

February 14, 2020

INFORMATIONAL ALERT: Medicaid Work Requirements Blocked in Arkansas

This afternoon, a three judge panel from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia unanimously ruled that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) does not have the authority to require some Medicaid enrollees to work in order to receive health coverage in Arkansas. Almost 18,000 Arkansans lost Medicaid coverage due to the implementation of work requirements. Today's decision upheld a lower court ruling against the work requirements, and while the ruling does not affect Medicaid work requirements in states besides Arkansas, it is a message to those states who have thought about enforcing Medicaid work requirements not to do so.

Currently, 10 states have had some sort of Medicaid work requirements approved by the Trump administration. However, due to litigation, Indiana is currently the only state that where work requirements are currently in effect. Judges have already overturned work requirements in states that include Kentucky and New Hampshire.

Why does this matter? The ruling indicates the increasing likelihood that Medicaid work requirements will be reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court. It also highlights the fact that Medicaid is looked at as solely a health care program, to be utilized by the most vulnerable populations, many of whom our organizations serve. Judges who ruled against work requirements in Arkansas noted that "coverage is a principal objective of Medicaid."

View the opinion, [*Charles Gresham, et al. v. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the State of Arkansas*](#).