

Many individuals believe that they must simply stay healthy until age 65 when Medicare coverage is available; however, the reality is that the stress of losing a job and the natural aging process between the ages of 50 and 65 leave those citizens the most vulnerable. At Browning, Meyer & Ball Co., LPA, we have developed several strategies that can be implemented and which can provide health care coverage through the Medicaid program in the event of a catastrophic illness. While Medicaid coverage is clearly not on par with private health care insurance, it is better than the alternative of full liquidation of all assets and still being unable to pay for medical care.

In general, it is our recommendation that you attempt to keep COBRA coverage. If you cannot afford to keep COBRA coverage, or if COBRA coverage has expired, or if COBRA coverage is not available to you, we can tailor a plan that will preserve a portion or all of your estate.

While it is preferable to put this plan in place prior to a health care crisis, we can put such a plan in place on an emergency basis soon after the crisis has occurred.

Legal fees for preplanning are in the range of \$1,500 while fees for planning once a crisis has occurred will likely cost anywhere from \$2,200 to \$6,000.

Medicaid eligibility rules are very complex and are likely indecipherable for individuals who have retirement funds, a residence, some savings, and debt. At Browning, Meyer & Ball Co., LPA, we can help you make sense of this government program and utilize it to assist you, should an emergency arise. It is our hope that legal work will allow those who are temporarily unemployed and in a health care crisis again return to a more fulfilling station in life without losing their retirement and residence.