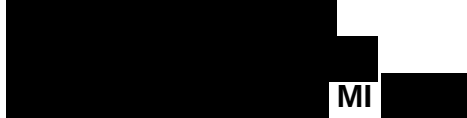




GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

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

MARLON I. BROWN, DPA
ACTING DIRECTOR



Date Mailed: November 21, 2023
MOAHR Docket No.: 23-006562
Agency No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioner: [REDACTED]

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Amanda M. T. Marler

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 November 13, 2023. The Petitioner was self-represented. The Department of Health and Human Services (Department) was represented by Haysem Hosny, Hearings Coordinator.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly close Petitioner's Medical Assistance (MA) Program Healthy Michigan Plan (HMP) case due to excess income?

FINDINGS OF FACT

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

1. Under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), PL 116-127, Michigan received additional federal MA funding during the COVID-19 pandemic health emergency (PHE).
2. As a condition for receiving the increased funding, § 6008 of the FFCRA required that MDHHS provide continuous MA coverage for individuals who were enrolled in MA on or after March 18, 2020, even if those individuals became ineligible for MA for reasons other than death, residing outside of Michigan, or requesting that MA be discontinued.

3. The MA continuous coverage requirement under § 6008 of the FFCRA was not indefinite.
4. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (CAA, 2023), PL 117-328, terminated the continuous coverage requirement effective March 31, 2023.
5. Beginning April 1, 2023, the CAA, 2023 required MDHHS to reevaluate almost all MA recipients' eligibility for ongoing MA.
6. Petitioner's wife had the following income:

September 29	\$	
October 6	\$	
October 13	\$	
October 20	\$	
7. Petitioner has one son aged ■, one son aged ■, and one daughter aged ■.
8. Petitioner is age ■ and his wife is age ■.
9. On September 27, 2023, the Department issued a Health Care Coverage Determination Notice (HCCDN) to Petitioner indicating that Petitioner's children were eligible for full coverage MA, but that Petitioner and his wife were no longer eligible for MA benefits effective November 1, 2023 because they were not under ■, not pregnant, not disabled, not over age ■, not blind, not in foster care at ■, not the caregiver of someone under age ■, and had income greater than the income limit for the group size.
10. On October 4, 2023, the Department received Petitioner's request for hearing disputing the Department's closure of his MA benefits indicating he was no longer employed.

APPLICABLE LAWS

Authority for the ALJ to conduct the hearing is provided under MCL 400.9 and 400.37; 42 USC 1396(3); 42 CFR 431.200 to 431.250.

MDHHS policies are contained in the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM), and Reference Tables Manual (RFT).

The MA program is established by Title XIX of the Social Security Act, 42 USC 1396 *et seq*; 42 USC 1315; the Affordable Care Act of 2010, the collective term for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, PL 111-148, as amended by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, PL 111-152; 42 CFR 430.10 to 42 CFR 430.25; 42 CFR 431.200 to 431.250; and 42 CFR 438.400 to 438.424. MDHHS administers the

MA program pursuant to 42 CFR 435, MCL 400.10 and MCL 400.103 to MCL 400.112k of the Social Welfare Act, MCL 400.1 *et seq.*

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Starting April 1, 2023, ongoing MA eligibility must be renewed. For MA beneficiaries whose MA eligibility is based on their Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI)-based income, MA must be renewed once every 12 months and no more frequently than once every 12 months. 42 CFR 435.916(a)(1). For MA beneficiaries whose MA eligibility is not based on their MAGI-based income, MA eligibility must be redetermined at least every 12 months. 42 CFR 435.916(b). Any renewal form or notice must be accessible to persons who are limited English proficient and persons with disabilities. 42 CFR 435.916(f)(2).

In conducting this renewal or redetermination, MDHHS must check available information and data sources to attempt to redetermine eligibility before contacting the beneficiaries. 42 CFR 435.916(a)(2) and (b), 435.948, and 435.949. Before concluding that an individual is ineligible for MA, MDHHS must evaluate the individual's eligibility for MA on all bases for MA coverage, including the Medicare Savings Programs. 42 CFR 435.916(f)(1).

Upon reviewing Petitioner's eligibility criteria at redetermination, MDHHS concluded that Petitioner and his wife were not eligible for MA coverage under program. Petitioner disputes this determination.

MA is available (i) under SSI-related categories to individuals who are aged (65 or older), blind or disabled, (ii) to individuals who are under age 19, parents or caretakers of children, or pregnant or recently pregnant women, (iii) to individuals who meet the eligibility criteria for Healthy Michigan Plan (HMP) coverage, and (iv) to individuals who meet the eligibility criteria for Plan First Medicaid (PF-MA) coverage. 42 CFR 435.911; 42 CFR 435.100 to 435.172; BEM 105 (October 2023), p. 1; BEM 137 (June 2020), p. 1; BEM 124 (July 2023), p. 1. Under federal law, an individual eligible under more than one MA category must have eligibility determined for the category selected and is entitled to the most beneficial coverage available, which is the one that results in eligibility and the least amount of excess income or the lowest cost share. BEM 105 (January 2021), p. 2; 42 CFR 435.404.

MAGI-RELATED PROGRAMS: HMP

Because Petitioner and his wife are not age [REDACTED] or older, blind or disabled, under age [REDACTED], the parent or caretaker of a minor child, or pregnant or recently pregnant, Petitioner and his wife were potentially eligible for MA coverage only under HMP. HMP is a MAGI-related MA category that provides MA coverage to individuals who (i) are [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] years of age; (ii) have income under the MAGI methodology at or below 133% of the federal poverty level (FPL); (iii) do not qualify for or are not enrolled in Medicare; (iv) do not qualify for or are not enrolled in other MA programs; (v) are not pregnant at the time of

application; and (vi) are residents of the State of Michigan. BEM 137, p. 1; 42 CFR 435.603.

In this case, MDHHS concluded that Petitioner was not eligible for HMP due to having income that exceeded the applicable income limit for Petitioner's group size. An individual is eligible for HMP if the household's MAGI-income does not exceed 133% of the FPL applicable to the individual's group size. An individual's group size for MAGI purposes requires consideration of the client's tax filing status. In this case, Petitioner was uncertain regarding his tax filing status, but the Department considered his group size to be three including himself, his wife, and his 19-year-old son as a dependent. Therefore, for HMP purposes, Petitioner has a household size of three. BEM 211 (October 2023), pp. 1-2. 133% of the annual FPL in 2023 (the most current applicable FPL) for a household with three member is \$33,063.80. See <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>. Therefore, to be income eligible for HMP, Petitioner's annual income cannot exceed \$33,063.80 or \$2,755.31 per month.

To determine financial eligibility under HMP, income must be calculated in accordance with MAGI under federal tax law. 42 CFR 435.603(e); BEM 500 (April 2022), p. 3. MAGI is based on Internal Revenue Service rules and relies on federal tax information. *Id.* 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 11. See <https://www.healthcare.gov/glossary/adjusted-gross-income-agi>. 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, childcare, or retirement savings. See <https://www.healthcare.gov/income-and-household-information/how-to-report/>. MDHHS considers *current* monthly income and family size (except for individuals who report seasonal work and complete a projected annual income field on the MA application to show work for only a portion of the year with reasonably predictable changes in income within the upcoming 12 months). Michigan Medicaid State Plan Amendment Transmittal 17-0100, effective November 1, 2017 and approved by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services on March 13, 2018 available at https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Folder3/Folder80/Folder2/Folder180/Folder1/Folder280/SPA_17-0100_Approved.pdf.

Petitioner's wife had 30 days' worth of income totaling \$[REDACTED]. Therefore, based solely on Petitioner's wife's income, Petitioner and his wife are not eligible for HMP because their income exceeds the income limit.

MAGI-RELATED PROGRAMS: PLAN FIRST

PF-MA is a MAGI-related limited coverage Medicaid group available to any United States citizen or individual with an immigration status entitling them to full Medicaid coverage (not emergency services only (ESO)) residing in Michigan whose fiscal group's net income does not exceed 195% of the federal poverty level (FPL) and meets

the other eligibility criteria. BEM 124 (July 2023), p. 1. There are no age or gender restrictions to PF-MA eligibility. BEM 124, p. 1.

Like HMP, determination of an individual's PF-MA eligibility requires consideration of the fiscal group's size and income and follows the same MAGI calculations. BEM 124, pp. 1-2. Again, Petitioner has a group size of three. BEM 211, pp. 1-2. 195% of the annual FPL in 2023 (the most current applicable FPL) for a household with three member is \$48,477.00. See <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>. Therefore, to be income eligible for PF-MA, Petitioner's group's annual income cannot exceed \$48,477.00 or \$4,039.75 per month.

To determine financial eligibility for PF-MA, income must be calculated in accordance with MAGI under federal tax law. 42 CFR 435.603(e); BEM 500 (April 2022), p. 3. MAGI is based on Internal Revenue Service rules and relies on federal tax information. *Id.* 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, childcare, or retirement savings. See <https://www.healthcare.gov/income-and-household-information/how-to-report/> MDHHS considers *currently* monthly income and family size (except for individuals who report seasonal work and complete a projected annual income field on the MA application to show work for only a portion of the year with reasonably predictable changes in income within the upcoming 12 months). Michigan Medicaid State Plan Amendment Transmittal 17-0100, effective November 1, 2017 and approved by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services on March 13, 2018 available at https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Folder3/Folder80/Folder2/Folder180/Folder1/Folder280/SPA_17-0100_Approved.pdf.

As seen above, Petitioner's MAGI income is below the PF income limit by more than \$400.00 per month. Therefore, Petitioner and his wife are eligible for PF.

DECISION AND ORDER

MDHHS did not act in accordance with Department policy when it closed Petitioner's Medicaid (MA) case.

Accordingly, MDHHS's MA decision is **REVERSED**

MDHHS 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 and his wife's MA eligibility effective November 1, 2023;

2. If otherwise eligible, issue supplements to Petitioner and his wife or on their behalf for benefits not previously received; and,
3. Notify Petitioner in writing of its decision.

AM/mp



Amanda M. T. Marler
Administrative Law Judge

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

Via-Electronic Mail :

Via-First Class Mail :

Interested Parties

MDHHS-Macomb-36-Hearings

EQAD Hearings

M. Schaefer

MOAHR

BSC4

Petitioner

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] MI [REDACTED]