



Update on Medicaid Work Requirement

What Medicaid's Work Requirement Means For Seniors, People With Disabilities, And Their Caregivers

The Trump Administration [announced in Jan](#) that it will allow states to require Medicaid recipients to work, take job training, or do community service to stay eligible for the program, which provides both medical and long-term care services for people with low incomes. [Ten states have asked to make this change.](#)

What will the requirement mean for older adults, younger people with disabilities, or their family caregivers? In general, [older Medicaid recipients](#) (starting between the ages of 50 and 65, depending on the state) would be exempt from the work requirement—as would children under 19 and pregnant women. But after that, it gets murky. The new guidelines, issued by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) give states broad flexibility in how they'd impose these new requirements.

—> [Click Here For the Full Article](#)

Which includes discussion about the possible implications of the broad language used in the CMS letter and the differences between it and those used by States, specifically Kentucky.

Advocates Say Work Requirements Will Kick People With Disabilities Off Medicaid

People with disabilities in several states stand to lose their health insurance if they are unable to work, because Trump administration is allowing states to impose work requirements on people covered by Medicaid, according to disability rights advocates and analysts.

In a recent [memo](#) to state officials, the Trump administration said that people who qualify for Medicaid because of a disability should be exempt from rules requiring working-age beneficiaries be employed or at least looking for a job and contributing to their communities. However, those exemptions may vary from state to state, and critics say that any new requirements or restrictions placed on Medicaid recipients are bound to squeeze vulnerable people out of the program.

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On a related note..

Who's Able-Bodied Anyway?

The “able-bodied” are now everywhere among government programs for the poor, Republican officials point out. They're [on food stamps](#). They're [collecting welfare](#). They're [living in subsidized housing](#). And their numbers have swelled on Medicaid, a program that critics say [was never designed to serve them](#).

These so-called able-bodied are defined in many ways by what they are not: not disabled, not elderly, not children, not pregnant, not blind. They are effectively everyone left, and they have become the focus of resurgent conservative proposals to overhaul government aid, such as one announced last month by the Trump administration that would allow states to test work requirements for Medicaid.

Able-bodied is not truly a demographic label, though: There is no standard for [physical or mental ability](#) that makes a person able. Rather, the term has long been a political one. Across centuries of use, it has consistently implied another negative: The able-bodied could work, but are not working (or working hard enough). And, as such, they don't deserve our aid.

—> [Click Here for the Entire Article](#)

On the home front:

Michigan may require Medicaid recipients to work at least 30-hour weeks

LANSING, MI - Michigan lawmakers are considering legislation that would institute work requirements for Michiganders who receive Medicaid, a federal health care program for low-income people.

—> [Click Here to Continue Reading](#)

And on a more positive note!

On Medicaid? Amazon offers recipients a Prime discount

Action Alert!

(From AADP—American Association of People with Disabilities)

Urge Congress to Pass the EMPOWER Care Act to Get People with Disabilities & Seniors Back Home

[Money Follows the Person](#) (MFP) is a Medicaid program that has **helped over 75,000 people with disabilities** and seniors move out of nursing homes or institutions and back into their communities. MFP restores the dignity and liberty of people with disabilities by promoting and supporting choice and community living.

Funding for the MFP program expired in 2016, and [states have already scaled back their plans by approximately 40%](#). We need your help and advocacy to get the Senate and House of Representatives to pass the bipartisan EMPOWER Care Act ([S.2227](#) and [H.R.4275](#)), which would extend and improve the MFP program. Last year was the first time that the number of people that transitioned to the community had declined.

By passing the EMPOWER Care Act and funding the Money Follows the Person program, Congress can help more people with disabilities transition out of institutions and nursing homes and into the homes and communities of their choice. Without action NOW, more people will be stuck in institutions.

[Click Here for Background: The EMPOWER Care Act One Pager](#)
[Click Here for the AADP Notice](#)

[Click Here for Information to Assist in Calling your Representatives](#)

Michigan mental health services face declining funding

Mental health services are being scaled back in western Michigan as regional agencies struggle with budget deficits. Network 180 coordinates services for people with mental illnesses, developmental disabilities and substance-abuse disorders. It began seeing a growing number of patients leaving traditional Medicaid in favor of the Healthy Michigan Plan in 2017. Healthy Michigan is the state's Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act, which began drawing patients because it's simpler and provides better benefits.

The shift may be good for clients, but it also means a decrease in reimbursements for local community mental health programs, said Robert Sheehan, chief executive of the Community Mental Health Association of Michigan, an advocacy group. Other regions could see their reserves drop next year if Medicaid reimbursement rates aren't adjusted quickly.

—> [Click Here for the Full Article](#)

MiABLE Updates—March 2018

(3/8/2018)

The Michigan Department of Treasury is pleased to announce that the MiABLE 529 Saving/Investment Program has surpassed \$4.46 million in assets and over 1200 accounts have been opened. Today, we announce the launch of the MiABLE debit card feature. Account owners and/or beneficiaries of MiABLE accounts may request a debit card at [www.miable.org](#)

The ABLE Act allows certain individuals with disabilities to save/invest up to \$15,000.00 per year without jeopardizing eligibility for public benefits like SSI, Medicaid, and SNAP. Assets in an ABLE account can be used for qualified disability expenses (QDE) including:

- education
- housing
- transportation
- employment training and support
- assistive technology and personal support services
- health, illness prevention, and wellness
- financial management and administrative services
- legal fees
- expenses for oversight and monitoring end of life expenses

MiABLE staff have been educating parent groups, disability advocacy organizations, and other potential MiABLE account holders throughout the state. Requests for events can be directed to [miable@michigan.gov](#)

Questions about the MIABLE program can be addressed by Customer Service at [844-656-7225](#)

Like us on Facebook @MichiganABLE

To create an account, request a debit card, or learn about outreach events go to [www.miable.org](#)

How to Challenge a Nursing Home Eviction Notice, and Other Tips

Many nursing home residents are unaware of their rights. So when these individuals [face the threat of eviction](#), legal advocates say, many of them do not even realize they have the right to challenge their discharge.

The following article lists several of those rights under federal law along with [tips from lawyers and advocates](#) who work on behalf of nursing home residents.

—> [Click Here for the Article](#)

An Inside Look At Why New Family Caregivers Law Is So Desperately Needed

Every day millions of Americans provide care for parents, spouses, children and adults with disabilities and other loved ones to help them live independently in their homes and communities. The unpaid care that family caregivers provide, while on the one hand helping delay or prevent costly nursing home care, is priceless.

In fact, according to the AARP Public Policy Institute's report "[Valuing the Invaluable: 2015 Update](#)," "The economic value of the nation's [family caregivers](#)' unpaid work is an estimated \$470 billion a year — an amount about equal to the annual sales of Wal-Mart, the world's largest company."

Despite the grim statistics, caregivers have just been validated in a big way with the Congressional passage this month and signing yesterday by President Donald Trump, of the *Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage* (RAISE) Family Caregivers Act. The bi-partisan law directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop and sustain a national strategy to recognize and support caregivers in the United States.

—> [Click Here for the Full Article](#)

New Law Mandates Creation of a National Plan to Support Caregivers

"Although it allocates no new funds, the Recognize, Assist, Include, Support and Engage ("RAISE") Family Caregivers Act gives the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services 18 months to create and sustain a national Family Caregiving Strategy.

The bill specifies that the strategy "identify recommended actions" for federal, state and local governments, as well as health care and long-term services providers, to, among other things, increase the adoption of "person-centered care," improve caregiver training and education materials, and boost financial security and workplace protections for caregivers. "

—> [Click Here to Continue Reading](#)

7 common mistakes to avoid when naming your beneficiaries

Many of us have spent years working and accumulating assets. Along the way, we have opened multiple bank, investment, and retirement accounts that have asked us to name beneficiaries directly for each account. Because these direct beneficiary designations supersede a will, they need to be carefully reviewed and coordinated with an estate plan.

How your accounts are titled will determine whether or not they go through probate upon your death. Probate is neither good nor bad, but it's not private and is an additional legal process that costs time and money when settling an estate and transferring property to your heirs. Once a will is filed with the probate court, it becomes a public document, unless the court orders otherwise. Being cognizant of proper account titling allows you to avoid probate and transfer assets directly to your named beneficiaries, since these assets will transfer outside of your will.

—> [Click Here to Read More](#)

DOE Issues 39th Annual Report to Congress on Implementation of IDEA #IDEA

The federal Department of Education has released its 39th Annual Report to the Congress. The voluminous report is a wealth of data about special education. If you work in this area, this report contains a lot of helpful information.

—> [Click Here for an Overview of some of the Key Part B findings from Special Education Law Blog](#)

March Is Developmental Disability Awareness Month

2018 marks the [31st anniversary](#) of the signing of the Presidential Proclamation that designated March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. This [movement](#) created an opportunity to promote respect and equality for people with disabilities.

People with developmental disabilities are valuable and contributing members of our community who are capable of meeting or exceeding society's expectations and standards. They are co-workers, friends, family, parents, classmates, and neighbors who should be fully included in their communities.

—> [Click Here for Entire Article](#)

United Cerebral Palsy Presents:

"Look Into My Eyes" Performed by Eric Filipowicz (2018)

For more news and information about Patricia and Patricia E. Kefalas Dudek & Associates please visit us online.

[www.pekdadvocacy.com](#)

[www.pattidudek.typepad.com/](#)

