



State of New Jersey

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF MEDICAL ASSISTANCE AND HEALTH SERVICES**

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
QUAKERBRIDGE PLAZA—BUILDING 5 & 7 & 12
QUAKERBRIDGE ROAD
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08619

ADDRESS REPLY TO:
CN-712
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625

MEDICAID COMMUNICATION NO. 88-26

DATE: July 25, 1988

TO: County Welfare Agency Directors

SUBJECT: Protection of Medicaid Eligibility for Certain Disabled Widows
and Widowers Losing SSI Because of Early Aged Benefits

Background

Under current practice, certain disabled widows and widowers receiving SSI must, upon reaching the age of 60, apply for early aged widow or widower benefits under Social Security. Often the resulting Social Security benefit is sufficient for such an individual to lose eligibility for SSI and, therefore, Medicaid benefits.

The federal Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1987 provides for special protection of Medicaid benefits for these individuals losing SSI eligibility because of the receipt of early aged widows or widowers benefits and who are not eligible for Medicare Part A benefits.

Policy

Effective July 1, 1988, any blind or disabled person who is at least 60 years of age, not eligible for Medicare Part A benefits, and loses SSI eligibility as a result of the receipt of early aged widows or widowers benefits under Social Security, will be entitled to an income disregard equal to the amount of the individual's early aged widows or widowers benefit in the determination of eligibility for Medicaid Only. This special income disregard will apply so long as the individual remains blind or disabled and is not eligible for Medicare Part A. Such persons are likewise eligible for the disregard of any subsequent cost-of-living increases to their Social Security benefits. This disregard of income applies only in Medicaid Only community cases and is not available for the Medicaid Only institutionalized population or New Jersey Care...Special Medicaid Programs, including medically needy.

Attached is a sample notice which is being sent to potentially eligible individuals identified by the Social Security Administration as meeting the criteria for this special income disregard. Should any individual receiving this notice contact your agency, Medicaid eligibility should be evaluated without regard to the Social Security benefit indicated on the listing. You

are reminded that eligibility for this special disregard does not exist for any period prior to July 1, 1988.

You will be advised as soon as this Division is notified of the method of identifying future cases qualifying under this policy.

Questions concerning this policy should be referred to the field service staff assigned to your county.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Russo, Director
Division of Medical Assistance
and Health Services

TMR:Hh

Attachment

cc: Odella T. Welch
Deputy Commissioner

Marion E. Reitz, Director
Division of Public Welfare

William Waldman, Director
Division of Youth and Family Services

Social Security Administration

Representative Payee for
SSA Beneficiary
c/o Leisure World
P.O. Box 1598
Benning Road Station
Washington, D.C. 20019

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT MEDICAID

You may be eligible for Medicaid, starting July 1, 1988. Special rules now allow some widows and widowers whose Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments stopped because of their Social Security payments to be eligible for Medicaid.

If you already have Medicaid, these special rules may allow Medicaid to cover more of your medical costs or cost you less.

WHO CAN RECEIVE MEDICAID

You may receive Medicaid under special rules if all of the following are true.

- o You are a widow or a widower,
- o You received SSI payments in the past,
- o You are at least 60 years old, but not yet 65 years old, on April 2, 1988,
- o You no longer receive SSI because of your Social Security payments,
- o You do not have hospital insurance under Medicare, .
AND
- o You meet the other requirements of Medicaid.

WHERE YOU CAN APPLY FOR MEDICAID

Call or visit your local State welfare office. Ask them to review your case to see if you can receive Medicaid.

WHEN YOUR MEDICAID COULD START

Your Medicaid could start on July 1, 1988, if you meet all of the special rules. Medicaid for widows and widowers will end when you become eligible for hospital insurance under Medicare. After you apply, the State welfare office that handles Medicaid will send you a letter to tell you if you qualify.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS

If you have any questions, you should call, write, or visit your local State welfare office or any Social Security office. If you visit an office, please bring this letter. If you call, tell them you received a widow's or widower's Medicaid letter. That will help them answer your questions.

Herbert R. Doggette, Jr.
Deputy Commissioner,
Operations