

Working and Paying for Health Care

This fact sheet covers:

- ◆ Medicaid and Medicare
- ◆ Working and health care benefits
- ◆ MED Works—a Medicaid “buy-in” program for people with disabilities who work
- ◆ Employer-sponsored health insurance

Great news! If you are worried about going to work and losing your health care coverage, there are some work incentives that may help put your mind at ease.

Work incentives are programs from the Social Security Administration that provide additional supports to many people with disabilities who are working.



Extended Period of Medicare Coverage

If you have Medicare (health care insurance provided to people who have received Social Security Disability Insurance for at least 24 months) and you go to work, you will be able to keep your Medicare coverage for at least 93 months after you’ve completed your Trial Work Period. (For more information on Trial Work Period, see the fact sheet “Social Security Disability Insurance.”) That’s more than seven years, regardless of how much money you earn. When your Medicare ends is based on when you work your way off cash benefits, but even after the Extended Period of Medicare Coverage, you may still have the option of purchasing Medicare.



Section 1619(b) and Medicaid Coverage

In Indiana, Medicaid coverage is connected to Supplemental Security Income (SSI). If you have SSI and Medicaid at least one month before you start working, your Medicaid coverage is protected by a Social Security rule known as 1619(b). This provision means that you can keep your Medicaid coverage even after your earnings increase to the “Break-Even Point,” when you

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no longer receive an SSI check. When that happens—as long as you earn under a specific amount: \$38,506 per year in 2019—you will have 12 months when you may still be eligible for Medicaid even if you’re no longer receiving an SSI check.



MED Works

If you are receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and/or do not receive SSI, you may qualify for MED Works. This is the Medicaid buy-in program in Indiana for people with disabilities who work. MED Works allows you to keep your Medicaid (full coverage; including HCBS waiver services) when you begin working. You may pay a monthly premium that is based on your monthly income. With MED Works you can also save for retirement in an approved account (such as a 401k through your employer), and it won’t count against your Medicaid resource limit!



Employer-Sponsored Health Insurance

Some jobs offer health insurance to their employees. You can take this insurance (there is usually a monthly premium) and still keep your Medicaid and/or Medicare. Some people choose to do this so that their family members who do not have a disability (your spouse and children) will have health insurance. Whatever you pay in premiums for this will decrease the amount you have to pay for MED Works. Here’s an example:

\$100	Amount of premium you need to pay for MED Works
—\$100	Amount you pay through payroll deduction for your employer’s health insurance premium
<hr/>	
\$0	New MED Works premium

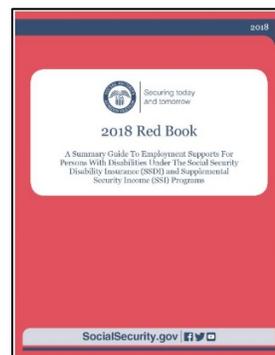
So, in this example, you would not need to pay anything for MED Works, but because you’re paying a health care premium at work, you’ll be covered through your employer-sponsored plan *and* through MED Works.

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See also, the “Need Help with Medical Expenses” section of the “Supplemental Security Income” fast sheet in this series. There you’ll find information about Impairment-Related Work Expenses or Blind Work Expenses, which are special work incentive programs established by Social Security to help workers pay for health expenses that may not be covered by Medicaid or their employer’s insurance.



The Social Security Red Book

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/>