



STATEHOUSE REPORT

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November 3, 2017

County jail psychotropic drug reimbursement program details

The state budget bill, HB 49, included the psychotropic drug reimbursement [program](#) for county jails that CCAO and the BSSA had proposed. The budget provided \$2.5 million for each year of the biennium.

The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (MHAS) this week released the program it has established for reimbursement. \$1.25 million will be made available for each of two six-month reporting periods. A county jail will receive reimbursement based on their jail's percentage of the total amount of reimbursement requested across all jails participating in the program. This reimbursement concept is similar to that for indigent defense.



For SFY 2018 the county sheriff's office is to submit reimbursement requests for the first six months and the second six months of the SFY as follows:

- July 1, 2017 – December 30, 2017 – submitted by February 15, 2018
- January 1, 2018 – July 1, 2018 – submitted by August 15, 2018

Failure to submit reimbursement requests by the specified dates will result in the request being denied.

MHAS has prepared the psychotropic drug reporting template which is a spreadsheet to be used by the sheriff's offices to submit their reimbursement request. The reimbursement request is to be itemized to include the number of prescriptions for each allowable drug and the cost. Once the reimbursement funds have been allocated MHAS will upload payment amounts for each jail in the Grants and Funding Management System. Once payment amounts are available, the ADAMHS Board will draw down the funds. For jails that are located in multiple ADAMHS Board counties, the payment upload will be processed to the Board in the county where the jail is located. Once processed, OhioMHAS will make payment to the county.

First Medicaid sales tax transitional aid payment made:

The state made the first of two Medicaid sales tax transition fund payments to the counties and transit authorities on Monday and should have now been received from the state. The payments were split into 2 allotments – 50% of each county's total [transitional aid](#) amount to be sent on or before November 1, 2017 and 50% on or after January 1, 2018.

State capital bill must fund voting equipment replacement

As a continuing reminder to our members, it is time to contact your state legislators to tell them that it is absolutely critical that funding for new voting equipment be included in this state capital bill. With Ohio's current voting equipment reaching the end of its useful life the need to replace it has become imperative.



Specifically outline, explain and quantify with an actual dollar amount the extent of ongoing expenses your county incurs to ensure the proper functioning of this equipment which includes maintenance contracts, a climate-controlled environment for their storage, proper technology upgrades, and election day supplies costs.

Also encourage them to utilize the funding model provided for the acquisition of electronic pollbooks. This process provided an amount to each county based upon the number of registered voters in the county.

SNAP bills voted out of the House

On Wednesday, the House voted out two bills that affect the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, provides food-purchasing assistance for people with little or no income.



[HB 50](#), sponsored by Rep. Schaffer (R-Lancaster), requires that the front of a SNAP debit card include a color photograph of at least one adult member of the household. Households that do not include an adult or include adults who are blind, disabled, victims of domestic violence, have religious objections to being photographed or are over age 60 are exempted from the requirement. The bill also requires that the back of the debit card include a telephone number that grocery store employees can call to report suspected SNAP fraud. New cards will have to comply with these requirements beginning six months after the bill's effective date and cards already issued will have to be updated not later than 12 months after the effective date.

Taking exemptions into account, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) estimates that 425,000 to 450,000 cards will need to include a photograph. According to the [fiscal note](#) for HB 50, “Based on some other states' experiences or studies of the costs of requiring photographs on SNAP cards, Ohio could experience one-time costs of \$1.5 million to \$2.0 million and ongoing annual costs of \$1.0 million to \$3.0 million, of which 50% will be reimbursed by the federal government.” The sponsor of the bill has cited a report on food-stamp fraud that places Ohio’s program losses at \$26 million a year due to fraud.

In an effort to control administrative costs, the bill permits the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, or an employee of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, to disclose an individual's photograph/digital image to ODJFS for the purpose of the color photograph requirement, but questions remain about what role local JFS departments will play in the process of adding photos to the cards and what kind of burden this may create for them.

[HB 119](#), sponsored by Reps Henne (R-Clayton) and McColley (R-Napoleon), requires certain information to be verified before certifying eligibility for SNAP and/or medical assistance programs. This information includes citizenship status, gross nonexempt income, enrollment in other programs and records related to potential identity fraud. Prior verification for SNAP benefits will not be required if that case is being expedited pursuant to existing law. County departments of job and family services (CDJFS) will be required to review and act on information that indicates any change affecting eligibility on at least a quarterly basis.

The [fiscal note](#) on the bill calculates that the CDJFS could experience a minimal increase in administrative costs, “Most of the verifications required in the bill are already included in the determination process, although some items (such as state residency status) may be based on self-reporting, but can be cross-checked with other available information through the Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS). If any staff training is necessary as a result of this provision, it is possible that CDJFS's may experience a minimal increase in administrative costs.”

The bills inspired a lengthy discussion on the House floor regarding public assistance fraud, possible cost savings, merits of the program and the effect on those served. Both bills will now move on to the Senate chamber where they will be heard in committee.

If you have questions please contact CCAO staffer [Kate Neithammer](#).

CCAO opposes piping materials legislation

The House State and Local Government Committee heard opponent [testimony](#) (link testimony) from CCAO Managing Director of Research Brad Cole on legislation (HB 121) requiring any public authority to consider all piping materials for the construction of a state funded water or waste water project that meets the engineering specifications for the project as determined by a design engineer.

The committee adopted an amendment at the urging of sponsor Jay Edwards (R-Nelsonville) that changed the central provision of the bill to read that “no public authority shall prohibit the use of reasonable piping material, based on sound engineering principles, in the construction ... of a water or waste water project that is funded in whole or in part with state funds.”

The legislation is backed by the plastic piping industry, the Ohio Chemistry Council and companies affiliated with the plastic piping industry who seek to eliminate local standards and specifications that give preference to or otherwise require the use of ductile cast iron pipes, clay, concrete and other materials that compete with plastic piping for the water supply and waste water business.

In addition to CCAO, the County Sanitary Engineers Association of Ohio, the Ohio Municipal League and other local government groups generally oppose the legislation on the grounds that the bill is unnecessary and interferes with the discretion of local officials and professional engineers to determine what piping material is most appropriate to a local water or waste water project.



County Sanitary Engineers Association of Ohio President Scott Ellsworth submitted written opposition [testimony](#) to HB 121.

In his written testimony, Cole said, “Ohio law is not the place to establish engineering standards. Engineering standards should be established and selected by engineering and other technically minded utility professionals representing local government agencies.”

CCAO and other witnesses also raised concerns that the legislation would result in more litigation. Cole added, “HB 121 creates liability for local governments by creating an additional opportunity for disgruntled vendors to sue local governments based on non-compliance with the provisions of the law.”

Hearings are expected to continue. For additional information regarding this topic please contact CCAO staffer Brad Cole at bcole@ccao.org

Fiscal Health Indicators Report for 2016 now available

The Auditor of State’s (AOS) Fiscal Health Indicators (FHI) [Report](#) is available on line for calendar year 2016 fiscal data. The FHI report automatically generates for each county upon their filing of their financial statement with the AOS office and is updated upon the completion of their audit.

The Overview statement associated with the report indicates that because the data used in the report is retrospective, it is important to note the report does not take into account the impact upon counties due to the elimination of the Medicaid MCO sales tax. According to the overview statement, the average county is prepared to lose 7.5 percent of its sales tax collections and some counties will see losses greater than 10 percent in sales tax revenues, which have become an increasingly important revenue source for counties. The impact of these losses will undoubtedly generate additional indicators of fiscal stress.

Bill allowing replacement of elected official surety bonds with insurance coverage moves forward

The House State and Local Government Committee this week recommended to the House the passage of HB 291 sponsored by former Wayne County Commissioner and now State Representative Scott Wiggam. The bill would give counties, townships, and municipalities the option to insure against elected office holder and employee dishonesty by obtaining insurance coverage, rather than requiring them to specifically obtain a surety bond for this purpose. The committee included an amendment to the bill sought by CCAO that clarifies that the coverage may also be provided through a "coverage document" issued by a political subdivision joint self-insurance pool such as CORSA.



County Board of Elections office space costs survey

We have received a few more responses to our county Board of Elections Office Space Survey this week, however we need all of our 88 counties to respond. For those of you who have not yet been able to respond, please continue to work on determining the information you need to complete the survey to identify the costs associated with the space provided by your county to support your county's Board of Elections operations.



We recognize that we are asking for specific detailed information which may take time for you to collect and report for us. We sincerely appreciate your effort invested in providing this detailed information and we ask that you access the [BOE OFFICE SPACE SURVEY](#), and return as soon as possible.

Information from all of our counties is important in order to provide accurate and valid data that documents the costs for counties state-wide to provide the space necessary to conduct board of elections activities. If you have questions or need assistance from us, please contact John Leutz jleutz@ccao.org or 614-220-7994.

Bills Introduced



[HB 399](#) **HEALTH INSURANCE** ([HENNE, M.](#), [BUTLER, J.](#)) To enact the Ohio Right to Shop Act to require health insurers to establish shared savings incentive programs for enrollees.

[SB 225](#) **BROADBAND GRANTS** ([SCHIAVONI, J.](#), [EKLUND, J.](#)) To create the Ohio Broadband Development Grant Program and to make an appropriation.

[SB 226](#) **TAX HOLIDAY** ([BACON, K.](#)) To provide for a permanent three-day sales tax "holiday" each August during which sales of clothing and school supplies are exempt from sales and use tax.

Hearing Schedule



TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7

Senate Finance (Chr. Oelslager, S., (614) 466-0626), Finance Hearing Rm., 2:30 pm

HB 158 MILITARY TRANSFERS (PERALES, R., CRAIG, H.)

To permit persons who quit work to accompany the person's spouse on a military transfer to be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

SB 187 TAX DELINQUENCIES (EKLUND, J.)

To allow municipal corporations to charge delinquent taxpayers the costs of collecting municipal income taxes regardless of whether the costs are incurred before or after a judgment is entered against the taxpayer. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8

Senate Ways & Means (Chr. Eklund, J., (614) 644-7718), South Hearing Rm., 9:00 am

SB 209 TAX EXEMPTIONS (COLEY, B.)

To modify the conditions that determine the relative priority of property tax exemptions when a parcel subject to a tax increment financing arrangement concurrently qualifies for another exemption. --1st Hearing-Sponsor