

May 11, 2015

For Immediate Release:

Contact: Kate McGarvey
Deputy Director
The Legal Aid Society of Columbus
(614) 737-0146 (Direct)
(614) 314-4372 (Cell)
kmcgarvey@columbuslegalaid.org

Settlement Reached in *Homewood v. McCarthy* reinstating benefits for over 180,000 Ohio Medicaid Recipients and Overhauling Renewal Process

The Plaintiffs in a lawsuit filed by Legal Aid Society of Columbus, Southeastern Ohio Legal Services and Marshall & Morrow reached a settlement agreement with the Ohio Department of Medicaid on May 11, 2015. The agreement brings Ohio's Medicaid renewal process into compliance with federal law and results in the reinstatement of Medicaid coverage for all beneficiaries across Ohio who lost coverage between January 1, 2015 and March 31, 2015 as a result of the flawed renewal process. The agreement also reinstates coverage for the individual Plaintiffs and members of the two organizational plaintiffs, Community Development for All People and Community Refugee and Immigration Services, who lost Medicaid coverage as a result of Ohio's Medicaid renewal process.

The over 180,000 individuals affected by the agreement can expect to receive a letter from the Department in early June to inform them that their coverage will be reinstated. In the meantime, individuals who have lost coverage can contact their local County Department of Job and Family Services to request reinstatement.

Beyond reinstatement of Medicaid coverage, the agreement requires the Department to make a number of improvements to the Medicaid renewal process going forward including the creation of a statewide telephone renewal option, improvements to the online renewal process, and a requirement that the Department review information available in state and federal databases to determine beneficiaries' continued Medicaid eligibility before requesting such information from individuals at renewal.

It also requires the Department to translate the renewal packet into Spanish and Somali and include information on the availability of interpreter services in 91 languages, and to ensure that Medicaid terminations include information explaining the reason for the termination and the individual's appeal rights.

Deputy Director of Legal Aid, Kathleen McGarvey, states, "We are very excited about the agreement reached in this case, which will result in hundreds of thousands of individuals around the state maintaining the coverage they are eligible to receive under the law and being able to seek the medical care they need, without worrying about racking up medical bills or having to forgo other necessities."

A full copy of the settlement agreement is included with this press release.
