

# Feds OK Medicaid Managed Care Program For Three Years

[Share](#) [Tweet](#) [g+1](#) [E-mail](#) [0 Comments](#) [Print](#)

By **NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA**

Federal officials have approved a three-year extension of a program that requires almost all Florida Medicaid beneficiaries to enroll in managed-care plans.

The federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, in a letter Thursday, formally approved the extension of what is known as a Medicaid "waiver." The move was expected, as federal officials indicated in April they would approve the extension, which will last through June 30, 2017.

Florida lawmakers in 2011 approved a controversial plan to use a statewide managed-care system in Medicaid. The state Agency for Health Care Administration in recent months has phased in the new system, which took effect Friday in the final 13 counties.



Thursday's approval also extended for one year a program known as the "Low Income Pool," which funnels extra money to hospitals and other health providers that serve large numbers of low-income and uninsured patients.

But in extending the so-called LIP program through June 30, 2015, federal officials made clear they expect the state to move away from the funding program in the future. The letter requires the state to commission an independent report on Medicaid provider payments.

"The report shall recommend reforms to the Florida Medicaid financing system that can allow the state, beginning in state fiscal year 2015-2016, to move toward Medicaid managed-care and fee-for-service payments that ensure access for Medicaid beneficiaries to providers throughout the state through such payments rather than through over reliance on supplemental payments," the letter said.

The LIP program is a supplemental-payment program.

Also, the letter indicates that some past LIP payments to providers were improper. It said federal officials had found \$104.3 million in improper payments and that the federal government will seek to recoup its share of the money. Medicaid programs are funded, in part, with federal matching money.

## **Crist, Committee Collect Almost \$600K**

Democratic gubernatorial candidate Charlie Crist and a closely tied political committee collected almost \$600,000 in contributions from July 19 to July 25, newly filed records show.

The committee, known as "Charlie Crist for Florida," pulled in \$377,000 during the week, bringing its overall total to \$10,759,350. It was buoyed by a \$250,000 contribution on July 25 from Coral Gables retiree Barbara Stiefel, a major Democratic donor.

Also, Crist's campaign raised \$215,779 during the week, bringing its total to slightly more than \$4.6 million. The campaign also reported spending \$178,207 during the time period.

Earlier, Gov. Rick Scott's re-election campaign reported collecting \$397,830 in contributions from July 19 to July 25, bringing its overall total to more than \$6.2 million. Also, a Scott committee, known as "Let's Get to Work," reported collecting \$55,000 in contributions during the week, bringing its overall total to slightly more than \$33 million.

### **Media Companies Ask Court to Unseal Redistricting Documents**

A group of media companies has filed a brief calling on the Florida Supreme Court to unseal documents used in a congressional redistricting case.

Eight news companies, the Associated Press and a handful of industry groups filed the arguments as justices consider whether records produced by Republican consultant Pat Bainter, his employees and his Gainesville-based firm, Data Targeting, Inc., should have been introduced in a lawsuit challenging congressional districts drawn by the Legislature in 2012.

The records were used in the case, in which Leon County Circuit Judge Terry Lewis struck down the map, but remain shielded from public view.

"The citizens of Florida -- and citizens throughout the nation -- have a right to review and evaluate for themselves all evidence relied upon by the trial court in rendering final judgment on the constitutionality of district mapping that impacts all Florida citizens and could ultimately factor in the future makeup and political balance of the U.S. House of Representatives," said the brief, filed late Thursday.

The Supreme Court is set to hear arguments in the case Sept. 19.

**TAGS:** [Florida Medicaid](#) [Medicaid managed care](#) [Charlie Crist](#) [Congressional redistricting](#)