Opioid Epidemic

Governor DeSantis is committed to continuing the fight against the national opioid epidemic by working with local partners and families affected by this crisis to ensure the needs of individuals during these difficult times are met. His Fiscal Year 2021-22 recommended budget recommends \$178 million in total funding to fight the opioid epidemic in Florida and includes \$119.9 million in funding from the State Opioid Response Grant to address the opioid crisis by providing evidence-based prevention, medication-assisted treatment and recovery. Additionally, the budget maintains \$19.6 million in federal funding to the Department of Health from the Overdose Data to Action grant to enhance drug overdose surveillance and prevention strategies to reduce overdoses.

Mental Health and Substance Abuse

The Governor's budget provides \$53.9 million in funding to provide community based behavioral health services for adults with severe and persistent mental illness and children with emotional disturbances. This funding will also be used to improve the safety of residents and staff at state mental health treatment facilities.

Seniors

The Governor's budget maintains funding for the Alzheimer's Disease Initiative waitlist, the Community Care for the Elderly Program and the Home Care for Elderly Program. These programs will continue to provide support for activities of daily living, medical assistance and caregiver support to keep seniors in their homes.

Veterans

The Governor's budget provides \$1.3 million to assist approximately 500 veterans in mentoring, training and networking throughout the state of Florida. The budget provides \$22.6 million to support capital improvements, equipment updates, and medical costs for nursing home residents and staffing needs for the two new Veterans' Nursing Homes including Ardie R. Copas and Lake Baldwin State Veterans Nursing Homes. Additionally, the Governor includes \$2.4 million to support the women's veterans program, assisting women veterans by informing them of health care eligibility, a veterans suicide prevention campaign and other services, counseling and assistance for veterans to help them obtain the resources they need.

Person with Disabilities

The Governor's Fiscal Year 2021-22 recommended budget provides \$36.6 million in funding for a new level of reimbursement for Intermediate Care Facilities to serve individuals with intellectual disabilities who have severe maladaptive behavioral needs who have been classified on the Global Behavioral Service Need Matrix levels four through six (4-6). The budget invests \$15 million in funding to allow an additional 306 individuals in crisis to be served through the Agency for Persons with Disabilities waiver program.



Florida Leads on Public Safety

Governor DeSantis has made public safety a top priority and has taken bold steps to protect all Floridians. Due to the hard work of Florida's law enforcement officers, the state's crime rate decreased in 2019, marking the 49th consecutive year the state has seen a drop in its crime rate. The 2020 statistics have not yet been reported. Governor DeSantis' budget continues to make necessary investments in our public safety, including funding for safer correctional facilities and evidence-based prevention programs for at-risk youth.

Enhancing Florida's Crime Databases

FDLE is responsible for maintaining a variety of databases that law enforcement uses daily to investigate crimes and apprehend criminals. The budget invests more than \$14.5 million for these databases, including:

- \$11.4 million to continue the transition to incident-based crime reporting (FIBRS); and
- \$3.1 million to centralize criminal justice data and make it more transparent to the public.

Safer Correctional Facilities

Governor DeSantis' recommended budget includes \$31.1 million and 330 FTE to improve staffing levels at the Department of Corrections (FDC). This includes:

- \$5 million to continue a targeted retention pay plan for Correctional Officers, Correctional Probation Officers, and Inspectors that aims to address exceptionally high turnover rates by providing a \$500 pay increase for new hires, a \$1,000 pay increase at two years of service, and a \$1,000 increase at five years of service.
- \$26.1 million and 330 FTE to continue transitioning Correctional Officers from a 12-hour shift to an 8.5-hour shift.

The budget also includes \$2.5 million and 7 FTE to make Florida's correctional facilities safer. This includes:

- \$2 million for security equipment, such as radios, metal detectors, and cameras; and
- \$498,448 and 7 FTE that will allow the Department to more closely monitor gang activity.

Expanding Reentry Programming

Governor DeSantis' recommended budget includes \$4.5 million and 7 FTE to increase inmate reentry programming which includes:

- \$461,099 and 7 FTE to continue increasing the number of academic teachers at the Department of Corrections;



- \$1 million to expand career and technical education programs to better meet the vocational training needs of the inmate population and current job market demands; and
- \$3 million to continue the Continuum of Care Program for enhanced offender rehabilitation at private correctional facilities.

Improving Correctional Infrastructure

Governor DeSantis' recommended budget includes \$19 million to make critical repairs and renovations to correctional and juvenile facilities. This investment in Florida's infrastructure enhances the safety and security of Florida's correctional and juvenile officers, inmates, and youth.

At-Risk Youth Programs and Prevention Services

Effective prevention programs reduce the likelihood that a child will have future involvement with the juvenile justice system. The budget includes more than \$12.4 million to fund prevention programs for at-risk youth. This includes funding for the following programs:

- **Youth Challenge Program** – \$5.8 million for a residential program at Camp Blanding that provides 16–18-year-olds who withdraw or are removed from school with opportunities such as high school credit recovery, career-technical education, and life preparation classes.
- **Mentoring Initiatives** – \$6.6 million for the Department of Education to contract with mentoring programs throughout the state.

Increasing Representation of Children

Governor DeSantis' recommended budget includes \$736,186 and 12 FTE to increase Guardian ad Litem staff where the state is experiencing the greatest growth in foster care placements.

Supporting Military and Their Families

Governor DeSantis' recommended budget provides \$24.4 million for Florida's military presence and families, which funds the State's support of military research and development. This includes:

- \$2 million for the Florida Defense Support Task Force
- \$1.75 million for the Defense Infrastructure Program
- \$7.2 million for armory maintenance
- \$2 million for military base protection, including additional security measures for National Guard armories
- \$3.1 million to support Florida National Guardsmen seeking higher education degrees
- \$8.4 million to support scholarships for children and spouses of deceased or disabled veterans



Problem-Solving Courts

- Problem-solving courts, such as drug courts, mental health courts, and veterans' courts, address the root causes of the criminal justice system's involvement through specialized dockets, multidisciplinary teams, and a non-adversarial approach. The budget provides more than \$10.8 million to continue the operation of problem-solving courts throughout the state.



Florida Leads on General Government

Florida has been able to efficiently manage state operations, even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Safety measures are critically important and investments to ensure safe and accessible working environments are a top priority. Governor DeSantis is committed to modernizing Florida's business operations, which include automation, reduced wait times and cyber threat mitigation.

Maintaining and Improving the Florida Facilities Pool

It is essential that the State of Florida provides safe and efficient working environments at state owned buildings. The budget invests more than \$192 million in the Florida Facilities Pool which will improve life safety issues, address Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and address needed building updates. This investment includes \$172 million in new bonding authority, achieving over \$55 million in General Revenue savings, to improve accessibility and efficiencies at the Capitol Complex as well as a new State Emergency Operations Center which will better serve the duties and responsibilities of the State Emergency Response Team.

Modernizing Florida's Business Processes

The budget invests \$5 million in the Department of Management Service's Florida Digital Service to automate state functions through Robotic Process Automation which will reduce processing and wait times for claims and application review for services that many Floridians depend on.

Safeguarding Florida against Cybersecurity Threats

The budget invests \$39.3 million in various state agencies to enhance information technology security measures and controls to help protect Florida against the ongoing and evolving nature of cyber threats that can compromise critical state resources and sensitive information.