



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

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

MARLON BROWN
DIRECTOR

██████████
████████████████████
██████████ MI ██████████

Date Mailed: October 30, 2024
MOAHR Docket No.: 24-009993
Agency No.: ██████████
Petitioner: ██████████

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Zainab A. Baydoun

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 October 9, 2024, from Detroit, Michigan. Petitioner appeared at the hearing with support person ██████████ and represented himself. The Department of Health and Human Services (Department) was represented by Avery Smith, Assistance Payments Supervisor.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly determine Petitioner's eligibility for 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. On or around ██████████ 2024, Petitioner submitted an application for MA benefits.
2. On or around August 20, 2024, the Department sent Petitioner a Health Care Coverage Determination Notice advising him that for July 1, 2024, ongoing, he was approved for Medicare Savings Program (MSP) benefits. The Notice also advised Petitioner that for June 1, 2024, through September 30, 2024, he was approved for full coverage MA benefits, and effective October 1, 2024, ongoing, was approved for MA subject to a monthly deductible of \$817. (Exhibit A, pp. 15-18)
3. On or around August 29, 2024, Petitioner requested a hearing disputing the Department's actions with respect to the MA program. (Exhibit A, pp. 3-4)

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's disputed the Department's determination that he was eligible for MA under a deductible based program.

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, p. 2; 42 CFR 435.404.

HMP is a MAGI-related MA category that provides MA coverage to individuals who (i) are 19 to 64 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.

Because Petitioner is over age 64 and enrolled in Medicare, he is not eligible for full coverage MA under the HMP. Thus, the Department properly concluded that Petitioner was eligible for SSI-related MA, which is MA for individuals who are blind, disabled or over age 65. BEM 105, p. 1. Individuals are eligible for Group 1 coverage, with no deductible, if their income falls below the income limit, and eligible for Group 2 coverage, with a deductible that must be satisfied before MA is activated, when their income exceeds the income limit. BEM 105, p. 1. Ad-Care coverage is a SSI-related Group 1 MA category which must be considered before determining Group 2 MA eligibility. BEM 163 (July 2017), p. 1. Eligibility for Ad-Care is based on the client meeting nonfinancial and

financial eligibility criteria. BEM 163, pp. 1-2. The eligibility requirements for Group 2 MA and Group 1 MA Ad-Care are the same, other than income. BEM 166 (April 2017), pp. 1-2.

Income eligibility for the Ad-Care program is dependent on MA fiscal group size and net income which cannot exceed the income limit in RFT 242. BEM 163, p. 2. Petitioner has a MA fiscal group of one. BEM 211 (October 2023), pp. 5-8. Effective April 1, 2024, an MA fiscal group with one member is income-eligible for full-coverage MA under the Ad-Care program if the group's net income is at or below \$1,275, which is 100 percent of the Federal Poverty Level, plus the \$20 disregard. RFT 242 (April 2023), p. 1. Thus, the income limit for Ad-Care eligibility is \$1,255.

The Department is to determine countable income according to SSI-related MA policies in BEM 500 and 530 *except* as explained in the countable RSDI section of BEM 163. The Department will also apply the deductions in BEM 540 (for children) or 541 (for adults) to countable income to determine net income. BEM 163, p. 2. The Department asserted that Petitioner had excess income for the Ad-Care program. The Department representative testified that it considered Petitioner's unearned income which totaled [REDACTED] and was based on gross monthly RSDI/Social Security benefits. The Department also properly considered the unearned income general exclusion of \$20 to determine that Petitioner had net unearned income of [REDACTED]. The Department representative testified that Petitioner had earned income from employment with [REDACTED] in the monthly amount of [REDACTED] and that and it specifically considered [REDACTED] paid on June 28, 2024, and [REDACTED] paid on July 12, 2024. Although the total of the paystubs identified is [REDACTED] and not [REDACTED] as determined by the Department, the Department's error is to the benefit of the client. An earned income disregard of \$259.50 was applied, based on the [REDACTED] earned income amount, resulting in net earned income of [REDACTED]. Thus, Petitioner's net unearned income and net earned income result in total net income of [REDACTED].

After further review of Department policy and based on the testimony provided at the hearing, because Petitioner's income exceeds the \$1,255 net income limit for the Ad-Care program, the Department acted in accordance with Department policy when it determined that Petitioner was ineligible for full coverage MA benefits under the Ad-Care program without a deductible and determined that he would be eligible for MA under the Group 2 Aged Blind Disabled (G2S) program with a monthly deductible.

Additionally, deductible is a process which allows a client with excess income to become eligible for Group 2 MA if sufficient allowable medical expenses are incurred. BEM 545 (July 2022), p. 10. Individuals are eligible for Group 2 MA coverage when net income (countable income minus allowable income deductions) does not exceed the applicable Group 2 MA protected income levels (PIL), which is based on shelter area and fiscal group size. BEM 105, pp. 1-2; BEM 166, pp. 1-2; BEM 544 (January 2020), p. 1; RFT 240 (December 2013), p. 1. The PIL is a set allowance for non-medical need items such as shelter, food and incidental expenses. BEM 544, p. 1. The monthly PIL for an MA group of one living in [REDACTED] County is \$408 per month. RFT 200 (April 2017), pp. 1-2; RFT 240, p. 1. Thus, if Petitioner's net monthly income is in excess of the \$408, he may

become eligible for assistance under the deductible program, with the deductible being equal to the amount that his monthly income exceeds \$408. BEM 545, p. 1. To meet a deductible, a MA client must report and verify allowable medical expenses (defined in Exhibit I) that equal or exceed the deductible amount for the calendar month being tested. The group must report expenses by the last day of the third month following the month in which client wants MA coverage. BEM 545, p. 11. The Department is to add periods of MA coverage each time the group meets its deductible. BEM 545, p.11.

According to the Health Care Coverage Determination Notice dated August 20, 2024, the Department determined that effective October 1, 2024, Petitioner was eligible for MA under the G2S category with a monthly deductible of \$817. The Department produced an SSI-Related Medicaid Income Budget to show how it calculated the deductible. As referenced above, the Department properly determined that Petitioner had net income of [REDACTED]. Although the Department indicated that Petitioner is enrolled in the MSP and is not responsible for Medicare premiums, the budget reflects an insurance premium deduction of \$174.70, which the Department indicated would likely be removed from the budget when the premium is no longer deducted from Petitioner's monthly Social Security. There was no evidence that Petitioner submitted any medical expenses for consideration and no evidence that Petitioner was entitled to any additional deductions to income such as guardianship/conservator expenses or remedial services.

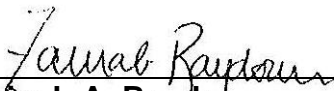
Upon review, the Department properly considered Petitioner's income and took into consideration the appropriate deductions to income. Based on the evidence presented because Petitioner's countable income of [REDACTED] for MA purposes exceeds the monthly protected income level of \$408 by \$817, the Department properly calculated Petitioner's monthly \$817 MA deductible in accordance with Department policy. Therefore, based on the information relied upon by the Department, the Department properly determined that Petitioner was eligible for MA under the G2S program with a monthly deductible of \$817. At the hearing, petitioner testified that his income from employment sometimes fluctuates. Petitioner was informed that should he submit updated pay stubs reflecting a decrease in his earnings, the Department would redetermine his MA eligibility, as a decrease in net income may result in MA eligibility under a different program.

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 acted in accordance with Department policy when it determined Petitioner's MA eligibility.

DECISION AND ORDER

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

ZB/ml


Zainab A. Baydoun
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:

DHHS

Tracey Jones

Oakland County Southfield District III

25620 W. 8 Mile Rd

Southfield, MI 48033

MDHHS-Oakland-6303-Hearings@michigan.gov

Interested Parties

BSC4

M Schaefer

EQAD

MOAHR

Via First Class Mail:

Petitioner

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED], MI [REDACTED]