

# Medicaid Coverage Under Attack

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WASHINGTON (Reuters) – Kentucky on Friday became the first U.S. state to require that Medicaid recipients work or get jobs training, after gaining federal approval for the fundamental change to the 50-year-old health insurance program for the poor.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services issued policy guidance on Thursday allowing states to design and propose test programs with such requirements.

Kentucky's waiver, submitted for federal approval in 2016, requires able-bodied adult recipients to participate in at least 80 hours a month of "employment activities," including jobs training, education and community service.

The Kentucky program also imposes a premium on most Medicaid recipients based on income. Some who miss a payment or fail to re-enroll will be locked out for six months. The new rules will take effect in July, Kentucky state officials said.

"Kentucky will now lead on this issue," Governor Matt Bevin said at a news conference on Friday. "They want the dignity associated with being able to earn and have engagement in the very things they're receiving," he said of Medicaid recipients.

Politsturm: This legislative reform of Medicaid is the latest attempt by the bourgeois politicians to try and frame the reduction of medical services to our citizens as gaining "dignity". This insidious, injurious legislation will only hurt the most vulnerable individuals in Kentucky. This new plan will require unemployed Kentucky Medicaid recipients to participate in 80 hours per month of "employment activities" including job skills training, general education, and job search activities. Capitalism incentivizes reducing healthcare for the population whereas socialism provides it as a protected right.

Under the KentuckyHealth plan, if workers are unable to work 80 hours a month or miss a premium payment they will risk being suspended from Medicaid completely. This change perfectly illustrates the insanity of the capitalist mode of production. The poorest citizens, defined as having an annual income up to 138% of the federal poverty level, will be at increased risk of losing health coverage for not being able to pay for insurance coverage. Simultaneously, the richest capitalists are benefitting from massive tax cuts and a booming stock market. As the workers and the involuntarily unemployed lose healthcare through no fault of their own the oligarchs continue to suck the blood of the working class.

Sources: 1, 2, 3