

ADVOCACY & ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

New Year Means New Laws

On January 1st, new laws came into effect in the State of Florida, focusing on subjects like newborn health care, toll relief, and the property insurance system.

During the 2022 Legislative Session and Special Sessions, Governor Ron DeSantis signed 280 bills into law, and over 100 bills took effect on July 1st, 2022. The other bills took effect with the New Year. Here are some of the new bills that became law on January 1st.

Electronic Filing of Taxes (SB 2514)

The law lowers the threshold for Florida taxpayers to file electronically from \$20,000 to \$5,000. This is meant to create more operational efficiency and save money by cutting down on the number of paper returns and checks received.

Newborn Screenings (SB 292)

In the new year, hospitals and state-licensed birthing facilities will be required to screen newborns for cytomegalovirus (CMV) if the baby fails their hearing test.

CMV is a virus that can cause growth and development problems in babies, the most common of which is hearing loss.

Toll Relief (SB 6-A)

This law will credit commuters 50% of their tolls if they record at least 35 times toll road trips during a month.

DeSantis said it ensures Floridians, not tourists, will benefit from the rebate program.

While this law technically went into effect on December 15th, the significant changes took effect in January.

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Property Insurance (SB 2-A)

This is part of a larger property insurance bill that the governor signed into law in December. Effective January 1st, the practice known as "assignment of benefits" will be eliminated. It involves homeowners signing claims over to contractors, who, in turn, pursue payments from insurers.

Disaster Relief (SB 4-A)

This was also signed into law during the December special session on property insurance. The measure makes property tax rates available to homeowners who were uninhabitable by Hurricane Ian and Hurricane Nicole.

Legal Notices (HB 7049)

This law removes the requirement that legal notices from local governments be published in a print newspaper or on a newspaper's website. Instead, government agencies can post them on the county's website.

Governments in counties with fewer than 160,000 residents must hold a public hearing to determine if residents have sufficient access to the Internet.

Implementation of the Constitutional Prohibition Against Lobbying by a Public Officer (HB 7001)

This law prohibits certain public officials from working as lobbyists and expands the time they have to wait to start lobbying after leaving office from two to six years. The law applies to lawmakers, agency heads, judges, and local officials.

Money Services Businesses (HB 273)

This law changes financial rules for cryptocurrency in the state. It specifies that a person wanting to sell cryptocurrency does not need a money transmitter license. On the other hand, crypto commerce programs are required to have licenses.

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Other notable changes coming to Florida law on January 1st include provisions to Miya's Law requiring landlords to conduct background checks on all employees.

On January 1st, Florida will also make a training program available to school librarians and media specialists tasked with selecting "age-appropriate" reading materials for libraries. This was required under an education bill (HB 1467), which went into effect on July 1st 2022.

We will be tracking all bills during the 2023 Legislative Session, which starts on March 7th and will run until May 5th. Our 2023 Legislative Priorities will be Affordable Housing, Disaster Recovery, Insurance, Lawsuit Abuse/Tort Reform, and Workforce Availability.

The Daytona Regional Chamber of Commerce 2023 Legislative Priorities

Also, of important to members is the wage increase enacted in 2020 increase the minimum wage to \$11.00 this year.