

DECLARATION OF MARISOL ARDON

1. My name is Marisol Ardon. I am competent and making this declaration on my own behalf. If called as a witness, I would testify consistent with the following:
2. I am 45 years old and live in Siloam Springs, Arkansas. My adult daughter Cristina Ardon currently lives with me. I have been separated from my husband for more than 10 years. In December 2017, my husband started renting a room with a separate entrance in my house.
3. From 2009 to 2013, I worked at the United Way's 211 Community Resource Telephone Line. At that job, I answered phone calls from people in need of services and connected them to social services agencies. In 2013, United Way moved the 211 line to the Arkansas Crisis Center, and I continued working there until March 2017. The job was the same, but I did not have the same health insurance coverage at the Crisis Center as at United Way. Though I liked my job, I had to stop working in March 2017 because of health issues.
4. I currently do not have any income. My daughter pays the rent to the landlord and other household expenses. My separated husband pays \$225 in rent to my daughter each month for his room with a separate entrance. When I filed taxes this year for the 2017 tax year, I filed as married filing separately.
5. I have been covered by Medicaid through Arkansas Works for a few years, probably since about 2015. I believe I enrolled at the DHS office in Bentonville, where I always go to renew my coverage or when I have questions about my insurance.
6. Prior to being on Medicaid, I often didn't get medical care when I needed it. From 2013 until I started on Arkansas Works, I had no health insurance. I paid for basic care out of my own pocket for things like my asthma inhaler or a doctor visit for the flu. I did not have

regular check-ups, go for an annual physical, get any tests or blood work, or receive other care. Since then, my health has gotten worse.

7. I have several medical conditions that need to be treated and monitored. I have a hernia in my stomach, thyroid problems, asthma, anxiety with panic attacks, and, as a result of a non-cancerous 25-pound tumor in my midsection, chronic back pain. With Medicaid coverage, I can get the treatment and services I need for my various conditions, including the surgery to remove the tumor around July 2017, the four daily medications I take, and regular doctor visits with my primary care doctor and specialists. I also use Medicaid to get annual check-ups.

8. Although I have access to the internet, I was not able to create my account to report my work hours on the Access Arkansas website the first time. My account got rejected several times before I finally was able to create an account. Then, once I was online on the page to report, I could not figure out how to report exemptions and had to go to the DHS office in person in July 2018. At that time, I gave DHS a piece of paper stating that I am not working because of my back, but I did not hear anything directly in response to that.

9. In August 2018, I confirmed with DHS that I have to meet the work requirement and that I was not exempt. I did not meet the requirements in June or July of this year. Because of these work requirements, I was having three panic attacks per day where I couldn't breathe and lost control of my emotions. This happened throughout July and August 2018. This is more panic attacks than I had before I started worrying about the work requirements.

10. After I got legal representation, I filed for the short-term incapacity at the end of August or early September 2018, which expired on October 31, 2018. Since my health has not gotten better, I plan to file for the same exemption again before December 5. Now that I have legal representation, I am not getting as many panic attacks due to the work requirements. But, I


am still very worried, and the possibility of losing coverage weighs on my mind. If I lose Medicaid, I won't be able to get the care I need for all of my health conditions. Overall, the uncertainty around work requirements has increased my anxiety.

11. Around October 9, 2018, I received a letter from DHS telling me that my eligibility redetermination was approved to continue my Arkansas Works coverage. Because the letter also said my exemption would end at the end of October, I tried to go online right around then to file for the same exemption again. I could not log onto the website or see my account even though I tried many times. I went to the DHS office in Bentonville to get help. The DHS worker told me that she could not help me sign on or report my exemption. She said that I have to do it all online.

12. Medicaid is important because I really need it for my health issues. If I didn't need the help, I wouldn't have asked for it. I am worried that many people will lose coverage because of these work requirements. DHS sends long letters that don't really explain things in a clear way. We don't know what we need to do or how to do it. I am really worried that people will lose coverage just because they don't know computers.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the above information is true and correct.

Dated: November 1, 2018


Marisol Ardon