

NAVIGATING MEDICAID AND ASSET GUIDELINES: A GUIDE FOR SENIORS AND THEIR FAMILIES

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Wichita, KS
September, 2024



When a senior or their family faces the transition to a nursing home, financial planning becomes a crucial concern. Did you know that Medicaid may help cover the high costs of nursing home care? Each state has its own rules, and in states like Kansas, Medicaid will pay for medically necessary nursing home services, but only after certain income and asset guidelines are met.

For example, in Kansas, an individual can have no more than \$2,000 in cash assets and must liquidate other qualifying assets, such as property or investments, to meet Medicaid eligibility. According to Kansas Medicaid guidelines (section 129-06-108), a primary residence is generally exempt from consideration as an asset, provided that the applicant or their spouse continues to live in the home. However, if the applicant is moving into a nursing home with no intent to return, the home may be considered a countable asset, unless certain exemptions apply (such as a spouse or disabled relative living in the home).

Beyond real estate, Kansas Medicaid guidelines (section 129-06-109) also outline how personal property is treated. Some personal property items are exempt from being counted toward the asset limit, including household goods, personal effects, clothing, and one automobile if it is used for transportation by the applicant or a family member. However, other personal property, such as additional vehicles, valuable collections, or significant assets like boats or recreational vehicles, may be counted as part of the total assets when determining Medicaid eligibility.

These rules can feel overwhelming, especially when your loved one's home or personal property becomes part of the equation. Selling a home or other assets to meet Medicaid qualifications may be necessary, but it's important to understand the guidelines and exemptions that may protect certain items from being counted as assets.

Understanding the process is key. A conversation with a Medicaid expert is the first step in determining how your family should proceed. You'll want to review the financial and legal aspects of your loved one's situation, especially when it comes to real estate and personal property. Selling the family home or other valuable assets might be the best option in cases where they are considered countable assets, but it's important to weigh all possibilities, including creative financial solutions, to ensure the most beneficial outcome.



Working with a Power of Attorney (POA) or family members is also essential to ensure that everyone is informed and confident in the decisions being made. The process involves discussing the home's value, condition, and timeline for selling, as well as any personal property that may need to be liquidated. Once a plan is made, selling assets quickly can help your loved one qualify for Medicaid while avoiding disqualification due to excess assets.

Navigating Medicaid and long-term care can be challenging, but understanding the guidelines regarding real and personal property and exploring all options can help ease the transition for both seniors and their families. It's always a good idea to seek professional advice to ensure the smoothest path forward, especially when dealing with complex financial and real estate matters.