Living Your Best Life

Medicaid



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**What You Need to Know**

Medicaid is a Federal Program but is run in conjunction with the States. For this reason, policies and eligibility requirements may vary from state to state.

 **What Does Medicaid Do?**

Medicaid is a health insurance program for people with low income. It provides coverage for over 62 million people in the United States.

**Four Types of Beneficiaries**

Half of the people covered under Medicaid are children. Other segments include the elderly, the blind, and the disabled.

**Participation in the Plans are Means Tested**

In order to be eligible, you will need to show both resources and income and qualify within guidelines for both.

**Who Funds Medicaid?**

Medicaid is funded by State Governments, who receive a percentage from the Federal Government. There is no payroll deduction for Medicaid, and Medicaid may be entitled to reclaim funds from your estate.

**Medicaid vs. Medicare**

**Similar Names, But Two Different Programs**

Medicare is funded by taxpayers through payroll deduction, and through the Federal Government. It functions much like commercial health insurance, with enrollees paying premiums for coverage.

Medicaid is means based, and available for the low-income people in the United States. It will also cover more than Medicare, and eligibility is met through a combination of resource and income parameters.

**Medicaid Covers Long Term Care**

Although Medicare Does Not Cover Long Term Care, either at home or in a nursing home facility, Medicaid does. Again, this is based on eligibility, as those with considerable assets and income are expected to pay for their own long-term care.

**While Medicare is Strict About Enrollment Periods, Medicaid Follows Different Guidelines**

Medicare Part A must be applied for within a seven-month window based on your birthday. While Medicaid does not have a strict enrollment period, it normally does require quite a bit of documentation, which inevitably will take quite a bit of time. It is suggested that you enlist the help of a professional with a background in Medicaid to help with the application process.

**Eligibility – Resources and Income**

**Countable Resources**

“Countable Resources” are those assets that represent cash or

can be sold to pay for care. They Include:

* Cash on Hand
* Checking or Savings Account
* Stocks and Bonds or Other Investments
* Real Estate – Other than the home you live in (if it meets equity limitations, which vary state to state)

**Exempt Resources**

“Exempt Resources” cannot be considered as part of eligibility formulas. Exempt Resources include:

* Life Insurance Policies with a Face Value of less than $1500
* Car
* Burial Plots
* Funds earmarked for burial expenses, up to $1500 per person
* The home they (or their spouse) live in, and adjacent land
* Household goods and personal effects

**Countable Income**

Like resources, countable income is defined as:

* Wages
* Net Earnings from Self-Employment
* Social Security Benefits
* Worker’s Comp Payments
* Veteran’s Benefits
* Pensions
* Annuities
* Rent Income

**Exempt Income**

Certain income is exempt from being considered as part of eligibility. The following are examples of Exempt Income:

* Medical Care and Services Reimbursement
* Income Tax Refunds
* Proceeds from a Loan (Bonafide)
* Home Energy Assistance
* Federal Housing Assistance Programs
* State Annuities for Certain Veterans

You cannot transfer resources to another person to avoid having them counted. Medicaid uses a 5-year “look-back” period to monitor your transfers of assets in the years before applying for Medicaid, and you will be penalized for these instances.

**Applying for Medicaid**

**Where to Apply**

Application can be made at any Medicaid Office, and some Social Security offices. Some states provide satellite offices at senior care centers. Since the passing of the Affordable Care Act, you are now able to apply in person, by mail, by phone, or electronically online.

**Applying for Medicaid for Nursing Home Admission**

This can be stressful, as it takes time, and frequently requires documentation. Most people that apply under these circumstances have an immediate need, which adds to the frustration.

Once approved, it is effective retroactively for three months, so that can help with the costs of nursing care.

If you feel that you need help applying for Medicaid, contact a senior care advocate, or check with your local nursing home or senior care center for a professional that can help streamline aspects of the application process.

**When to Apply**

There is no specific enrollment period for Medicaid, so application should be made as soon as the need arises.

**Important Points**

* More than 6 million older adults rely on Medicaid to pay for nursing home care, medical care, and community based long term care.
* Medicaid wraps around Medicare, covering services that are not covered by Medicare.
* Medicaid helps to cover services that allow older adults to remain in their home instead of going to nursing home or other long-term facility.
* Medicaid is based on your income and your resources, so lower-income seniors can get assistance for medical costs once their savings and resources run out.
* Medicaid covers more than 9 million “dual eligible” beneficiaries, who are eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid.
* Medicaid is a significant source of funding for long-term care for seniors.

**When to Use Professional Services to Help You Apply**

Applying for Medicaid can feel overwhelming when you try to fill out all the paperwork, provide documentation, and submit the application on your own.

There are people who have made it their mission to help seniors with the process and provide guidance and practical help when it comes to understanding the Medicaid program.

You should seek help when:

* You do not understand how the program works
* You are not sure what your countable resources and countable income are
* You are confused by the paperwork required
* You cannot determine what documents you need
* You are not sure how Medicaid and Medicare work together to give you adequate coverage.

**Resources**

[www.medicaid.gov](http://www.medicaid.gov) Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

[www.longtermcare.gov](http://www.longtermcare.gov) Administration for Community Living

**How Lean on Dee Can Help Seniors?**

**Senior Wellness Check-Ins**

We offer direct communication and support while assuring that the emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being of your loved ones are addressed. We do this by providing three Wellness Check-In visits per month where we utilize a monthly assessment tool to gauge any changes that may occur.

**Home Safety Assessment**

We will assess the living environment, and make recommendations for hardware and fixtures that may need to be installed or repaired to help to support your loved one in the home and making referrals to our list of trusted partners for services that can assist in fixing or installing them. Our goal is to reduce falls and avoidable hospitalizations

​**Housing Placement**

There is a range of reasons why your loved one may need assistance in relocating to a senior living community or skilled nursing facility. If the occasion ever arises, we will be there to help you find the best option for your price range and level of care.

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