STATE OF MICHIGAN MICHIGAN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING SYSTEM FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH

P.O. Box 30763, Lansing, MI 48909 (877) 833-0870; Fax: (517) 334-9505

IN THE MATTER OF:	
	Docket No. 2011-54497 TRN
	Case No.
Appellant	
/	

DECISION AND ORDER

This matter is before the undersigned Administ rative Law Judge (ALJ) pursuant to MCL 400.9 and 42 CFR 431.200 *et seq.*, upon the Appellant's request for a hearing.

After due notice, a hearing was held on	
appeared on his own behalf.	,
represented the Department.	appeared as a
witness on behalf of the Department.	The hearing record was left open through
for both parties to su	ıbmit additional documentation, which has been
received.	

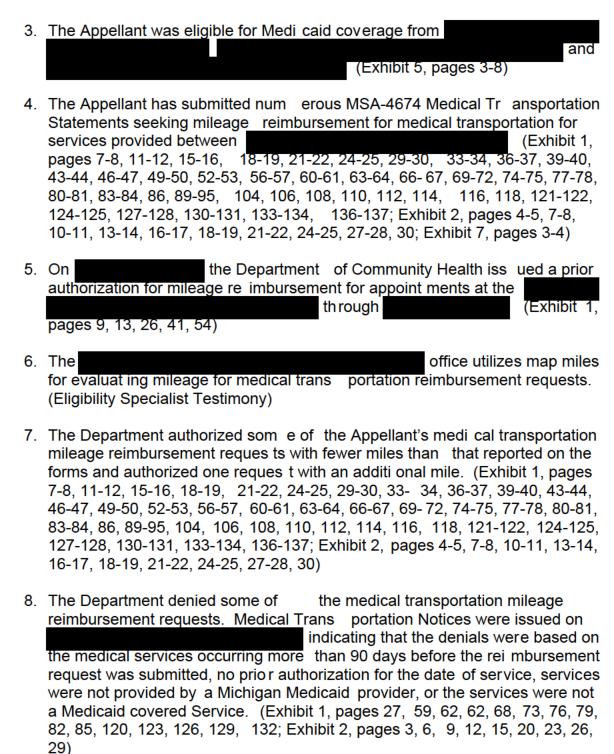
ISSUE

Did the Department properly process the Appellant's requests for medical transportation mileage reimbursement?

FINDINGS OF FACT

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

- The Appellant is a Medi caid beneficiary, who, at times, has had a monthly deductible, or spend-down, that must be met to be eligible for Medicaid for the remainder of each month.
- 2. The Appellant was enrolled in the MI Choice Waiv er from through During this time period the Appellant did not have a Medicaid spend-down. (Eligibility Specialist Testimony)



these requests. (Eligibility Specialist Testimony)

9. The Department mailed some requests for medical transportation mileage reimbursement back to the Appellant and did not is sue a denial notice for

the Appellant's Request for Hearing was received by the Michigan Administrative Hearing System. (Exh ibit 1, page 5)
The Department's Exhibit contained pr ior hearing re quests received by the Gogebic County Department of Human Services office on (Exhibit 1, pages 87 and 103) The Appellant provided copies of many additional hearing requests signed between and not all of which indicated a medical transportation issue was being contested. (Exhibit 4, pages 4, 7-17, 20, 23-28; Exhibit 6, page 14)

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Medicaid program was established pursuant to Title XIX of the Social Security Act (SSA) and is implemented by 42 USC 1396 *et seq.*, and Title 42 of the Code of Federa I Regulations (42 CFR 430 *et seq.*). The program is administer ed in acc ordance with state statute, the Social Welfare Act (MCL 400.1 *et seq.*), various portions of Michigan's Administrative Code (1979 AC, R 400.1101 *et seq.*), and the State Plan promulgated pursuant to Title XIX of the SSA.

The evidence documents that the Appellant had Medicaid coverage from through (Exhibit 5, pages 3-8) Only medical transportation mileage reimbursement requests and appeals during these timeframes can be reviewed.

The Appellant asserted that he request ed medical transportation mileage reimbursement as far back as and that he filed hearing requests contesting medical transportation determinations back to . The hearing record was left open, in part, for the Appellant to provide copies of any additional medical transportation statements and hearing requests. (Interim Order Leaving Re cord Open) The hearing requests in evidenc e were s igned by the Appellant bet ween (Exhibit 1, pages 5, 87, 103: Exhibit 4. pages 4. 7-17. 20. 23- 28: Exhibit 6, page 14) These hearing requests w ould not be timely to contest any medic al transportation determinations m ade in Further, there was no documentation submitted to support the Appellant's testimony that he submitted medical transportation mileage reimbursement requests in The exhibits document MSA-4674 Medica 1 Transportation Statements submitted for dates of service from (Exhibit 1, pages 7-8, 11-12, 15-16, 18-19, 21-22, 24-25, 29-30, 33-34, 36-37, 39-40, 43-44, 46-47, 49-50, 52-53, 56-57, 60-61, 63-64, 66-67, 69-72, 74-75, 77-78, 80-81, 83-84, 86, 89-95, 104, 106, 108, 110, 112, 114, 116, 118, 121-122, 124-125, 127-128, 130-131, 133-134, 136-137; Exhibit 2, pages 4-5, 7-8, 10-11, 13-14, 16-17. 18-19. 21-22. 24-25. 27-28. 30; Exhibit 7, pages 3-4) Accordingly, there is no jurisdiction to review medical transportation issues in

Policy addressing medical trans portation cove rage under the State Medicaid Plan is found in the Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), 825 Medical Transportation. The version of BAM 825 was still in effect in

COVERED MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION

Medical transportation is av ailable to obtain medical evidence or receive any MA-covered service from any MA-enrolled provider, including:

- Chronic and ongoing treatment.
- Prescriptions.
- Medical Supplies,
- Onetime, occasional and ongoing visits for medical care.

Exception: Payment may be made for transportation to VA hospitals and hospitals with do not charge for care (e.g., St. Jude Children's Hospital, Shrines Hospital).

MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION NOT COVERED

Do not authorize payment for the following:

- Transportation for noncovered services (e.g., AA meetings, medically unsupervise d weight reduction, trips to pharmacies for reasons ot her than obtaining MAcovered items).
- Reimbursement for transportation for episodic medical services and pharm acy visits that has already been provided.
- Transportation costs for long-te rm care (LTC) resident s. LTC facilities are expected to provide trans portation for services outside their facilities.
- Transportation costs to meet a client's personal choice of provider for routine medica I care outside the community when comparable care is av ailable locally. Encourage clients to obtain medical c are in their own community unless referred elsewhere by their local physician.
- DCH authorized transportation for client s enrolled in managed care is limit ed. See "CLIENTS IN AMNAGED CARE."

Exception: Dental, s ubstance abuse or c ommunity mental health ser vices are not provided by managed care; therefore, an DCH a uthorization for medical transportation for these services may still be necessary.

Transportation services that are billed dir ectly to MA.
 See "BILLED DIRECTLY TO DCH."

MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION EVALUATION

Evaluate a client's r equest for medical transportation to maximize use of existing community resources.

- If the client, or his/her relatives, etc. can provi expected to do so, it is reas onable to expect the expect of the client at no cost, it is reas onable to expect the is to continue, except in extreme circumstances or hardship.
 family, neighbors, friends, de transportation, they are without reimbursement. If transportation has been provided to the client at no cost, it is reas onable to expect the is to continue, except in extreme circumstances or hardship.
- Do not routinely author ize payment for medical transportation. Explore why transportation is needed and all alternatives to payment.
- Do not authorize pay ment for transportation unless first requested by the client.
- Use referrals to public or nonprofit agencies who provide transportation to meet i ndividual needs without reimbursement.
- Use free delivery services that are offered by a recipient's pharmacy.
- Use bus tickets or provide for ot her public transportation arrangements.
- Refer to volunteer s ervices or use state vehicles to transport the client if payment for a personal veh icle is not feasible.

LOCAL OFFICE PROCEDURES

It is essential that medical tr ansportation is administered in an equitable and consistent manner. It is important that local offices hav e procedur es to assure medic al transportation eligibility and that payment reflect policy. If such procedures do not exist, local office management is to initiate a process that supports this policy.

Transportation Coordination

IT is recommended that local/district offices institute a "transportation coordinator" to ensure that all nec essary tasks are done. This position would be responsible for establishing local procedures to assure the following:

- All requests for medical transportation are assessed a nd processed according to policy and local office procedures.
- Verification of current or pending MA on CIMS is available.
- The DHS-54A, Medical Needs, is given to eligible clients when required.
- Each client's need f or tr anspora6tion and access to resources are appropriately assessed.
- Maximum use is made of existing community transportation resources.

Note: Many transportation authorities will make tickets/passes available at spec ial rates. The transportation coordinator is encouraged to ne gotiate with the local transit authority and dev elop adm inistrative procedures for distribution to recipients.

In some areas, it may be cost effective for local offices to contract with local transit pr oviders for all or p art of transportation services in the local office, e.g. Agencies on Ageing, Intermediate School Districts, local CMHSP.

- Alternative transportation means are used.
- New Resources are develo ped within the community, including the use of social c ontract participants to act as scheduled, providers or in ot her supportive roles related to transportation activities of the local office.
- The De partment of Comm unity Hea Ith (DCH) is contacted for any required prior authorizations.
- Sufficient MSA-4674s, Medical Transportation Statement, are given to eligible clients.
- A centraliz ed proces s for returning com pleted MSA-4674s is developed and implemented.
- The amount of reimbursement is correct, authorization for payment is completed and forwarded to the fiscal unit, and payment is processed in a timely manner.
- A loca I office liaiso n exists for resolving transportati on payment disputes.

LOCAL OFFICE AUTHORIZATION

Travel-Related

Local offices may authorize and pay for the following. Prior authorization may be required. See "PRIOR AUTHORIZATION." Also see "CLIENTS IN MANAGED CARE."

 Travel for clients to receive any MA-covered service from any MA enrolled pr ovider. This inc ludes Early and Periodic Screening Diagnos is a nd Treatment (EPSDT) and Childr en's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS) for those clients who are dually eligible (Medicare/Medicaid).

Some local health departments provide reimbursement for transportation to clie nts for EPSDT scr eenings or the Maternal and Infant Support Services (MOMS) program. Check with your local health department prior to authorization to guard against duplicate payments.

Travel for methadone treatment for up to 18 months. Travel for methadone treatment ext ending beyond 18 months must be prior authorized. The 18 months are nonconsecutive (will not start over due to a break in treatment). Reimburse travel to receive methadone treatment at the least expensive cost. Use bus tokens or expect the client to car-pool, if feasible.

- Travel and a fee for an a ttendant/travel aide needed to accompany a recipient needing special assistance during transport.
- Travel for a parent, relative, guardian or attendant who is accompanying a client who is a minor child.
- Travel for family members of clients who are children in an inpatient hospital treatment program, if the family members are part of a struct ured treatment or therapy program.
- Travel for one trip for ex amination and one trip per Medical Review Team (MRT) recommendation for clients claiming disability or blindness.
- Travel within or outside t he normal service deliv ery area including borderland outstate travel (local offices have responsibility for defining normal service delivery area).

Payment Authorization

Authorize payment for medica I transportation beginning the month the client reported the need.

At application, do not authorize payment earlier than the MA begin date. If program eligibil ity is denied, only aut horize payment for transportation to obtain medical evidence.

Some transportation services require prior authorization. See "**PRIOR AUTHORIZATION**" below.

Prior Authorization

All prior authorization request must be submitted before the service is provided a nd payment is made. Exception s will only be granted for emergen cy situations or when extenuating circumstances exist and are clearly documented.

No payment will be made for requests submitted one month or more after the service is provided.

The following transportati on expenses require prior authorization from DCH:

- All out of state that is non-borderland (see BAM 402).
- Overnight stays if within 50 miles from recipients home (one way).
- Overnight stays beyond five days (14 day s for U of M MOTT Children's pediatric Hospital).
- Overnight stays or travel outside the normal service delivery area in expenses for two or more family members are included.
- Special allowances when tw o or more attendants are medically necessary.
- Mileage and food costs for daily long distance trips.
- Methadone treatment that extends beyond 18 mont hs (DCH/CMH).

It is important that doc umentation include the **specific reason(s)** why the client requires special transpor tation. Attach the following to the DHS-54A:

- Client name.
- Case Number.
- Recipient ID number.
- Client address.
- Effective travel date.

- Destinatio n.
- Diag nosis.
- Specific reason/need for special transportation.
- Specialist name and telephone number.
- Prior Authorization may be requested f or up to six months in cases where pr olonged treatment requires multiple transports.

REIMBURSEABLE EXPENSES

Compute the cost of the client's medical transportation when you receiv e the verification that transportation has been provided.

Calculate the total number of r ound trip miles traveled. Use the distance from the client's home to the medical services destination(s) and back to the c lient's home. Accept any reasonable client or transporter statement of the mileage. Otherwise, use map miles to determine mileage.

Vehicle Rates

The following are reimbursement rates for travel by vehicle are effective October 1, 2005:

- Ticket charge per person (one way or round trip) for intercity bus transportation.
- Round trip rate of \$30 and \$.27 cents per mile for commercial non-emergency medical trans port vehicles specially equipped or des igned to accommodate nonambulatopry (unable to walk) clients)
- \$.18 cents per mile for all **personal** vehicles if alternative transportation is not av ailable and milea ge reimbursement is necessary. This includes the client, relatives, friends, neighbors, etc.
- \$.27 cents per mile is only for:
 - Commercial non-emergency transport vehicles.
 - Nonprofit agencies.
 - o Taxis.
 - Vans op erated by medica I fa cilities or public entities such as health agencies.

 \$.328 per mile for registered volunteer services drivers and foster care parents.

Payment Authorization

MSA-4674

Use the MSA-4674, Medical Transportation Statement, to:

- Authorize payment for routine travel expenses that do not require advance payment,
- Verify that transportation was provided.

Use an MSA-4674 to authoriz e payment whenever a les s expensive means for medical transportation is not otherwise available. Use comparable doc umentation from the provider and/or transporter if the cli ent is unable to obtain the MSA-4674 prior to a medical visit.

A separate MSA-4674 is required for each medical provider or transporter. Chronic and ongoing treatment to the **same provider** may have more than 5 multiple trips within a calendar month reflected on the MSA-4674-A, Medica I Transportation Statement - Chronic and Ongoing Treatment; see Reference Forms & Publications (RFF) manual.

You must receive the MSA- 4674 within 90 days from the date of service in order to aut horize payment. Do not make payment less frequently than monthly.

Exception: An MSA-4674 is not r equired for volunteer services dr ivers if an DHS-468 1, Volunteer Transportation Request/Authorization, is submitted for payment to the local office fiscal unit.

The client and medic al provider(s) (or their staff) must sign the form. The transporter must sign if payment is to be issued to the transporter, except for mass transit transporters.

> Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), 825 Medical Transportation Pages 1- 11 of 17, August 1, 2008

While there have been three updates, most of the medical transportation policy has remained substantially the same. The change relevant to the issues rais ed by the Appellant was an inc rease in the vehicle rate for personal vehicles to \$.24 cents per mile effective Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 825 Medical I Transportation, Pages 1-17, January 1, 2010, Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 825 Medical Transportation, Pages 1-17, March 1, 2010, and Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 825 Medical Transportation, Pages 1-17, January 1, 2011. The January 1, 2011, version of BAM 825 currently remains in effect.

The Appellant has submitted numerous M SA-4674 Medical Transportation Statements seeking m ileage reimbursement for medica. I trans portation for services provided between J anuary 2009 and September 2011. (Exhib it 1, pages 7-8, 11 -12, 15-16, 18-19, 21-22, 24-25, 29-30, 33-34, 36-37, 39-40, 43-44, 46-47, 49-50, 52-53, 56-57, 60-61, 63-64, 66-67, 69-72, 74-75, 77-78, 80-81, 83-84, 86, 89-95, 104, 106, 108, 110, 112, 114, 116, 118, 121-122, 124-125, 127-128, 130-131, 133-134, 136-137; Exhibit 2, pages 4-5, 7-8, 10-11, 13-14, 16-17, 18-19, 21-22, 24-25, 27-28, 30; Exhibit 7, pages 3-4) Several issues were raised r egarding the Department 's processing and determinations.

Prior Authorization

In accordance with the BAM 825 policy, prio r authorization was sought for trips to a not within the borderland area. clinic in Wisconsin that is (Eligibility Specialist the Depart ment of Community Health iss ued a prior Testimony) On authorization for mileage reimbu resement for appoint ments at the Marshfield Clinic in Wisconsin from . (Exhibit 1, pages 9, 13, 26, 41, 54) The Department properly au thorized mileage reim bursement for trips to this clinic within the prior authorization period. The Department i ssued Medical Transportation s Notices denying mileage reimbu reement requests for dates of services not covered by this prior authorization. (Exhibit 1, pages 27, 76, 79, 85, 129; Exhibit 2, pages 6, 9, 29) Denials of mileage reimbursement for dates of service prior to the through authorization period must be upheld.

Calculation of Round Trip Miles

The Goge bic Cou nty Department of Human Services office utilizes map miles for evaluating mileage for medical transportati on reim bursement requests. (Eligibilit y Specialist Testimony) For most trips, the Department's calculation reduced the Appellant's reported round trip miles. For one trip, the Department's calculation added one mile to the Appellant's reported round trip mileage. (Exhibit 1, pages 29-31)

The BAM 825 policy supports local offices developing their own procedures to assure medical transportation is administered in an equitable and consistent manner. The policy regarding calculating the total number of round trip miles is not clear because two opposing interpretations are pos sible. First, the policy could be interpreted as stating

that map miles shou ld only be utilized when the client or transporter statements of mileage are not reasonable. Second, the policy could be interpreted as stating that map miles can always be utilized to determine mil eage in place of client or transporter statements. Under the second interpretation, there is support in the policy for utilizing map miles rather than client statements. Ut ilizing map miles for all Medica Transportation Statements would result in equitable and consis tent determinations. Further, the documentation indicates that the Appellant's reported mileage would not be considered reasonable when the map mileages are significantly and consistently fewer. For example, the shorter trips between Ir onwood, Michigan and Wakefield, Michigan were consistently reported as 25 miles each way compared to the map mileage of 17.26 miles, and the longer trips between Minocqua, Wisconsin and Wakefield, Michigan were reported as 110 or 120 miles c ompared to the map mileage of 99.36 mile s. (Exhibit 1, pages 7-14, 18-28) The adjustments of the Appellant's reported mileage to map mile s for authorized reimbursements is upheld.

Reimbursement Rate

The App ellant also q uestioned the reimbursement rate utilized by the Department. It appears that some of the mileage reimburse ment requests were submitted on an older version of the MSA-4674 Medical Transportation Statement form, which reflected a higher mileage reimbursement rate. The Department must authorize mileage reimbursement at the rates set out in the policy. The \$.505 rate listed on the September 2008 version of the MSA-4674 Medical Transportation Statement was not in effect at the time the medical I transportation requests and dates of service at issue for this hearing were submitted. The Department is not bound by a mileage rate on an old version of a form. The Department's calculation of mileage re imbursement utilizing the mileage rates found in the policity at the time is the Appellant's Medical Transportation Statements were submitted is also upheld.

More than 90 Days from Date of Servic e to Subm ission of Medical Transportation Statement

Many of the Medical Transporta tion Notices indicated the denials were issued because the Appellant's Medi cal Transportation Statements were received more than 90 days after the dates of services. (Exhibit 1, pages 59, 62, 65, 68, 73, 82; Exhibit 2, pages 3, 12, 15, 20, 23, 26) The payment authorization policy specifies that the Department must receive the MSA-4674 within 90 days from the date of service in order to authorize payment. The Appellant submitted several MSA-4674 Medical Transportation Statements well beyond the 90 day timeframe. For example, on Appellant submitted MSA-4674 Medical Transportation Statements for dates of service in (Exhibit 1, pages 69-70) The medical transportation reimbursement denials based on the request being submitted more than 90 days after the date services were provided are upheld.

Non-Michigan Medicaid Providers and Services Not Covered by Medicaid

Several denials were also i ssued because the medic al services were not provided by Michigan Medicaid enrolled prov iders or were not Medicaid covered services. (Exhibit 1, pages 120, 123, 126, 132) The covered medical transportation policy specifies that medical transportation is available for an y Medicaid covered se rvice from enrolled providers. Accordingly, the medical transportation reimbursement denials based on services not provided by Michigan Medic aid enrolled provider s or for services not covered by Medicaid are upheld.

Pharmacy Trips

Some MSA-4674 Medical Trans portation Statements for pharmacy trips were included in the Department's exhibits. (Exhibit 1, pages 46-47, 49-50, 56-57, 60-61, 63-64, 66-67, 69-72, 74-75, 83-84, 89, 110, 112; Exhibit 2, pages 4-5, 13-14, 16-19, 21-22, 24-25, 27-28, Exhibit 7, pages 3-4) Some were authorized but for fewer miles based on map mileage. Some were denied as they were submitted beyond 90 days for the dates of services. However, the Department has not been consistent in how it processed mileage reimbursement requests for pharmacy trips.

The Eligib ility Spec ialist's testimony indicated that some requests for medica I transportation mileage reimburse ment were mailed back to the Appellant without being processed and without a written denial notice for these requests. He indicated this was based on a supervisor's position that trips to the pharmacy are not covered. (Eligibility Specialist Testim ony) The mileage reimbursem ent requests submitted on appear to fall into this category. (Exhibit 1, page 89; Exhibit 7, pages 3-4) Effectively the Department denied these requests without issuing written denial notices.

The polic y regarding covered medical tr ansportation policy clearly include s prescriptions. An exception is included in the medical transportation not covered section addressing trips to the pharmacy fo r non-Medicaid covered items. Another exception is found in the medical transportation evaluation section, addressing when free delivery services are offered by the pharmacy. However, there does not appear to have been any findings by the Department to hat any of the exceptions for pharmacy coverage applied to the MSA-4674 Medical Transportation Statements.

While there are some exceptions to medical transportation coverage for pharmacy trips, the Department erred by not processing s ubmitted mileage reimbursement requests for pharmacy trips and mailing these requests back to the Appellant. The Department shall process the Appellant's MSA-4674 Medical T ransportation Statements requesting m ileage reimbursement for pharmacy trips.

DECISION AND ORDER

Date Mailed:

law, de Statem	dministrative Law Judge, based on the above findings of fact and con clusions of ecides that the D epartment properly process ed the Medical Transportation nents requesting mileage reim bursement, with the ex ception of the and MSA-4674 Medical portation Statements requesting mileage reimbursement for pharmacy trips.
IT IS T	HEREFORE ORDERED that:
	The Department's decis ion is PARTIAL LY AF FIRMED and PARTIAL LY REVERSED. The Department is ordered to process the Appellant's and MSA-4674 Medical T ransportation Statements r equesting m ileage reimbursement for pharmacy trips. The Department must iss ue written notice of any determination sto deny the requested mileage reimbursement for medical transportation.
	Colleen Lack Administrative Law Judge for Olga Dazzo, Director Michigan Department of Community Health
cc:	

*** NOTICE ***

The Michigan Administrative Hearing System may order a rehearing on either its own motion or at the request of a party within 30 days of the mailing date of this Decision and Order. The Michigan Administrative Hearing System will not order a rehearing on the Department's motion where the final decision or rehearing cannot be implemented within 90 days of the filing of the original request. The Appellant may appeal the Decision and Order to Circuit Court within 30 days of the receipt of the Decision and Order or, if a timely request for rehearing was made, within 30 days of the receipt of the rehearing decision.