



Commission Establishes Opioid Settlement Funding Policy & Procedures

Posted on November 12, 2025 by Carey Fauscett-Anderson



TRENTON, Ga. (Nov. 6, 2025) — The Dade County Board of Commissioners reviewed and approved new policy and procedure guidelines for the management of opioid settlement funds during the November workshop. The policy establishes a structured process for distributing approximately \$150,000 in settlement funds to qualified organizations that support addiction recovery and prevention efforts in Dade County.

Commissioner Melissa Bradford, who introduced the item, explained that she has been working with other counties and local recovery advocates to design a process that is transparent, consistent, and fair. “I’ve really been thinking about the best way to use this,” Commissioner Bradford said. “I got with Kathy, our grant writer, and instead of coming up with just an application, I wanted it completely done — with a checklist, policies and procedures, and a grant request form.”

Bradford noted that the program will be open to nonprofits and other organizations that serve individuals affected by opioid addiction. “This is for organizations that deal with these kinds of situations,” she said. “They can come and fill out the application, and it will come before the Commission Board for a vote to grant or deny the request.”

Commissioner Bob Woods asked how the funding would be used and whether it would have a measurable effect. “What does this do? ... When an organization gives these people these drugs, what does it do?” Commissioner Woods asked.

Commissioner Dr. Bill Pullen explained that such programs can help reduce relapse rates and support individuals in recovery. “You can substitute medications that ease them off and offer support to keep them from relapsing,” Dr. Pullen said.

Bradford confirmed that several local organizations are positioned to apply and that settlement payments are expected to continue for eight to ten more years. She emphasized the goal of helping Dade County residents recover and become productive citizens.

Commissioner Phillip Hartline asked whether the funding would be limited to nonprofit organizations, saying, “Are you mandating a 501(c)(3)? Is that part of the point scale?”

Commissioner Hartline voiced concern about limiting applications to established nonprofits and stressed his desire to see the funds reach residents directly. “Why can’t we help people with rent directly?” he asked. “I have a problem giving it to a 501(c)(3) that can eat it up and use it any way they want. I just want to see the funds go to help people who need it.”

In response to related questions, Commissioner Bradford clarified that the policy is designed to fund institutions rather than individuals directly.

County Chief Financial Officer Rebecca Jones noted that the draft policy specifies nonprofit eligibility. Chairman Don Townsend supported that approach, saying nonprofit status adds oversight, while also stressing that funds should benefit Dade County residents. County Attorney Robin Rogers added that flexibility for other qualifying entities, such as churches or governmental programs, could be considered.

Following discussion, the Board agreed to adopt Commissioner Bradford’s proposed policy and procedures, adding the item to the consent agenda; the consent agenda later passed by unanimous vote during the regular meeting.