



Kansas Medical Assistance Fact Sheet: Spenddown/Medically Needy

The Medically Needy program or Spenddown offers coverage to people who have income over the maximum allowable income standard. The spenddown amount is your share of your family's medical bills. The spenddown amount is like an insurance deductible. If you have a spenddown amount (deductible), you are responsible for that amount and Medicaid would pay any medical bills over that amount.

Who can get Medically Needy coverage?

A spenddown can be set up if you are in any one or more of the following groups:

- Pregnant Women
- Children under the age of 19
- Seniors age 65 and over
- Persons determined disabled by Social Security rules

Countable Resources

For pregnant women and children, there is no resource test. For seniors and people with disabilities, there is a resource limit of \$2,000 for a single individual and \$3,000 for couples. Examples of resources are bank accounts, cars, property, stocks, etc. that are owned by you or someone in your household.

How much is the spenddown?

The spenddown amount is different for every person or family. The countable income of yourself and your family over the protected income limit becomes the amount of the spenddown.

The protected income limit for all spenddowns is \$994.00 for one person, \$1,491.00 for two people, and \$498.00 for each additional person.

For the elderly and people with disabilities, only the income of the person needing coverage, and their spouse is used.

For children, the income of the children and the parents who live with them is counted.

For pregnant women, your family size is usually determined by your income tax unit. Your unborn child is also included. Your family size may also include your parents if you are a minor or they claim you as a tax dependent.

The following deductions are given:

- The first \$20 per month of any income is disregarded;
- For seniors and people with disabilities, over half of the wages are deducted. Deductions for Blind or Impairment related work expenses may also be applied to earned income.
- Qualifying pre-tax and federal deductions for earned income.

How long is the spenddown?

The spenddown period is usually six months. The spenddown period starts with the month you apply. If requested, a three-month spenddown period may be established to help pay for medical bills from the three months before the month you apply.

EXAMPLE 1:

A 70-year-old woman receives \$1,195 in Social Security income. She applies for medical assistance on June 2nd. The spenddown period is June to November.

Calculating the Spenddown Amount:

\$1,195 (Social Security income)
- \$994 (protected income level)
- \$20 (unearned income disregard)
= \$181 monthly spenddown amount

\$181 x 6 months = \$1,086 total spenddown

Example 2:

A pregnant woman earns \$1,000 a month and her husband earns \$2,000 a month. They apply for medical assistance on August 4th. Her spenddown period is August to January.

Calculating the Spenddown Amount:

\$3,000 (total monthly income)
- \$1,989* PIL (Protected income level) *Allowance amount based on household size of three
= \$1,011 monthly spenddown amount

\$1,011 x 6 months = \$6,066 total spenddown

How does the spenddown process work?

The eligibility worker determines the spenddown amount and sends a letter to you. A medical card is sent for each person in your family who is included on the spenddown plan. The medical card will not pay any medical bills until the spenddown amount is met.

When all of the medical bills added together meet the spenddown amount, the medical card can be used for all other medical bills during the 6-month spenddown period.

What medical bills can be used to meet a spenddown?

You may use most of the medical bills for yourself, your spouse living with you, and your minor children living with you. The medical bills may include doctor, hospital, dental, vision, hearing, prescriptions, transportation to get medical care, premiums paid for health insurance and Medicare, old medical bills still owed, and some over the counter drugs and medical supplies ordered by a doctor. Bills for the person on the spenddown (during the spenddown period) must be filed electronically by the provider; show them your medical card so they can file the bill. When medical care is needed and the medical provider (doctor, dentist) does not accept Kansas Medicaid, send in a copy of the bills during the spenddown period. You cannot use any bills or parts of any bills already paid by Medicare or other health insurance.

What happens when the spenddown amount is met?

Once the spenddown amount has been met, the medical provider can bill the medical card and ask for payment from KanCare. The bills used to meet the spenddown amount remain your responsibility to pay. A new spenddown period may begin after you reach the end of the first spenddown period.

How to Apply for Medical Coverage:

You must complete and submit an application to receive medical coverage.

To apply for medical coverage, use any of the following choices:

- Apply Online, [Apply for KanCare](#).
- Call the KanCare Clearinghouse at 1-800-792-4884 to request an application. Interpreter services are available.
- Applications can be downloaded from the [Apply for KanCare](#).