

HOW TO ADVOCATE FOR AN INCREASE IN THE PERSONAL NEEDS ALLOWANCE

1. SEND A LETTER TO LEGISLATOR(S) BY USING THIS TEMPLATE:

(Senator/Representative)

Iowa State Capitol

1007 E. Grand Ave, Des Moines, IA 50319

RE: Increasing the ***Personal Needs Allowance (PNA)*** from \$50 to \$85 for Medicaid recipients in Nursing Homes.

Dear (Senator/Representative)

We are the nursing home residents who live at (Insert Facility Name Here). We are your constituents on Medicaid who reside in your district. We are writing to ask that you support an increase in the ***Personal Needs Allowance in the Health and Human Services Budget*** this legislative session.

Medicaid rules indicate that a resident's Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) may be used to cover the costs of items not provided through the Medicaid program, so examples of that would be: hair care, snacks, clothing, cell phone or streaming services among other personal-use items. We receive only \$50 per month to pay for these items that enhance our quality of life.

The PNA in Iowa was last increased more than 20 years ago and prices today are almost 2 times higher than prices in 2001. According to information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, a dollar today only buys 58 % of what it could buy back then.

You can help by supporting an increase in the monthly PNA amount to a minimum of \$85. This can be done through additional funding in the Health and Human Services Appropriations bill. This increase would keep Iowa more in line with inflation but more importantly, it would make a huge difference in the lives of Iowa's nursing home residents by allowing us the flexibility to purchase items we need.

(Be sure to include your name and address on both your letter and envelope.)

Sincerely,

(THE RESIDENTS AT:

(Street address City, State, Zip code)

2. YOU MAY ALSO CALL YOUR LEGISLATOR BY FOLLOWING THESE INSTRUCTIONS:

Locate your legislator here: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find>

When calling, state your name and address and identify yourself as the legislator's constituent. You will often be speaking with a secretary or aide. Outline the issue and be clear with what you're requesting. You may use these talking points as a guide:

- Medicaid recipients living in nursing homes are only allowed to keep \$50 a month to cover their personal expenses, this is known as Personal Needs Allowance (PNA). The PNA is supposed to cover costs of items not provided through the Medicaid program, so examples of that would be: hair care, snacks, clothing, cell phone or streaming services, among other personal-use items.
- The PNA in Iowa was last increased more than 20 years ago and prices today are almost 2 times higher than prices in 2001.
- Tell your legislator what they can do: ***To keep up with inflation, the Iowa Legislature needs to increase the monthly PNA amount to a minimum of \$85. This can be done through additional funding in the Health and Human Services Appropriations bill.*** This increase would keep Iowa more in line with inflation but more importantly, it would make a huge difference in the lives of Iowa's nursing home residents by allowing them the flexibility to purchase items they need.

It is also very helpful to share how the issue affects you personally. Thank them for their support.