
CMCS Informational Bulletin

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FROM: Chris Traylor, Deputy Administrator and Director
Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services

SUBJECT: Updated 2019 Spousal Impoverishment Standards

This CMCS informational bulletin provides an update to the 2019 Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Spousal Impoverishment Standards.

Certain Medicaid income and resource standards are adjusted annually in accordance with changes in the SSI federal benefit rate (FBR) and the Consumer Price Index (CPI). These include some of the standards described in section 1924 of the Social Security Act (the Act), which describes the financial eligibility rules (the “spousal impoverishment rules”) that apply when married individuals seek coverage of certain long-term services and supports.

While some of the spousal impoverishment standards, such as the maximum community spouse income maintenance allowance and community spouse minimum and maximum resource allowances, are adjusted each January, section 1924 of the Act directs that the community spouse’s minimum monthly maintenance needs allowance (MMMNA) be adjusted, in accordance with changes to the federal poverty level, effective July 1st of each year. Additionally, as the community spouse’s monthly housing allowance (which is the basis for determining if the community spouse may have an excess shelter allowance) is calculated based on a percentage of the MMMNA, the housing allowance is adjusted each July 1st as well.

Included with this informational bulletin is the revised 2019 SSI and Spousal Impoverishment Standards chart that displays the updated MMMNA and Community Spouse Monthly Housing Allowances. These standards are also available on Medicaid.gov at <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/eligibility/spousal-impoverishment/index.html>.

Please update your standards in accordance with this information.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Gene Coffey at 410-786-2234 or Gene.Coffey@cms.hhs.gov.