Iowa Department of Human Services

Comm. 414 (Rev. 1/18)

Protecting Your Resources and Income

Medicaid help married couples pay the cost of a spouse's care in a medical facility.

These policies apply only if you or your spouse plan to stay, or have stayed, in the medical facility 30 consecutive days or more and entered after September 30, 1989.

When can Medicaid help?

Medicaid may pay up to the full facility cost depending on your resources and income. To find out if you or your spouse qualifies for Medicaid, you will need to complete an application.

To get Medicaid, the spouse in the medical facility must be aged 65 or older, blind or disabled.

What resources can be protected?

The protection of resources for the spouse at home depends on the couples' total combined resources as of the first day of the month the spouse entered the medical facility. All resources must be listed on the Medicaid application. The Department of Human Services (DHS) will determine which resources are countable to determine eligibility, and then split the amount between the spouse in the facility and the spouse at home.

The spouse at home can keep:

- Half of the total resources, or $24,720* whichever is greater,
- But no more than $123,600*.

The amount of resources kept by the spouse at home may be increased by a court order or by an appeal decision.

To be eligible for Medicaid long-term care coverage, the applicant cannot have more than $2,000 after resources are split between the spouses.

What is the income limit?

The income of the spouse in the medical facility cannot exceed three times the monthly SSI cash benefit for Medicaid to help pay the cost of care. (This is $2,205* per month in 2017. In 2018, it is $2,250* per month.)

What income can be protected?

The spouse in the medical facility can keep $50 of monthly income for personal needs. If the spouse in the facility has earnings, they can also keep an additional $65 per month. The DHS worker will determine if income from the spouse in the facility can be given to the spouse at home and dependent relatives living with the spouse to help them pay their living expenses.

Does it matter whose name the income is in?

In most cases, when income is in the name of one individual, DHS considers the income belongs to that individual. If the income is in the names of both spouses, DHS considers one half belongs to each spouse. If there is trust property, the income shall be considered according to the trust document.

* These amounts are indexed for inflation and change when the federal government releases the annual inflation amount.