A win in Medicaid work requirements lawsuit (Nov. 2, 2026)

HR1 imposed work requirements on certain Medicaid recipients starting in 2027. The law, however, exempted people who are medically frail, including people with serious or complex health conditions, from these work requirements.

Given that HIV infection is both a serious and complex health condition, we anticipated that people living with HIV would be exempt from the work requirement as medically frail.

But over the summer, the federal administration released a rule restricting the medical frailty exemption. To be exempt, a person had to show not only that they had a serious or complex health condition, but also that the condition significantly impaired the person's ability to work.

HIV was specifically identified as a condition that might be serious or complex but may not significantly impair a person's ability to work.

Pennsylvania, along with other states, challenged this new rule, arguing that the “significant impairment” requirement goes beyond the law.

On October 29, a federal judge agreed and issued an order striking down the "significant impairment" requirement. The work requirements were not struck down, just the administration's attempt to require a medically frail person to show that their condition impairs their ability to work.

In Pennsylvania - at least for now - a person with a serious or complex medical condition should be considered medically frail and be exempt from the work requirements.

It is expected that this ruling will be appealed and we will provide updates if and when the rules change. For more, check out: https://chlpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/11/HCIM-Mass-v.-Oz_FINAL-1.pdf