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### **Agreement Reached In Lawsuit On Behalf Of Marylanders With Disabilities Seeking Medicaid**

Medicaid applications based on disability will be processed faster as the result of a settlement of a lawsuit between the Maryland Department of Human Resources and the Plaintiff.

Under the agreement, DHR will eliminate a backlog of over 9,000 delayed cases and agrees to promptly process all other applications for Medicaid on the basis of disability, in compliance with federal law and regulations. In addition, many of the problems identified by the plaintiff will be addressed with Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act to all individuals with incomes at or below 133% of the federal poverty line. The state's progress in addressing the delays and eliminating the backlog of applications will be closely monitored by plaintiff's counsel through January 2014.

"This is an important first step," said Mary Lou Magee-Kern, the named plaintiff in the case. "Now people won't be waiting months or years and getting sicker and sicker like me, just to find out if they have Medicaid."

The lawsuit, filed in early January, challenged longstanding delays in processing of Medicaid applications by low-income Marylanders with severe disabilities and serious medical needs. At the time the suit was filed, Magee-Kern had been waiting for an eligibility determination for more than 233 days. During that time she was unable to see specialists to help her manage her disabilities, except when hospitalized for an emergency. Within two days of the case being filed, Magee-Kern's application was processed and she was found eligible for Medicaid.

"Imagine being sick and getting sicker, and not being able to go see a doctor because you can't pay," said Camilla Roberson, staff attorney at the Public Justice Center. "Now, timely processing will at least eliminate one of the barriers to healthcare that low-income, vulnerable individuals have been facing for years. I am pleased that we could reach a quick resolution and concentrate resources on addressing the real problems immediately."

The Plaintiff in this case is represented by:

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