



RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
MICHIGAN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING SYSTEM

SHELLY EDGERTON  
DIRECTOR



Date Mailed: April 6, 2018  
MAHS Docket No.: 18-001291  
Agency No.: [REDACTED]  
Petitioner: [REDACTED]

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Ellen McLemore**

**HEARING DECISION**

Following Petitioner's request for a hearing, this matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9 and 400.37; 7 CFR 273.15 to 273.18; 42 CFR 431.200 to 431.250; 42 CFR 438.400 to 438.424; 45 CFR 99.1 to 99.33; and 45 CFR 205.10; and Mich Admin Code, R 792.11002. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on April 5, 2018, from Detroit, Michigan. Petitioner was present and represented himself. The Department of Health and Human Services (Department) was represented by Eric Murphy, Eligibility Specialist.

**ISSUE**

Did the Department properly close Petitioner's Medical Assistance (MA) benefit case?

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

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

1. Petitioner was an ongoing MA recipient under the Healthy Michigan Plan (HMP) program.
2. At some point, a redetermination was completed related to Petitioner's MA benefit case.
3. Petitioner was not married and did not claim any other dependents on his taxes.
4. On January 18, 2018, the Department sent Petitioner a Health Care Coverage Determination Notice informing Petitioner that his MA benefit case was closing effective February 1, 2018, ongoing (Exhibit A).
5. On January 31, 2018, Petitioner submitted a request for hearing.

## **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), 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 (formerly known as the Department of Human Services) administers the MA program pursuant to 42 CFR 435, MCL 400.10, and MCL 400.105-.112k.

In this case, Petitioner requested a hearing disputing the Department's decision to close his MA benefit case. Petitioner was an ongoing MA recipient under the HMP program. Petitioner completed a redetermination and his MA eligibility was review by the Department. On January 18, 2018, the Department advised Petitioner his MA benefit case was closing effective February 1, 2018, ongoing.

The Department concluded that Petitioner was not eligible for HMP because his income exceeded the applicable income limit for his group size. HMP uses a Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) methodology. BEM 137 (October 2016), p. 1. An individual is eligible for HMP if his household's income does not exceed 133% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) applicable to the individual's group size. BEM 137, p. 1. An individual's group size for MAGI-related purposes requires consideration of the client's tax filing status. In this case, Petitioner filed taxes and did not claim any dependents. Therefore, for HMP purposes, he has a household size of one. BEM 211 (January 2016), pp. 1-2.

133% of the annual FPL in 2017 for a household with one member is \$16,039.80. See <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>. Therefore, to be income eligible for HMP, Petitioner's annual income cannot exceed \$16,039.80. To determine financial eligibility under HMP, income must be calculated in accordance with MAGI under federal tax law. BEM 500 (July 2017), p. 3. MAGI is based on Internal Revenue Service rules and relies on federal tax information. BEM 500, p. 3. Income is verified via electronic federal data sources in compliance with MAGI methodology. MREM, § 1.

In order to determine income in accordance with MAGI, a client's adjusted gross income (AGI) is added to any tax-exempt foreign income, tax-exempt Social Security benefits, and tax-exempt interest. AGI is found on IRS tax form 1040 at line 37, form 1040 EZ at line 4, and form 1040A at line 21. Alternatively, it is calculated by taking the "federal taxable wages" for each income earner in the household as shown on the paystub or, if not shown on the paystub, by using gross income before taxes reduced by any money

the employer takes out for health coverage, child care, or retirement savings. This figure is multiplied by the number of paychecks the client expects in 2018 to estimate income for the year. See <https://www.healthcare.gov/income-and-household-information/how-to-report/>.

The Department testified that it used pay statements that Petitioner submitted in June 2017. The pay statements show that Petitioner receives income from employment in the amount of \$320.40 per week. Petitioner stated he is always paid the same amount each week. The Department stated it calculated Petitioner's monthly income to be \$1,377.72, and therefore, he exceeded the income limit under the HMP program. The Department presented the employment budget summary for Petitioner's case which shows the monthly budget amount is \$1,377.72. However, it states that the monthly budget amount for MA is \$1,281.60 (Exhibit C). The \$1,377.72 figure is Petitioner's weekly income multiplied by the 4.3 multiplier, which is how a monthly income budget is calculated for other programs including the Food Assistance Program. MA benefit cases do not use the multipliers. When using the MAGI methodology as stated above, Petitioner's weekly payment of \$320.40 multiplied by 52 (the number of pay checks Petitioner would expect to receive in a year, as he is paid weekly) results in the total income amount of \$16,660.80 per year, which exceeds the income limit for a group size of one under the HMP program.

For MAGI-related MA programs, the Department allows a 5 percent disregard in the amount equal to five percent of the FPL level for the applicable family size. BEM 500 (July 2017), p. 5. It is not a flat 5 percent disregard from the income. BEM 500, p. 5. The 5 percent disregard is applied to the highest income threshold. BEM 500, p. 5. The 5 percent disregard shall be applied only if required to make someone eligible for MA benefits. BEM 500, p. 5.

5 percent of the FPL for a group size of one is \$801.99. Petitioner's yearly income of \$16,660.80 reduced by \$801.99 is \$15,858.80, which is below the income limit under the HMP program for a group size of one. Therefore, the Department did not act in accordance with policy when it closed Petitioner's MA benefit case.

### **DECISION AND ORDER**

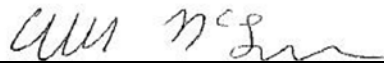
The Administrative Law Judge, based on the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, if any, finds that the Department did not act in accordance with Department policy when it closed Petitioner's MA benefit case.

Accordingly, the Department's decision is **REVERSED**.

THE DEPARTMENT IS ORDERED TO BEGIN DOING THE FOLLOWING, IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEPARTMENT POLICY AND CONSISTENT WITH THIS HEARING DECISION, WITHIN 10 DAYS OF THE DATE OF MAILING OF THIS DECISION AND ORDER:

1. Redetermine Petitioner's MA eligibility as of February 1, 2018, ongoing;
2. Provide Petitioner with MA benefits he is entitled to receive as of February 1, 2018, ongoing; and
3. Notify Petitioner of its MA decision in writing.

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**Ellen McLemore**  
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

**Via Email:**

MDHHS-Wayne-41-Hearings  
M. Best  
EQAD  
BSC4- Hearing Decisions  
MAHS

**Petitioner – Via First-Class Mail:**

