



RON DESANTIS  
GOVERNOR

MARY C. MAYHEW  
SECRETARY

**For Immediate Release**  
May 11, 2020

**Contact:** AHCA Communications Office  
(850) 412-3623  
[AHCACommunications@ahca.myflorida.com](mailto:AHCACommunications@ahca.myflorida.com)

## **CMS Grants Expanded Ability for Hospitals to Offer Long-term Care Services for COVID-19 Patients**

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – Following a [recent request](#) from Governor Ron DeSantis, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a new federal flexibility to allow hospitals to bill Medicare for a lower acuity hospital stay or establish a rate that may be used in these instances such as an inpatient rehabilitation facility rate.

“Protecting long-term care residents and Florida’s seniors from COVID-19 has been a central focus of my administration’s efforts from the onset of this public health emergency,” said **Governor Ron DeSantis**. “This newly-issued federal flexibility is key as we continue to support facilities working to combat this virus and provide necessary care to our state’s most vulnerable.”

“The fatal threat of COVID-19 can be devastating in long-term care facilities,” said **Agency for Health Care Administration Secretary Mary Mayhew**. “By providing additional flexibilities to allow hospitals to offer long-term care services, we can better protect patients and save lives by bolstering the mitigation and containment of this virus.”

On Friday, CMS announced they are providing increased flexibility for hospitals to establish skilled nursing facility (SNF) swing beds payable under the SNF prospective payment system (PPS) to provide additional options for hospitals with patients who no longer require acute care but are unable to find placement in a SNF.

In order to qualify for this waiver, hospitals must:

- Not use SNF swing beds for acute level care.
- Comply with all other hospital conditions of participation and those SNF provisions set out at 42 CFR 482.58(b) to the extent not waived.
- Be consistent with the state’s emergency preparedness or pandemic plan.

To see the full announcement from CMS and further details (pages 7-8 of announcement) please use this link: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/summary-covid-19-emergency-declaration-waivers.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3aK0ozbU5e70MlpxD1QSjZfMUWbBeKE6bTcz-dxWLSaOeXjNQJLj4nKI>

###

---

*The Agency for Health Care Administration is committed to better health care for all Floridians. The Agency administers Florida's Medicaid program, licenses and regulates more than 44,000 health care facilities and 53 health plans, and publishes health care data and statistics at [www.FloridaHealthFinder.gov](http://www.FloridaHealthFinder.gov). Additional information about Agency initiatives is available via [Facebook \(AHCAFlorida\)](#), [Twitter \(@AHCA\\_FL\)](#) and [YouTube \(/AHCAFlorida\)](#).*