
Program Policy Notice No. 09-02

- ◆ U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
- ◆ Health Resources and
Services Administration
- ◆ Healthcare Systems Bureau

February 4, 2009

To: Facilities Obligated Under the Uncompensated Services
Assurance (HILL-BURTON)

Subject: Revised Poverty Guidelines

Attached are the revised Poverty Guidelines issued on January 23, 2009, by the Department of Health and Human Services. These guidelines replace the Poverty Guidelines last published on January 23, 2008. Effective March 24, 2009, they are to be used in making determinations of eligibility for uncompensated services. Facilities certified under one of the uncompensated services compliance alternatives are not required to use these guidelines, although they are permitted to do so.

Facilities located in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Palau are to use the poverty guidelines for the "48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia."

The guidelines no longer include a definition of "income;" however, Hill-Burton facilities are required to use the statistical definition of income previously provided in the guidelines (see the attached).

Further, the guidelines no longer include a definition of "family;" however, Hill-Burton facilities are required to use either the statistical definition of family previously provided in the guidelines (see the attached) or formally adopt their own written definition of family.

However, the definition chosen must be used consistently in determining eligibility for uncompensated services. If the facility has not established its own formal written definition of "family," it must apply the statistical definition. To avoid misunderstandings, we recommend that facilities formally establish their definition in writing in their operating procedures manual.

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For further information, you may contact the Division of Facilities Compliance and Recovery, Healthcare Systems Bureau, Health Resource and Services Administration, Parklawn Building, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 10-105, Rockville, Maryland 20857; telephone (301) 443-5656.

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Attachments