

Medicaid work requirements could affect Legal Aid clients

Nonprofit seeks input from those currently enrolled

Community Legal Aid is seeking input from local residents who are currently enrolled or have been enrolled in Medicaid. The move is in response to the recent federal approval of Ohio's Medicaid Waiver, which imposes work requirements for eligible Ohioans enrolled in Medicaid.

The nonprofit law firm is trying to gain a better understanding of how the new restrictions will impact their clients, according to Executive Director Steven McGarrity.

"We need to be able to advise people about their rights," McGarrity explained. "The first step in that is knowing who is impacted and how they're impacted."

Legal Aid, a 501(c)3 nonprofit law firm, provides free legal help to low-income residents in central northeast Ohio. Many of their clients use Medicaid as their primary healthcare coverage.

"Most of our clients are at or below the federal poverty guidelines," McGarrity said. "They are the working poor, people with disabilities, those with mental health issues, seniors living in poverty. Many of them don't have the option of employer provided coverage."

Marie Curry, managing attorney for Legal Aid's health and education law programs, explained that the exemptions outlined by the Ohio Department of Medicaid would help many of their clients.

"We are interested in making sure that clients who are eligible for an exemption are able to show that," Curry said. "For clients who are not eligible for an exemption, we can work with them to make sure they get the support they need to keep their families healthy and stable."

These new requirements could impact up to 315,000 Ohioans state wide, according to a [statement released March 15 by the nonpartisan think tank Policy Matters Ohio](#).

Those interested in learning more can fill out a brief survey here at <https://survey.communitylegalaid.org/aayn>.

Last updated on March 21, 2019.

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