

ABC for Health: 2019 federal poverty level change increases access to health coverage

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Interview: Bobby Peterson: (608)261-6939 or (608)444-7197

Madison, WI– Today, ABC for Health, Inc. updated its popular “FPL Calculator” using 2019 numbers set by the Federal Government. The Federal Poverty Level, or “FPL,” is a benchmark of the minimum amount of gross income a family is determined to need for food, clothing, transportation, shelter, health, and other necessities established by the federal government. FPL varies according to income and family size, and is adjusted annually based on consumer price index. The federal government released the 2019 FPL numbers, with a January 11, 2019 effective date for certain programs.

The ABC for Health FPL calculator is available free online at: <https://safetyweb.org/fpl.php>

“FPL is one criteria for determining eligibility for health coverage programs like BadgerCare Plus,” says Bobby Peterson, Public Interest Attorney at ABC for Health. “People use our online FPL calculator frequently to help assess possible eligibility for programs. In 2018, our calculator generated over 235,000 clicks.”

Peterson continues, “Remember, these new numbers will impact new applications for BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid programs, which look at your current, monthly income. Individuals applying for private insurance through the Federal Marketplace, however, will have eligibility based on their 2018 annual income.” Peterson says the ABC for Health calculator page has links to the 2018 numbers for those evaluating Marketplace coverage and FoodShare eligibility.

Peterson concludes, “It’s incredibly important that individuals, families and their advocates have access to tools to help them assess and secure available health coverage and other important safety net services. While the new poverty level numbers were not published in the Federal Register, due to the partial government shutdown, the effective date of January 11, 2019, as published by the US Department of Health and Human Services is firm.”

Celebrating 25 years in 2019, ABC for Health, Inc., is a Wisconsin-based, nonprofit, public interest law firm dedicated to linking children and families, particularly those with special health care needs, to health care benefits and services. ABC for Health’s mission is to provide information, advocacy tools, legal services, and expert support needed to obtain, maintain, and finance health care coverage and services