

**STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING SYSTEM
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No: 201225109
Issue No: 2006, 3000
Case No: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: February 28, 2012
Macomb County DHS

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Kevin Scully

HEARING DECISION

This matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge by authority of MCL 400.9 and MCL 400.37. Claimant's request for a hearing was received on December 28, 2011. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on Tuesday, February 28, 2012.

ISSUE

Whether the Department of Human Services (Department) properly determined the Claimant's Medical Assistance (MA) eligibility?

FINDINGS OF FACT

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

1. The Claimant applied for Food Assistance Program (FAP) and Medical Assistance (MA) on July 5, 2011.
2. The Claimant receives monthly [REDACTED] benefits in the gross monthly amount of [REDACTED].
3. The Claimant's wife receives monthly [REDACTED] benefits in the gross monthly amount of [REDACTED].
4. The Claimant receives monthly [REDACTED] in the gross monthly amount of [REDACTED].
5. The Department completed a MA budget that determined the Claimant was eligible for MA benefits with a [REDACTED] deductible.

6. The Department received the Claimant's request for a hearing on December 28, 2011, protesting her Medical Assistance deductible.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Food Assistance Program (FAP) (formerly known as the Food Stamp program, is established by the Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended, and is implemented by the federal regulations contained in Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The Department of Human Services (DHS or Department), administers the FAP program pursuant to MCL 400.10, et seq., and MAC R 400.3001-3015. Department policies are found in the Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), the Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM), Reference Table Manual (RFT), and the Bridges Reference Manual (BRM).

The Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 600, p. 4, provides in relevant part as follows:

The client or authorized hearing representative has 90 calendar days from the date of the written notice of case action to request a hearing. The request must be received anywhere in DHS within the 90 days.

In this case, the Claimant applied for Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits on July 5, 2011, and the Department denied the application due to excess income. The Department received the Claimant's request for a hearing on December 28, 2011, protesting the denial of his Food Assistance Program (FAP) application. The Claimant's hearing request is denied with respect to the Food Assistance Program (FAP) because this Administrative Law Judge lacks the jurisdiction to her or decide this matter.

The Claimant was approved for Medical Assistance (MA) with a patient deductible. Since this is an ongoing benefit, the Claimant has the right to protest the calculation of his Medical Assistance (MA) deductible.

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), Reference Table Manual (RFT), and the Bridges Reference Manual (BRM).

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. 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.

A review of claimant’s case reveals that the Department budgeted correct amount of income received by the Claimant. Claimant’s “protected income level” is [REDACTED], and this amount cannot be changed either by the Department or by this Administrative Law Judge. Department’s determination that the Claimant has a [REDACTED] deductible per month she must meet in order to qualify for MA for any medical expenses above is therefore correct.

The Claimant did not protest the income used by the Department to determine his benefits but instead argued that he could not afford his medical bills with such a high deductible.

The claimant’s grievance centers on dissatisfaction with the Department’s current policy. The claimant’s request is not within the scope of authority delegated to this Administrative Law Judge. Administrative Law Judges have no authority to make decisions on constitutional grounds, overrule statutes, overrule promulgated regulations, or make exceptions to the department policy set out in the program manuals. Furthermore, administrative adjudication is an exercise of executive power rather than judicial power, and restricts the granting of equitable remedies. *Michigan Mutual Liability Co. v Baker*, 295 Mich 237; 294 NW 168 (1940).

The Department has established that it properly determined that the Claimant’s Medical Assistance (MA) deductible.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides that the Department acted in accordance with policy in determining the Claimant's MA eligibility.

The Department's MA eligibility determination is **AFFIRMED**. It is SO ORDERED.

/s/ _____
Kevin Scully
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura D. Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: March 6, 2012

Date Mailed: March 6, 2012

NOTICE: Administrative Hearings may order a rehearing or reconsideration on either its own motion or at the request of a party within 30 days of the mailing date of this Decision and Order. Administrative Hearings will not order a rehearing or reconsideration on the Department's motion where the final decision cannot be implemented within 60 days of the filing of the original request.

The Claimant 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 date of the rehearing decision.

KS/tb

cc:

