

Medicaid Disqualifying Transfer: Assets and Income

A person does not qualify for ND Medicaid coverage for nursing care services if that person or his or her spouse makes a disqualifying transfer. A normal transfer of assets or income for which fair market value is received is not considered a disqualifying transfer. A transfer is only disqualifying if fair market value is not received. Fair market value is determined by a professional in a particular industry (Example: banker, realtor, etc.).

One example of disqualifying transfer: A person gives land and equipment to his or her adult children without receiving payment equal to its fair market value.

NOTE: There are many other types of disqualifying transfers.

If a person applies for coverage of nursing care services, all transfers within the past five years are reviewed to determine whether it was a disqualifying transfer.

Nursing care services include services received in a nursing home, swing bed services in a hospital, nursing care in any other medical institution, such as the ND State Hospital, the Anne Carlsen Center, Prairie St. John's, a psychiatric residential treatment facility (PRTF), an intermediate care facility for the intellectually disabled (ICF) or a home and community-based services setting.

Penalty Periods

If a disqualifying transfer occurred, a penalty period is established. The penalty period is the length of time that ND Medicaid will not cover the cost of nursing care services. The length of the penalty period is determined by the amount of the disqualifying transfer divided by the average monthly cost of nursing facility care in North Dakota as of the individual's first application for ND Medicaid.

Penalty periods generally begin on the latest of:

- The first day of the month in which the transfer occurred; or
- The first day on which the person is receiving nursing care services and is "otherwise eligible" for ND Medicaid.

When deciding if an individual is “otherwise eligible” for ND Medicaid:

- The person must have applied for ND Medicaid and meet all nonfinancial eligibility criteria (be a North Dakota resident, have a social security number, etc.);
- Countable assets must be within ND Medicaid asset levels; and
- The monthly cost of nursing care and other medical care the person is responsible for, must be equal to or greater than the person’s client share (recipient liability).

Transfers that do not cause penalty periods

Some transfers of property are not treated as disqualifying even when no money is received. For instance:

- Transfer of the home to: a spouse, a child who is disabled or a minor child; a sibling who has partial ownership who has lived there and cared for a person for at least 1 year before that person entered nursing care; or, an adult child who lived there and cared for a person for at least 2 years before that person entered nursing care.
- Transfers to a trust solely for the benefit of a child who is disabled.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q – If both spouses enter long term care and one spouse already has a disqualifying transfer penalty period set up, can the other spouse be eligible for ND Medicaid coverage for nursing care services?

A – If both spouses are receiving nursing care services, any penalty period is split equally between the two spouses.

Q – Can services other than nursing care services be covered by ND Medicaid when someone has a disqualifying transfer?

A – Yes, non-nursing care services may be covered by ND Medicaid even if a person has a penalty period.

Q – What if I made a transfer and now I have no money to pay for my care?

A – In rare cases, a hardship waiver may be granted. A fact sheet titled, “Medicaid Disqualifying Transfer: Hardship Provisions” provides more information. It’s online at hhs.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/form-medicaid-hardship-provision-application.pdf.



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