

# Medicaid Spousal Impoverishment Program

NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

*Helping People Live Better Lives.*

# Why Talk About Medicaid?

---

- 70% of people who reach age 65 will need long-term services
- 24% will need those services for two years or more
- In Nebraska, the average cost of a private nursing home room was \$8,289 per month (2021)
  - \$99,468 annually
- Even with careful retirement planning, the cost of long-term care can quickly reduce your assets
- Medicaid is the largest payer of long-term care
  - Nationwide, Medicaid pays 42.1% of all long-term care costs

**NEBRASKA**

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

*Helping People Live Better Lives.*

# What is the Spousal Impoverishment program?

- The Spousal Impoverishment program was created to address the situation where one spouse needs nursing home care, but the other spouse is healthy enough to remain in the community.
- Before Spousal Impoverishment, a couple would have to qualify as a single unit before they could receive Medicaid. Due to Medicaid's means tested formula, this would often result in the community spouse being unable to provide for their own needs.
- The Spousal Impoverishment program created a way to allow the spouse with medical needs to receive necessary care while allowing the healthy spouse to remain at home.

NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

*Helping People Live Better Lives.*

# When is Spousal Impoverishment an option?

---

- The program is available when one spouse needs nursing home level of care for more than 30 days.
- The program also covers Home and Community Based Services (Waiver). If one spouse is likely to need in-home services through Medicaid for more than 30 days, then Spousal Impoverishment is an option. Home and Community Based Services can be received either at home or in an assisted living facility.
- The couple can start the process any time that they meet the level of care and duration requirements, even if they are not qualified for Medicaid at the time.

**NEBRASKA**

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

*Helping People Live Better Lives.*

# How does the program work?

---

- When the level of care and duration requirements are met, a couple may request an Assessment of Resources.
- The Assessment of Resources catalogs the assets owned by both spouses at the time that one entered long-term care.
  - The total assets are divided by two. The community spouse can reserve half of the total, subject to a minimum and maximum amount.
- When the couple has spent down their resources to the determined amount, then they may qualify for the Spousal Impoverishment program.
- The couple can designate which assets are held by the community spouse.

**NEBRASKA**

Good Life. Great Mission.

---

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

*Helping People Live Better Lives.*

# What is needed to qualify?

---

- Meet general Medicaid eligibility requirements
  - US Citizen or a qualified non-citizen
  - Nebraska resident
- Income is not sufficient to pay for medical needs
- Resources must be within Spousal Impoverishment limits
- Cannot have transferred or gifted any resources in the last five years

**NEBRASKA**

Good Life. Great Mission.

---

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

*Helping People Live Better Lives.*

# What are the program limits?

---

- 2022 Community spouse resource reserved amounts
  - Minimum of \$27,480
  - Maximum of \$137,400
  - Amounts are adjusted annually for inflation
- Community Spouse maximum income allowance of \$3,435 per month
- Home Equity Maximum of \$636,000

**NEBRASKA**

Good Life. Great Mission.

---

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

*Helping People Live Better Lives.*

# What is the process to qualify?

---

- The Assessment of Resources can be requested at any time one spouse is likely to need 30 days or more of institutional level of care.
- This can be done regardless of the level of resources at the time.
- The Assessment is always considers the amount of resources owned at the time of the first entry into long-term care. If a couple does not qualify for Medicaid at the time of entry, it may still be to their advantage to request an Assessment.
- Couple may need to spend down some of their resources before they can become eligible.
- When resources are within program guidelines, the couple can apply for Medicaid.

**NEBRASKA**

Good Life. Great Mission.

---

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

*Helping People Live Better Lives.*



- 
- Upon application, the couple's resources are verified. This step may take some time, depending on the assets.
  - After eligibility is determined, a Designation of Resources is completed.
  - The Designation allows the couple to determine which spouse will have what asset.
  - Some income of the Medicaid spouse can be allocated to the community spouse to ensure that their needs are met.

**NEBRASKA**

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

*Helping People Live Better Lives.*

# How to get started

---

- Online
  - AccessNebraska ([accessnebraska.ne.gov](http://accessnebraska.ne.gov))
  - iServe ([iserve.nebraska.gov](http://iserve.nebraska.gov))
- Phone
  - AccessNebraska Call Centers
    - (855) 632-7633
    - Lincoln (402) 473-7000
    - Omaha (402) 595-1178
  - Local Office
- In Person
  - Contact your local office
  - Request online through [accessnebraska.ne.gov](http://accessnebraska.ne.gov)

**NEBRASKA**

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

*Helping People Live Better Lives.*

# For more information

---

- DHHS Website
  - Dhhs.ne.gov
  - Lots of information on different Medicaid programs, including Spousal Impoverishment
  - Separate links with provider information as well as client eligibility
- Area Agency on Aging
  - Experience with Spousal Impoverishment cases
  - Perform HCBS service coordination

**NEBRASKA**

Good Life. Great Mission.

---

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

*Helping People Live Better Lives.*

# Jason Davis

Medicaid Program Specialist

Jason.Davis@Nebraska.gov

(531) 530-7123



@NEDHHS



NebraskaDHHS



@NEDHHS

[dhhs.ne.gov](http://dhhs.ne.gov)

**NEBRASKA**

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

*Helping People Live Better Lives.*