

STATE OF MICHIGAN
STATE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS AND RULES
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No: 2010-46022

Issue No: 2026

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Hearing Date: October 28, 2010
Oakland County DHS

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Suzanne L. Keegstra

HEARING DECISION

This matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9 and MCL 400.37 upon claimant's request for a hearing. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on October 28, 2010. The claimant personally appeared and provided testimony.

ISSUE

Did the department properly budget the claimant's Medical Assistance (MA) deductible amount?

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the competent, material and substantial evidence on the whole record, finds as material fact:

1. On March 11, 2010, the claimant was mailed a Notice of Case Action (DHS-1605) that indicated the claimant's monthly MA deductible would go from [REDACTED]. (Department Exhibit 22 – 23)
2. The claimant submitted a hearing request to protest the change on March 25, 2010.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Medical Assistance (MA) program is established by Title XIX of the Social Security Act and is implemented by Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The Department of Human Services (DHS or department) administers the MA program

pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and MCL 400.105. Department policies are found in the Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), the Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) and the Program Reference Manual (PRM).

Department policy states:

INCOME

DEPARTMENT POLICY

All Programs

The group composition and program budgeting items specify whose income to count. The program budgeting items might also contain program-specific income deductions or disregards.

Income means benefits or payments measured in money. It includes money a person owns even if NOT paid directly such as stock dividends automatically reinvested and income paid to a representative.

Earned income means income received from another person or organization or from self-employment for duties that were performed for remuneration or profit. Unearned income means all income that is NOT earned income. The item specifies whether the income is earned or unearned.

The amount of income counted may be more than the amount a person actually receives, because it is the amount before any deductions including deductions for taxes and garnishments. The amount before any deductions is called the **gross** amount. PEM, Item 500, p. 1.

Income remaining after applying the policy in this item is called **countable**.

Count all income that is NOT specifically excluded. PEM, Item 500, p. 1.

The goal of the Medicaid program is to ensure that essential health care services are made available to those who otherwise could not afford them. Medicaid is also known as Medical Assistance (MA). BEM 105.

The State of Michigan has set guidelines for income, which determine if an MA group is eligible. Income eligibility exists for the calendar month tested when:

- . There is no excess income, **or**
- . Allowable medical expenses equal or exceed the excess income (under the Deductible Guidelines). BEM 545.

Net income (countable income minus allowable income deductions) must be at or below a certain income limit for eligibility to exist. BEM 105. Income eligibility exists when net income does **not** exceed the Group 2 needs in BEM 544. BEM 166. The protected income level is a set allowance for non-medical need items such as shelter, food and incidental expenses. RFT 240 lists the Group 2 MA protected income levels based on shelter area and fiscal group size. BEM 544. An eligible Medical Assistance group (Group 2 MA) has income the same as or less than the “protected income level” as set forth in the policy contained in the Program Reference Table (RFT).

An individual or MA group whose income is in excess of the monthly protected income level is ineligible to receive MA. However, a MA group may become eligible for assistance under the deductible program. The deductible program is a process, which allows a client with excess income to be eligible for MA, if sufficient allowable medical expenses are incurred. Each calendar month is a separate deductible period. The fiscal group’s monthly excess income is called the deductible amount. Meeting a deductible means reporting and verifying allowable medical expenses that equal or exceed the deductible amount for the calendar month. The MA group must report expenses by the last day of the third month following the month it wants medical coverage. BEM 545; 42 CFR 435.831.

The claimant is disputing her increase in monthly deductible from \$58 to \$261. The department worker testified that the claimant receives employment income, income as an adult home help provider and child support. The claimant confirmed that the department was using the correct figures for her income.

The department worker explained that the difference in MA deductible was due to an error in the budgeting of the deductible. The department worker testified that the claimant’s adult home help provider income (\$274.66 monthly) had been erroneously included in the MA budget as a deduction (medical expense) as if the claimant was paying for adult home help, instead of being paid to provide home help. Once this mistake was corrected and the \$274.66 was included in the MA budget as income (not a medical deduction), the claimant’s deductible increased to \$261.

Thus, this Administrative Law Judge finds that the department is correctly budgeting the claimant’s MA deductible and acted in accordance with department policy.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides that the department properly budgeted the claimant’s MA deductible.

