

## AGENCY SNAPSHOTS

*from page 13***Agency for Health Care Administration**

by Vilma Martinez

The Legislature created the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) in section 20.42, Florida Statutes. AHCA is specifically authorized in section 20.42, Florida Statutes, to act as the chief health policy and planning entity for the state. It is the agency primarily responsible for the state's estimated \$22.9 billion Medicaid program, the licensure of the state's 45,000 health care facilities, and the sharing of health care data through its operation of the Florida Center for Health Information and Policy Analysis. AHCA's major responsibilities also include: health care facility inspections and regulatory enforcement; investigation of consumer complaints related to health care facilities and managed care plans; implementation of the Certificate of Need program; administration of the contracts with the Florida Healthy Kids Corporation; certification of health maintenance organizations and prepaid health clinics; and other duties prescribed by statute or agreement.

Like many of its sister agencies, AHCA is headed by a secretary, who is appointed by the Governor, subject to confirmation by the Senate. AHCA is divided into various units and subunits:

- **The Chief of Staff's Office** coordinates Medicaid and health care regulation policy with other state agencies, the Legislature and the federal government. This office oversees Communications and Legislative Affairs, the Division of Information Technology, and serves as the liaison to the Governor's Washington Office.
- **The Division of Operations** is headed up by the Deputy Secretary of Operations and is the Agency's business support unit. It assists the Agency with financial, personnel, and support related functions through the Bureau of Financial Services, Bureau of Human Resources, Bureau of Social Services, and Medicaid Third Party Liability Unit.
- **The Division of Health Quality Assurance (HQA)** is authorized to regulate 40 types of health care facilities and providers, managed care organizations, and more than 46,000 facilities or providers including health maintenance organizations, nursing homes, hospitals, assisted living facilities, home health agencies, health care clinics, and clinical laboratories. The Division is comprised of six bureaus: Bureau of Health Facility Regulation, Bureau of Managed Care, Bureau of Field Operations, Bureau of Central Services, the Office of Plans and Construction, and the Florida Center for Health Information and Policy Analysis.
- **The Division of Medicaid** directs all Medicaid program planning and development activities. The Division plans, develops, organizes, and monitors program planning, coverage and reimbursement policies and oversees provider and consumer relations. Additionally, the Division administers the Medicaid fiscal agent contract and formulates long-term plans for service delivery. The Division is subdivided into several units, which are managed by three Assistant Deputy Secretaries.
  - The Assistant Deputy Secretary for Medicaid Finance oversees the Division and acts as the Medicaid Chief Financial Officer and is responsible for the bureaus of Medicaid Program Analysis, Medicaid Program Finance, and Medicaid Contract Management. These bureaus aid the Assistant Deputy Secretary in carrying out the functions of the Division.
  - The Assistant Deputy Secretary of Medicaid Operations is responsible for the bureaus of Medicaid Services and Pharmacy Services, and the Performance, Evaluation and Research Unit.
  - The Assistant Deputy Secretary for Medicaid Health Systems heads the Bureaus of Health Systems Development, the 11 Medicaid field offices, and the Choice Counseling Unit.
- **The Office of the Inspector General** works to provide a central point for coordination of activities that promote accountability, integrity, and efficiency in government and ensures that AHCA's programs and services comply with all applicable laws, policies, and procedures in accordance with the Florida Statutes. In addition to these duties, the Inspector General is responsible for the oversight of the Office of Medicaid Integrity (MIP), which is authorized by section 409.913, Florida Statutes. MIP audits and investigates Medicaid providers suspected of overbilling or defrauding Florida's Medicaid program, recovers overpayments, issues administrative sanctions and refers cases of suspected fraud for criminal investigation. The Inspector General's Office contains an investigations section, an internal audit unit, the Office of Medicaid Program Integrity, and the HIPAA Privacy and Security Compliance Office.
- **The Office of the General Counsel (OGC)** is managed by the General Counsel, who is AHCA's chief legal officer and a member of the AHCA Management Team. He advises the Secretary and the AHCA Management Team on all legal issues relating to AHCA. The General Counsel supervises the Deputy General Counsel and all OGC section leaders, except the Agency Clerk who is supervised by the Deputy General Counsel. The OGC has seven sections: the Agency Clerk's Office (ACO), the Appellate Section, the Facilities Section, the

Litigation Section, the Medicaid Section, the Medicaid Managed Care Section, and the Rules Coordinator.

The OGC provides legal advice and representation for AHCA on all legal matters, including: licensure and regulation of health care facilities; regulation of managed care plans; administration of the Medicaid state plan; recovery of Medicaid overpayments due to abuse or third party liability; and, civil litigation related to various AHCA programs.

**General Counsel:**

Stuart F. Williams  
2727 Mahan Drive, Mail Stop #3  
Tallahassee, FL 32308  
Phone: (850) 412-3630

**Filing Documents:**

Petitions for hearing and other pleadings filed pursuant to the administrative process of chapter 120, Florida Statutes, may be filed with AHCA by U.S. mail or courier sent to the Agency Clerk at the address listed below, by hand delivery or by facsimile transmission to (850) 921-0158. Electronic filing is also available at: <http://apps.ahca.myflorida.com/Efile>. All pleadings filed with AHCA must meet the requirements of rule 28-106.104, Florida Administrative Code, as well as the requirements of rules 28-106.201 or 28-106.2015, Florida Administrative Code (whichever is applicable), in the case of petitions for hearing. The filing date for documents filed by facsimile transmission is the date the Agency Clerk receives the complete document. Documents filed by facsimile transmission after 5:00 p.m. are deemed to have been filed as of 8:00 a.m. on the next regular business day.

**Agency Clerk:**

Richard J. Shoop  
2727 Mahan Drive, Mail Stop #3  
Tallahassee, Florida 32308  
Phone: (850) 412-3671  
Fax: (850) 921-0158  
[Richard.Shoop@ahca.myflorida.com](mailto:Richard.Shoop@ahca.myflorida.com)

**Hours of Operation:**

AHCA's hours of operation during which filings will be accepted are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Obtaining Public Records:**

Public Records Office  
2727 Mahan Drive, Mail Stop #3  
Tallahassee, Florida 32308-5403  
Phone: (850) 412-3688  
Fax: (850) 921-0158  
[PublicRecordsReq@ahca.myflorida.com](mailto:PublicRecordsReq@ahca.myflorida.com)

**Index of Final Orders:**

AHCA currently uses the website of the Division of Administrative Hearings as its official reporter for all final orders required to be indexed by section 120.53, Florida Statutes, which have been rendered since September 1, 2013. The Division of Administrative Hearings' website

can be found at <http://www.doah.state.fl.us/>.

Florida Administrative Law Reports served as the official reporter for final orders rendered before September 1, 2013, and required to be indexed by section 120.53, Florida Statutes.

**Head of the Agency:**

Elizabeth Dudek, Secretary  
2727 Mahan Drive  
Tallahassee, Florida 32308  
Phone: (888) 419-3456

**Agency Website:**

<http://www.ahca.myflorida.com/>

Robbed of his motor skills by cerebral palsy from birth, Julio was then deprived of his educational rights

when his school told him it couldn't provide the accommodations he needed to function in the classroom.

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