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What is the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) Program?

Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) is a Medicaid program for people who are already receiving Medicare benefits. The purpose of the program is to reduce the cost of medications and copays for doctors, hospitals, and medical procedures.

Important Note: The QMB program may differ by state. For the purpose of this article, we are discussing the QMB program as it relates to *Florida*.

Typically, this program is used by individuals and couples still living at home in the community. However, it can also be used by people who live in Assisted Living, Independent Living, or a Group Home.

As with all Medicaid programs, QMB has income and asset limits that must be met in order for someone to qualify for this program. The current limits for QMB as of January 2025 are:

Monthly QMB Limits as of January 2025			
Gross Income Limit		Countable Assets	
Individual	Couple	Individual	Couple
\$1,287	\$1,746	\$9,660	\$14,470

The limits are updated quarterly and can be found on the SSI-Related Programs Financial Eligibility Standards Chart. (link: <https://www.myflfamilies.com/sites/default/files/2024-12/Appendix-A-9.pdf>)

QMB Benefits (Medicare with Medicaid)

- Medication costs \$0-13
- Medicare Part D deductible and premiums = \$0
- Medicare Parts A & B deductibles and premiums = \$0
- Copays for Medicare covered expenses = \$0

Here is an example of how the QMB program can help someone:

- Andy lives on Social Security Income of \$2000 / month and spends \$165 on medications and \$400/ month on medical co-pays. If Andy can qualify for QMB, his medication costs may be reduced to \$30 / month, and his medical co-pays are \$0. Also, Andy's Social Security check increases by \$185 because the government is paying his Part B premium. Andy saves over \$700 a month.

How Can a Pooled Trust Help Me Qualify for QMB?

If your income or assets are over the financial limits for the QMB program, and you have medical conditions that prevent you from working, a Pooled Trust can be used to qualify for the program. Setting up a Pooled Trust allows you to place your over income and/or over asset (or both) into the trust, making this overage no longer “countable” for Medicaid purposes. This means that while Medicaid acknowledges your total income and/or assets, they deduct the income and/or assets placed into the trust from the total, so that it no longer counts against you.

Example 1: Over Income

An individual making \$2,000 from Social Security cannot qualify for QMB because they are over the \$1,287 income limit. By opening a Pooled Trust account, and placing \$800 into the trust each month, Medicaid only “counts” the person as having \$1,200 in monthly income. They will need to make deposits into the trust every month to keep their countable income under the limit.

Example 2: Over Assets

An individual making \$1,200 / month from Social Security is under the income limit. However, if that individual has \$14,000 in savings, they are over the QMB asset limit of \$9,660. By opening a Pooled Trust account, and placing \$6,000 into the trust, the over asset issue is eliminated, allowing the person to financially qualify for QMB. If at any time their countable assets outside of the trust get close to the QMB asset limit, they can make additional deposits into the trust to continue to meet the program limits.

With either example, AGED as the Trustee may use the money in the trust to pay bills and expenses for the individual (known as the beneficiary), as long as the expenses are for the sole benefit of the beneficiary, and are not paid for by government benefits. Examples of bills paid from the trust include, but are not limited to, mortgage, rent, facility bills, utilities, repairs, phone bills, auto insurance, auto loan payments, etc. However, the trust cannot pay the beneficiary directly, as this could disqualify them from the QMB program.

Setting up a Pooled Trust is easy. Refer to our Forms page to view the documents needed to establish an AGED Trust. (link: <https://trustaged.org/forms/aged-d4c-pooled-trust-documents/>)

AGED, Inc. is a nonprofit Pooled Trust company that assists seniors and individuals with disabilities to financially qualify for Medicaid. Call AGED for more information and a **FREE** consultation.

A Trust is a legal instrument. AGED does not give legal advice; we recommend seeking legal counsel to determine if a trust is right for you.

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