



2025 ASSEMBLY BILL 253

May 8, 2025 - Introduced by Representatives BROOKS, KAUFERT, ALLEN, KNODL, MURPHY, MURSAU, SUBECK, WICHGERS and BEHNKE, cosponsored by Senators JACQUE and FEYEN. Referred to Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care.

1 **AN ACT** *to create* 49.472 (3m) of the statutes; **relating to:** independence
2 accounts.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill requires the Department of Health Services to allow an individual to deposit up to \$15,000 of the individual's gross earnings in an independence account over a 12-month period. Further, the bill prohibits DHS from including assets acquired by an individual by inheritance when determining the individual's financial eligibility for Medical Assistance benefits under the Medical Assistance purchase plan.

Under current law, an independence account is an account approved by DHS that consists solely of savings, dividends, other gains derived from those savings, and income earned from paid employment after the date on which the individual began receiving Medical Assistance benefits under the Medical Assistance purchase plan. The Medical Assistance purchase plan is a subprogram of the Medical Assistance program that allows individuals who have a qualifying disability and who are working or who want to work to remain eligible for Medical Assistance benefits. To be eligible for benefits under the Medical Assistance purchase plan, among other things, an individual's assets must not exceed \$15,000, but assets accumulated in an independence account are excluded from the calculation. The Medical Assistance program is a joint state and federal program that provides health services to individuals who have limited financial resources.

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SECTION 1

For further information see the state fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 49.472 (3m) of the statutes is created to read:

49.472 (3m) INDEPENDENCE ACCOUNTS. (a) The department shall allow an individual to deposit up to \$15,000 of the individual's gross earnings in an independence account over a 12-month period.

(b) In determining assets under sub. (3) (b), the department may not include assets that are acquired by inheritance.

(c) If the department determines that federal approval is required to implement any part of this subsection, the department shall submit any state plan amendment, waiver of federal Medicaid law, or other request for federal approval necessary to implement this subsection. The department shall implement this subsection to the extent that the federal department of health and human services does not disapprove of the plan amendment, waiver request, or other request for federal approval.

(END)