

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
MICHIGAN OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS AND RULES

ORLENE HAWKS
DIRECTOR

[REDACTED] MI [REDACTED]

Date Mailed: August 28, 2019
MOAHR Docket No.: 19-005813
Agency No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioner: [REDACTED]

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Kevin Scully

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; 45 CFR 99.1 to 99.33; and 45 CFR 205.10. A hearing scheduled for July 3, 2019, was adjourned for an in-person hearing at Petitioner's request. After due notice, an in-person hearing was held on August 7, 2019, from Ithaca, Michigan. Petitioner represented himself. The Department was represented by Garilee Janofski and Katie Marks.

ISSUE

Did the Department of Health and Human Services (Department) properly close Petitioner's Medical Assistance (MA) benefits?

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 Medical Assistance (MA) recipient on March 13, 2019, when the Department received his Redetermination (DHS-1010) form. Exhibit A, pp 1-8.
2. Petitioner receives monthly earned income in the gross monthly amount of \$841. Exhibit A, p 9.
3. Petitioner receives monthly Retirement, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (RS DI) in the gross monthly amount of \$976. Exhibit A, p 15.
4. Petitioner receives monthly pension income in the gross monthly amount of \$25. Exhibit A, p 15.
5. On April 19, 2019, the Department notified Petitioner that he was not eligible for Medical Assistance (MA) as of May 1, 2019. Exhibit A, pp 10-14.

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.

The income limit to participate in the Healthy Michigan Plan (HMP) is 133% of the federal poverty level. Department of Health and Human Services Reference Table Manual (RFT) 246 (April 1, 2014), p 1.

MAGI for purposes of Medicaid eligibility is a methodology which state agencies and the federally facilitated marketplace (FFM) must use to determine financial eligibility. It is based on Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules and relies on federal tax information to determine adjusted gross income. It eliminates asset tests and special deductions or disregards. Every individual is evaluated for eligibility based on MAGI rules. The MAGI rules are aligned with the income rules that will be applied for determination of eligibility for premium tax credits and cost-sharing reductions through exchanges. Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) 500 (January 1, 2016), pp 3-4.

Modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) is a methodology for how income is counted and how household composition and family size are determined. It is based on federal tax rules for determining adjusted gross income. It eliminates asset tests and special deductions or disregards. Every individual is evaluated for eligibility based on MAGI rules. The MAGI rules are aligned with the income rules that will be applied for determination of eligibility for premium tax credits and cost-sharing reductions through exchanges. The 5% disregard is the amount equal to 5% of the Federal Poverty Level for the applicable family size. It is not a flat 5% disregard from the income. The 5% disregard shall be applied to the highest income threshold. The 5% disregard shall be applied only if required to make someone eligible for Medicaid.¹

Household income is the sum of the MAGI-based income of every individual included in the individual's household, minus an amount equivalent to 5 percentage points of the Federal poverty level for the applicable family size. 42 CFR 435.603.

¹ Department of Health and Human Services Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) Related Eligibility Manual, pp 14-15. This manual is available on the internet at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/MAGI_Manual_457706_7.pdf

The size of the household will be determined by the principles of tax dependency in the majority of cases. Individual family members may be eligible under different categories. For tax filers and non-tax filers, the household includes the individual and the individual's spouse. MAGI Manual, p 12.

Petitioner was an ongoing recipient of MA benefits until May 1, 2019, when the Department closed his benefits because his modified adjusted gross income exceeds 133% of the federal poverty level, and the 5% disregard does not make him eligible for benefits.

The evidence supports a finding that Petitioner resides with his wife. This Administrative Law Judge finds no basis in Department policy for determining Petitioner's eligibility for HMP benefits as a group of one. Petitioner may or may not be eligible for MA with his wife added to his benefit group, but Department policy directs the Department to determine eligibility based on tax dependency rules.

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 determined Petitioner's eligibility for Medical Assistance (MA) as of May 1, 2019.

DECISION AND ORDER

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. Give Petitioner a ten-day period to verify all countable household income.
2. Initiate a determination of Petitioner's eligibility for May 1, 2019.
3. Provide Petitioner with written notice describing the Department's revised eligibility determination.
4. Issue Petitioner any retroactive benefits he may be eligible to receive, if any.

KS/hb


Kevin Scully
Administrative Law Judge
for Robert Gordon, 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 Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules (MOAHR).

A party may request a rehearing or reconsideration of this Order if the request is received by MOAHR 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. MOAHR will not review any response to a request for rehearing/reconsideration.

A written request may be mailed or faxed to MOAHR. If submitted by fax, the written request must be faxed to (517) 763-0155; Attention: MOAHR Rehearing/Reconsideration Request.

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

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

DHHS

Garilee Janofski
201 Commerce Dr
Ithaca, MI 48847

Gratiot County, DHHS

BSC2 via electronic mail

D. Smith via electronic mail

EQADHShearings via electronic mail

Petitioner

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