



# OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

## Bill Analysis

Audra Tidball

### H.B. 587

132nd General Assembly  
(As Introduced)

**Reps.** Anielski and Kick, Antonio, Arndt, Blessing, Gavarone, Green, Greenspan, Hambley, Hill, LaTourette, Retherford, Riedel, K. Smith, West

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## BILL SUMMARY

- Requires Medicaid to cover white canes as part of its coverage of durable medical equipment.

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## CONTENT AND OPERATION

### Medicaid coverage of white canes

The bill requires the Medicaid program to cover white canes as part of its coverage of durable medical equipment.<sup>1</sup> White canes are a tool used by an individual who is blind or visually impaired to navigate the environment or for support.<sup>2</sup>

Existing administrative rules provide Medicaid reimbursement for specified durable medical equipment (DME),<sup>3</sup> which is defined as equipment that can stand repeated use, is primarily and customarily used to serve a medical purpose, is not useful to a person in the absence of illness or injury, and is appropriate for use in the

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<sup>1</sup> R.C. 5164.061.

<sup>2</sup> National Federation of the Blind, *Free White Cane Program*, <https://nfb.org/free-cane-program>; Vision Aware, *What Type of Cane Should I Use?*, <http://www.visionaware.org/info/everyday-living/essential-skills/an-introduction-to-orientation-and-mobility-skills/what-type-of-cane-should-i-use/1235>. In the case of Medicare, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has determined that a white cane used by a blind person is not covered because it is an identifying and self-help device, rather than an item that makes a meaningful contribution in the treatment of an illness or injury. CMS.gov, *National Coverage Determination (NCD) for White Cane for Use by a Blind Person (280.2)*, <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/details/ncd-details.aspx?ncdid=168&ver=1>.

<sup>3</sup> Ohio Administrative Code (O.A.C.) 5160-10-03, Appendix.

home. Examples of DME currently included in the Medicaid program are hospital beds, wheelchairs, and ventilators.<sup>4</sup>

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## HISTORY

| ACTION     | DATE     |
|------------|----------|
| Introduced | 04-09-18 |

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<sup>4</sup> O.A.C. 5160-10-02(A)(3).

