

2026 Florida Legislative Session Recap

The 2026 Florida Legislative Session concluded on March 13, marking a challenging year with one of the lowest bill passage rates in recent history. Of the 1,896 bills filed, only 237 passed—approximately 12.5%.

Throughout the session, FNA tracked a wide range of legislation impacting nursing practice, patient care, and the healthcare workforce. This included bills we supported, closely monitored, and, in some cases, voiced opposition to. Our efforts played a critical role in raising awareness, educating lawmakers, and advancing important conversations about the role of nurses in improving healthcare access and outcomes. Many of these issues represent ongoing priorities we have worked on across multiple legislative sessions.

Protection from Surgical Smoke

For several years, we have advocated for protections against surgical smoke exposure, a recognized occupational hazard for healthcare workers. This year, the legislation gained strong support in the House but ultimately stalled in the Senate due to committee delays. While it did not pass, we made meaningful progress in building awareness and legislative support, and we remain committed to advancing this issue.

Patient Directed Medical Orders (PDMO)

We have also continued our multi-year efforts to advance Patient Directed Medical Orders (PDMO), which would create an electronic system based on the POLST model to ensure patients' treatment preferences are clearly documented and honored across care settings. The bill received unanimous support in Senate Health Policy committee but did not advance in the House. We will continue working to educate stakeholders and strengthen support moving forward.

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Autonomous Practice

Legislation that would allow psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners to practice without physician protocols passed the House but was not taken up in the Senate. We continue to support efforts that enhance practice authority for nurses and improve access to care, particularly in underserved communities.

Nursing Education Programs

Strengthening the nursing workforce is critical to meeting Florida's healthcare needs. This session, legislation aimed at increasing oversight and accountability for nursing education programs advanced through the House and multiple Senate committees before ultimately falling short. We will continue to support policies that ensure program quality and prepare nurses for practice.

Nursing Title Legislation

We monitored legislation related to the use of the title "doctor" in clinical settings by non-physicians with doctoral degrees. While the bill moved through much of the legislative process, it was ultimately postponed due to a problematic amendment. This remains an important issue for many of our members and the broader healthcare community.

Medical Freedom Act

We joined other professional healthcare organizations in voicing concern over the Medical Freedom Act, which proposed easing vaccine requirements. Vaccines have a well-established record of protecting public health, and maintaining evidence-based immunization policies remains essential to safeguarding patients and communities. Our formal position statement on this issue is available on our website.

Advocacy does not end when the legislative session concludes. We continue this work year-round through grassroots engagement, collaboration with the Florida Nurses Political Action Committee (FNPAC), and ongoing efforts with our government relations team. Legislative progress often takes time, and each session helps build momentum for future success.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the many members who contributed to advocacy efforts throughout the session. Whether participating in Advocacy Days, engaging with legislators in their communities, or sharing their expertise in policy discussions, your involvement strengthens the voice of nursing in Florida and helps advance policies that support both our profession and the patients we serve. ■

