

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-__

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 4 OF THE POLK COUNTY INDIGENT HEALTH CARE PLAN EXTENSION ORDINANCE (ORDINANCE NO. 2015-076); PROVIDING FOR CONTINUITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Polk County (the “County”) adopted Ordinance 03-89, implementing an Indigent Health Care Surtax, which was approved by voters in a referendum; and

WHEREAS, the County adopted Ordinance 2011-005, which amended Ordinance 03-89; and

WHEREAS, the County adopted Ordinance 15-076, which amended and restated the Polk County Indigent Health Care Plan Extension Ordinance (the “Ordinance”) and extended the Indigent Health Care Surtax for an additional twenty-five (25) year period and was approved by voters in a referendum; and

WHEREAS, now the County finds it necessary to amend Section 4 of the Ordinance to allow the Board of County Commissioners to make changes to the “Polk Health Care Plan – Polk County Florida’s Safety Net Program” (the “Plan”) without amending the Ordinance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA, THAT:

SECTION 1. INCORPORATION OF RECITALS:

The above recitals are hereby fully incorporated in the body of this Ordinance.

SECTION 2. CHANGES TO SECTION 4 OF THE ORDINANCE:

Section 4 of the Ordinance, “Plan Extended for Provision of Indigent Health Care Services,” is hereby amended to revise how the Plan may be amended, replacing the requirement that updates must be made by an Ordinance amendment with a requirement that the Plan may be amended by the Board of County Commissioners adopting a Resolution which describes the Plan changes. Amended Section 4 is restated as follows:

- (a) The “Indigent Health Care Surtax Use Plan,” which was previously titled the “Polk Health Care Plan – Polk County Florida’s Safety Net Program” and also as the “Polk County Health Care Plan” (hereinafter referred to as the “Plan”), is hereby extended. The Plan was originally adopted on December 3, 2003, and subsequently amended in 2011, 2015, and 2026. The Plan contains the County’s methods for providing health care services to qualified residents.

- (b) For convenience the Plan shall be maintained separate and apart from this Ordinance. The Board of County Commissioners may amend the Plan from time-to-time as needed by adoption of a Resolution which describes the Plan changes.
- (c) The Plan and any subsequent amendments thereto shall continue to fund a broad range of health care services for indigent persons and the medically poor, including, without limitation, primary, preventative, and hospital care. It shall continue to emphasize a continuity of care in the most cost-effective setting, taking into consideration high quality of care and geographic access. Where consistent with these objectives, it shall continue to include, without limitation, services rendered by physicians, clinics, community hospitals, mental health centers, and alternative delivery sites, as well as at least one regional referral hospital where appropriate. This Plan shall continue to require the following: 1) that agreements negotiated between the County and providers shall include reimbursement methodologies that take into account the cost of services rendered to eligible patients, 2) the recognition of hospitals that render a disproportionate share of indigent care, 3) the provision of other incentives to promote the delivery of charity care, and 4) the requirement of cost containment, including without limitation, case management. The Plan must also continue to include innovative health care programs that provide cost-effective alternatives to traditional methods of service delivery and funding. The Plan shall permit the payment of mandatory Medicaid contributions required by Section 409.915, Florida Statutes, for qualified residents, as authorized by AGO 2005-54.

SECTION 3. CONTINUITY CLAUSE.

All sections, subsections, and provisions of the Ordinance not expressly amended by this Ordinance are hereby ratified, confirmed, and shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE:

This Ordinance shall become effective upon filing a certified copy with the Florida Department of State.