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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
MICHIGAN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING SYSTEM
Christopher Seppanen
Executive Director

SHELLY EDGERTON
DIRECTOR

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Date Mailed: June 14, 2016
MAHS Docket Nos.: 15-026541;
15-026542; 15-026539; and 15-026540
Agency No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioners: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Alice C. Elkin

HEARING DECISION

Pursuant to a September 8, 2014, federal lawsuit, the Department of Health and Human Services (Department) issued notices to Medicaid applicants who were potentially denied full Medicaid coverage based on immigration status between January 2014 and May 2015. The notice included information about how to request a hearing. Petitioner filed a request for a hearing; and accordingly, this matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to Michigan Administrative Hearing Rules (R 792.10101 – R 792.11903) and the Administrative Procedures Act, 1969 PA 306, as amended, MCL 24.201 *et seq.*

After due notice, a telephone hearing was held via 4-way telephone conference on June 6, 2016, from Detroit, Michigan. Petitioners' cases were consolidated. Petitioners were represented by Petitioner [REDACTED] (BT), husband of Petitioner [REDACTED] (ST) and father of Petitioners [REDACTED] (NT) and [REDACTED] (RT). The Department was represented by [REDACTED], Eligibility Specialist. Fwechhya Bheattraai served as translator [REDACTED] during the hearing.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly determine Petitioner's immigration status or citizenship when determining Medicaid (MA) eligibility?

FINDINGS OF FACT

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

1. On December 4, 2014, Petitioners filed a federal marketplace application seeking health care coverage (Exhibit A, pp. 5-20).
2. On the date of application, Petitioners were not United States citizens.
3. The Department approved Petitioners for Emergency Services Only (ESO) MA coverage effective January 1, 2014 ongoing (Exhibit A, pp. 19-21).
4. On an unknown date, the Department notified Petitioners that they may have been denied full MA coverage based on immigration status between January 2014 and May 2015 (Exhibit A, p. 3).
5. On September 8, 2015, Petitioners requested hearings (Exhibit A, p. 2; Exhibit B, p. 2; Exhibit C, p. 2; Exhibit D, p. 2).

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Department policies are contained in the Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM), Department of Health and Human Services Reference Tables Manual (RFT), Department of Health and Human Services Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) Related Eligibility Manual (MREM), and Department of Health and Human Services Emergency Relief Manual (ERM).

The Medical Assistance (MA) program is established by Title XIX of the Social Security Act, 42 USC 1396-1396w-5; 42 USC 1315; the Affordable Care Act of 2010, the collective term for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Pub. L. No. 111-148, as amended by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-152; and 42 CFR 430.10-.25. The Department administers the MA program pursuant to 42 CFR 435, MCL 400.10, and MCL 400.105-.112k.

In this case, Petitioners requested hearings to dispute the Department granting them ESO MA rather than full-coverage MA. To be eligible for full-coverage MA, a person must be a U.S. citizen or an alien admitted to the U.S. under a specific immigration status. BEM 225 (January 2014), p. 2. An individual who is a permanent resident alien with a class code on the permanent residency card other than RE, AM or AS is eligible only for ESO MA coverage for the first five years in the U.S. unless the alien is a qualified military alien or the spouse or dependent child of a qualified military alien. BEM 225, pp. 7-8, 30; MREM, § 3.6. A qualified military alien is a qualified alien on active duty in, or veteran honorably discharged from, the U.S. Armed Forces. BEM 225, p. 5; MREM, § 3.6. A person who does not meet an acceptable alien status, including undocumented aliens and non-immigrants who have stayed beyond the period authorized by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, are eligible only for ESO MA coverage. BEM 225, p. 9. The alien status of each non-citizen must be verified to be eligible for full MA coverage. BEM 225, p. 2.

At the hearing, the Department testified that after Petitioners filed their hearing request, it reassessed their MA eligibility. Because Petitioners were permanent resident aliens and refugees with a category code of RE (Exhibit A, p. 30; Exhibit B, p. 30; Exhibit C, p. 30; Exhibit D, p. 30), the Department acknowledged that they were eligible for full-coverage MA.

The Department testified that it converted their improper ESO coverage to full-coverage MA for the period for January 2014 through December 2015. All Petitioners had active full-coverage during that period other than Petitioner ST, whose MA coverage was subject to a deductible and showed as active only for those months that she met her deductible. The Department sent Petitioners BT, NT and RT a March 28, 2016 Benefit Notice advising them that they were eligible for full-coverage MA between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2015 (Exhibit A, pp. 28-29; Exhibit C, pp. 29 -29; Exhibit D, pp. 28-29). It sent Petitioner ST a March 28, 2016 Benefit Notice advising her that she was eligible for full-coverage from January 1, 2014 through January 31, 2015 and for April 2015. The Department explained that ST did not meet her deductible for the other months in 2015. The Department presented a Medicaid eligibility summary showing coverage consistent with its testimony (Exhibit A, pp. 21-23; Exhibit B, pp. 21-23; Exhibit C, pp. 21-23; Exhibit D, pp. 21-23). Therefore, the Department established that it properly corrected Petitioners' MA coverage based on their status as refugees from the date they were first approved in January 2014 through December 2015.

The Department testified that Petitioners' MA cases closed effective December 31, 2015 because they were found ineligible for MA due to excess income and assets. Because the case closures involved reasons unrelated to Petitioners' immigration status, the case closures are not within the scope of the hearing request and, as such, are not addressed in this Hearing Decision.

The Administrative Law Judge, based on the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, if any, finds that the Department properly determined Petitioners' immigration status or citizenship when determining MA eligibility.

DECISION AND ORDER

Accordingly, the Department's determination about MA eligibility based on immigration status is **AFFIRMED**.



ACE/tlf

Alice C. Elkin

Administrative Law Judge
for Nick Lyon, Director
Department of Health and Human Services

NOTICE OF APPEAL: A party may appeal this Order in circuit court within 30 days of the receipt date. A copy of the circuit court appeal must be filed with the Michigan Administrative Hearing System (MAHS).

A party may request a rehearing or reconsideration of this Order if the request is received by MAHS within 30 days of the date the Order was issued. The party requesting a rehearing or reconsideration must provide the specific reasons for the request. MAHS will not review any response to a request for rehearing/reconsideration.

A written request may be mailed or faxed to MAHS. If submitted by fax, the written request must be faxed to (517) 335-6088; Attention: MAHS Rehearing/Reconsideration Request.

If submitted by mail, the written request must be addressed as follows:

Michigan Administrative Hearings
Reconsideration/Rehearing Request
P.O. Box 30639
Lansing, Michigan 48909-8139

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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