

above, and be sure to include name, affiliation, and a brief description of the topic or nature of the statement.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Diane Gianelli, 202/296-4694.

Dated: February 6, 2002.

Dean Clancy,

Executive Director, President's Council on Bioethics.

[FR Doc. 02-3626 Filed 2-13-02; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Meeting of the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Regulatory Reform

AGENCY: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Department of Health and Human Services.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given of a public hearing by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary's Advisory Committee on Regulatory Reform. As governed by the Federal Advisory Committee Act in accordance with Section 10(a)(2), the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Regulatory Reform is seeking guidance for the Department's efforts to streamline regulatory requirements. The Advisory Committee will advise and make recommendations for changes that would be beneficial in four broad areas: Health care delivery, health systems operations, biomedical and health research, and the development of pharmaceuticals and other products. The Committee will review changes identified through regional public hearings, written comments from the public, and consultation with HHS staff.

All meetings and hearings of the Committee are open to the general public. During each meeting, invited witnesses will address how regulations affect health-related issues. Meeting agendas will also allow some time for public comment. Additional information on each meeting's agenda and list of participating witnesses will be posted on the Committee's Web site prior to the meetings, <http://www.regreform.hhs.gov>.

DATES: The first public hearing of the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Regulatory Reform will be held on Monday, February 25, 2002, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on Tuesday, February 26, 2002, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The hearing will be held in Miami, Florida. Information about the

exact location will be posted at the Web site address listed above and published in the **Federal Register** when the location has been confirmed.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Christy Schmidt, Executive Coordinator, Secretary's Advisory Committee on Regulatory Reform, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 200 Independence Avenue, SW., Room 344G, Washington, DC 20201, (202) 401-5182.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Anyone planning to attend the meeting who requires special disability-related arrangements such as sign-language interpretation should provide notice of their need by Tuesday, February 19, 2002. Please make any request to Michael Starkweather—phone: 301-628-3141; fax: 301-628-3101; e-mail: mstarkweather@s-3.com.

On June 8, 2001, HHS Secretary Thompson announced a Department-wide initiative to reduce regulatory burdens in health care, to improve patient care, and to respond to the concerns of health care providers and industry, State and local Governments, and individual Americans who are affected by HHS rules. Common sense approaches and careful balancing of needs can help improve patient care. As part of this initiative, the Department is establishing the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Regulatory Reform to provide findings and recommendations regarding potential regulatory changes. These changes would enable HHS programs to reduce burdens and costs associated with departmental regulations and paperwork, while at the same time maintaining or enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and access of HHS programs.

Dated: February 7, 2002.

William Raub,

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation.

[FR Doc. 02-3625 Filed 2-13-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4151-05-P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

Annual Update of the HHS Poverty Guidelines

AGENCY: Department of Health and Human Services.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice provides an update of the HHS poverty guidelines to account for last (calendar) year's

increase in prices as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

EFFECTIVE DATE: These guidelines go into effect on the day they are published (unless an office administering a program using the guidelines specifies a different effective date for that particular program).

ADDRESSES: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Room 404E, Humphrey Building, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Washington, DC 20201.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information about how the poverty guidelines are used or how income is defined in a particular program, contact the Federal (or other) office which is responsible for that program.

For general questions about the poverty guidelines (but NOT for questions about a particular program—such as the Hill-Burton Uncompensated Services Program—that uses the poverty guidelines), contact Gordon Fisher, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Room 404E, Humphrey Building, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC 20201—telephone: (202) 690-5880; persons with Internet access may visit the poverty guidelines Internet site at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/poverty.htm>.

For information about the Hill-Burton Uncompensated Services Program (no-fee or reduced-fee health care services at certain hospitals and other health care facilities for certain persons unable to pay for such care), contact the Office of the Director, Division of Facilities Compliance and Recovery, Health Resources and Services Administration, HHS, Room 10C-16, Parklawn Building, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Maryland 20857. To speak to a person, call (301) 443-5656. To receive a Hill-Burton information package, call 1-800-638-0742 (for callers outside Maryland) or 1-800-492-0359 (for callers in Maryland), and leave your name and address on the Hotline recording. Persons with Internet access may visit the Division of Facilities Compliance and Recovery Internet home page site at <http://www.hrsa.gov/osp/dfcr>. The Division of Facilities Compliance and Recovery notes that as set by 42 CFR 124.505(b), the effective date of this update of the poverty guidelines for facilities obligated under the Hill-Burton Uncompensated Services Program is sixty days from the date of this publication.

For information about the percentage multiple of the poverty guidelines to be used on immigration forms such as INS Form I-864, Affidavit of Support,

contact the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. To obtain information on the most recent applicable poverty guidelines from the Immigration and Naturalization Service, call 1-800-375-5283. Persons with Internet access may obtain the information from the Immigration and Naturalization Service Internet site at <http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/howdoi/affsupp.htm>.

For information about the Department of Labor's Lower Living Standard Income Level (an alternative eligibility criterion with the poverty guidelines for certain programs under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998), contact John Beverly, Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor—telephone: (202) 693-3502—e-mail: jbeverly@doleta.gov; persons with Internet access may visit the Employment and Training Administration's Lower Living Standard Income Level Internet site at <http://wdsc.doleta.gov/lisil>.

For information about the number of people in poverty since 1959 or about the Census Bureau statistical poverty thresholds, contact the HHES Division, Room G251, Federal Office Building #3, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, D.C. 20233-8500—telephone: (301) 457-3242—or send e-mail to hhes-info@census.gov; persons with Internet access may visit the Poverty section of the Census Bureau's Internet site at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty.html>.

2002 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Size of family unit	Poverty guideline
1	\$8,860
2	11,940
3	15,020
4	18,100
5	21,180
6	24,260
7	27,340
8	30,420

For family units with more than 8 members, add \$3,080 for each additional member. (The same increment applies to smaller family sizes also, as can be seen in the figures above.)

2002 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR ALASKA

Size of family unit	Poverty guideline
1	\$11,080

2002 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR ALASKA—Continued

Size of family unit	Poverty guideline
2	14,930
3	18,780
4	22,630
5	26,480
6	30,330
7	34,180
8	38,030

For family units with more than 8 members, add \$3,850 for each additional member. (The same increment applies to smaller family sizes also, as can be seen in the figures above.)

2002 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR HAWAII

Size of family unit	Poverty guideline
1	\$10,200
2	13,740
3	17,280
4	20,820
5	24,360
6	27,900
7	31,440
8	34,980

For family units with more than 8 members, add \$3,540 for each additional member. (The same increment applies to smaller family sizes also, as can be seen in the figures above.)

(Separate poverty guideline figures for Alaska and Hawaii reflect Office of Economic Opportunity administrative practice beginning in the 1966-1970 period. Note that the Census Bureau poverty thresholds—the primary version of the poverty measure—have never had separate figures for Alaska and Hawaii. The poverty guidelines are not defined for Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Palau. In cases in which a Federal program using the poverty guidelines serves any of those jurisdictions, the Federal office which administers the program is responsible for deciding whether to use the contiguous-states-and-D.C. guidelines for those jurisdictions or to follow some other procedure.)

The preceding figures are the 2002 update of the poverty guidelines required by section 673(2) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) of 1981 (Pub.L. 97-35—reauthorized by Pub.L. 105-285, Section

201 (1998)). As required by law, this update reflects last year's change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U); it was done using the same procedure used in previous years.

Section 673(2) of OBRA-1981 (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) requires the use of these poverty guidelines as an eligibility criterion for the Community Services Block Grant program. The poverty guidelines are also used as an eligibility criterion by a number of other Federal programs (both HHS and non-HHS). Due to confusing legislative language dating back to 1972, the poverty guidelines have sometimes been mistakenly referred to as the "OMB" (Office of Management and Budget) poverty guidelines or poverty line. In fact, OMB has never issued the guidelines; the guidelines are issued each year by the Department of Health and Human Services (formerly by the Office of Economic Opportunity/Community Services Administration). The poverty guidelines may be formally referenced as "the poverty guidelines updated periodically in the **Federal Register** by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2)."

The poverty guidelines are a simplified version of the Federal Government's statistical poverty thresholds used by the Census Bureau to prepare its statistical estimates of the number of persons and families in poverty. The poverty guidelines issued by the Department of Health and Human Services are used for administrative purposes—for instance, for determining whether a person or family is financially eligible for assistance or services under a particular Federal program. The poverty thresholds are used primarily for statistical purposes. Since the poverty guidelines in this notice—the 2002 guidelines—reflect price changes through calendar year 2001, they are approximately equal to the poverty thresholds for calendar year 2001 which the Census Bureau expects to issue in September or October 2002. (A preliminary version of the 2001 thresholds is now available from the Census Bureau.)

In certain cases, as noted in the relevant authorizing legislation or program regulations, a program uses the poverty guidelines as only one of several eligibility criteria, or uses a percentage multiple of the guidelines (for example, 125 percent or 185 percent of the guidelines). Non-Federal organizations which use the poverty guidelines under their own authority in non-Federally-funded activities also have the option of choosing to use a

percentage multiple of the guidelines such as 125 percent or 185 percent.

While many programs use the guidelines to classify persons or families as either eligible or ineligible, some other programs use the guidelines for the purpose of giving priority to lower-income persons or families in the provision of assistance or services.

In some cases, these poverty guidelines may not become effective for a particular program until a regulation or notice specifically applying to the program in question has been issued.

The poverty guidelines given above should be used for both farm and non-farm families. Similarly, these guidelines should be used for both aged and non-aged units. The poverty guidelines have never had an aged/non-aged distinction; only the Census Bureau (statistical) poverty thresholds have separate figures for aged and non-aged one-person and two-person units.

Definitions

There is no universal administrative definition of "family," "family unit," or "household" that is valid for all programs that use the poverty guidelines. Federal programs in some cases use administrative definitions that differ somewhat from the statistical definitions given below; the Federal office which administers a program has the responsibility for making decisions about its administrative definitions. Similarly, non-Federal organizations which use the poverty guidelines in non-Federally-funded activities may use administrative definitions that differ from the statistical definitions given below. In either case, to find out the precise definitions used by a particular program, please consult the office or organization administering the program in question.

The following statistical definitions (derived for the most part from language used in U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P60-185 and earlier reports in the same series) are made available for illustrative purposes only; in other words, these statistical definitions are not binding for administrative purposes.

(a) Family

A family is a group of two or more persons related by birth, marriage, or adoption who live together; all such related persons are considered as members of one family. For instance, if an older married couple, their daughter and her husband and two children, and the older couple's nephew all lived in the same house or apartment, they would all be considered members of a single family.

(b) Unrelated Individual

An unrelated individual is a person 15 years old or over (other than an inmate of an institution) who is not living with any relatives. An unrelated individual may be the only person living in a house or apartment, or may be living in a house or apartment (or in group quarters such as a rooming house) in which one or more persons also live who are not related to the individual in question by birth, marriage, or adoption. Examples of unrelated individuals residing with others include a lodger, a foster child, a ward, or an employee.

(c) Household

As defined by the Census Bureau for statistical purposes, a household consists of all the persons who occupy a housing unit (house or apartment), whether they are related to each other or not. If a family and an unrelated individual, or two unrelated individuals, are living in the same housing unit, they would constitute two family units (see next item), but only one household. Some programs, such as the Food Stamp Program and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, employ administrative variations of the "household" concept in determining income eligibility. A number of other programs use administrative variations of the "family" concept in determining income eligibility. Depending on the precise program definition used, programs using a "family" concept would generally apply the poverty guidelines separately to each family and/or unrelated individual within a household if the household includes more than one family and/or unrelated individual.

(d) Family Unit

"Family unit" is not an official U.S. Census Bureau term, although it has been used in the poverty guidelines **Federal Register** notice since 1978. As used here, either an unrelated individual or a family (as defined above) constitutes a family unit. In other words, a family unit of size one is an unrelated individual, while a family unit of two/three/etc. is the same as a family of two/three/etc.

Note that this notice no longer provides a definition of "income." This is for two reasons. First, there is no universal administrative definition of "income" that is valid for all programs that use the poverty guidelines. Second, in the past there has been confusion regarding important differences between the statistical definition of income and various administrative definitions of

"income" or "countable income." The precise definition of "income" for a particular program is very sensitive to the specific needs and purposes of that program. To determine, for example, whether or not taxes, college scholarships, or other particular types of income should be counted as "income" in determining eligibility for a specific program, one must consult the office or organization administering the program in question; that office or organization has the responsibility for making decisions about the definition of "income" used by the program (to the extent that the definition is not already contained in legislation or regulations).

Dated: February 6, 2002.

Tommy G. Thompson,

Secretary of Health and Human Services.

[FR Doc. 02-3627 Filed 2-13-02; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

Nominations of Topics for Evidence-based Practice Centers

AGENCY: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), DHHS.

ACTION: Nominations of topics for evidence reports and technology assessments.

SUMMARY: AHRQ invites nominations of topics for evidence reports and technology assessments relating to the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and management of common diseases and clinical conditions, as well as topics relating to organization and financing of health care. AHRQ's previous requests for topic nominations were published in the **Federal Register** on December 23, 1996, November 28, 1997, May 4, 1999, and November 13, 2000.

DATES: Topic nominations should be submitted by April 15, 2002, in order to be considered for the next group of evidence reports and technology assessments. In addition to timely responses to this request for nominations, AHRQ also accepts topic nominations on an ongoing basis. AHRQ will not reply to individual responses, but will consider all nominations during the selection process. Topics selected will be announced from time to time in the **Federal Register** and through AHRQ press releases.

ADDRESSES: Topics nominations should be submitted to Jacqueline Besteman, J.D., M.A., Director, Evidence-based Practice Centers (EPC) Program, Center