

STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH P.O. Box 11729 Albany, NY 12211

# **Notice of Decision**

Decision Date: September 21, 2017

NY State of Health Account ID: Appeal Identification Number: AP000000019874



On September 18, 2017, you appeared by telephone at a hearing on your appeal of NY State of Health's May 17, 2017 eligibility determination notice.

The enclosed Decision, rendered after that hearing, is issued by the Appeals Unit of NY State of Health.

If you have questions about your Decision, you can contact us by:

- Calling the Customer Service Center at 1-855-355-5777
- Sending Mail to:

NY State of Health Appeals P.O. Box 11729 Albany, NY 12211

• Sending a Fax to 1-855-900-5557

When contacting NY State of Health about your appeal and/or the Decision, please refer to the Appeal Identification number and the NY State of Health Account ID at the top of this notice.

# Legal Authority

We are sending you this notice in accordance with 45 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 155.545.

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STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH P.O. Box 11729 Albany, NY 12211

# Decision

Decision Date: September 21, 2017

NY State of Health Account ID: Appeal Identification Number: AP000000019874

## Issues

The issues presented for review by the Appeals Unit of NY State of Health are:

Did NY State of Health properly determine that you were eligible to receive up to \$49.00 per month in advance payments of the premium tax credit, effective July 1, 2017?

Did NY State of Health properly determine that you were ineligible for costsharing reductions?

Did NY State of Health properly determine that you were ineligible for the Essential Plan?

Did NY State of Health properly determine that you were ineligible for Medicaid?

# **Procedural History**

On July 8, 2016, NY State of Health (NYSOH) issued a notice of eligibility determination stating that you were eligible for Medicaid, effective July 1, 2016.

On July 9, 2016, NYSOH issued a notice of enrollment confirmation stating that you were enrolled in a Medicaid Managed Care plan with a plan enrollment start date of August 1, 2016.

On May 4, 2017, NYSOH issued a notice that it was time to renew your health insurance for the upcoming coverage year. That notice stated that based on

information from federal and state sources, NYSOH could not make a decision about whether you would qualify for financial help paying for your health coverage, and that you needed to update your account by June 15, 2017 or you might lose the financial assistance you were currently receiving.

On May 16, 2017, you updated your household's application for financial assistance.

On May 17, 2017, NYSOH issued a notice of eligibility determination stating that you were eligible to receive up to \$49.00 per month in advance payments of the premium tax credit (APTC), effective July 1, 2017. That notice also stated that you were not eligible for cost-sharing reductions, the Essential Plan, or Medicaid because your income was over the allowable income limits for those programs.

Also on May 17, 2017, NYSOH issued a disenrollment notice stating that your coverage with your Medicaid Managed Care plan would end on June 30, 2017. This was because you were no longer eligible to enroll in a Medicaid Managed Care plan.

On June 20, 2017, you spoke to NYSOH's Account Review Unit and appealed insofar as you were not found eligible for additional financial assistance.

On June 24, 2017, NYSOH issued a notice of eligibility determination stating that you were eligible for Medicaid through NYSOH for a limited time, effective July 1, 2017. This was because you have been granted Aid to Continue until a decision is made on your appeal.

Also on June 24, 2017, NYSOH issued an enrollment confirmation notice stating that you were enrolled in a Medicaid Managed Care plan with a plan enrollment start date of July 1, 2017.

On September 18, 2017, you had a telephone hearing with a Hearing Officer from NYSOH's Appeals Unit. The record was developed during the hearing and closed at the end of the hearing.

# **Findings of Fact**

A review of the record supports the following findings of fact:

- 1) You testified that you expect to file your 2017 taxes with a tax filing status of married filing jointly and that you will claim one dependent on that tax return.
- 2) You are seeking insurance for yourself. You testified that your spouse has coverage through her parents.

- 3) You testified that your spouse is pregnant with one child with a due date of
- 4) The application that was submitted on May 16, 2017 listed annual household income of \$55,000.92, consisting of income you earn from your employment. You testified that this amount was correct.
- You testified that your spouse has had no income for 2017. You explained that your spouse is seeking employment, but has not yet found work.
- 6) You testified that your income consists of two parts, your salary which is taxed at the time of payment, and an owner draw which is not taxed at the time of payment. You explained that you receive a W-2 for your salary and a 1099 for the owner draw.
- 7) You testified that you are paid the same amount each Friday. You testified that your net pay each week is \$943.00.
- 8) You testified that in May 2017 your income was approximately \$3,700.00.
- 9) Paystubs that you submitted for pay dates August 12, 2016, August 19, 2016, August 26, 2016, and September 9, 2016 each show gross earnings of \$581.75 and an owner draw of \$475.97. You testified that you continue to be paid the same amount on a weekly basis and in the same manner as in August 2016.
- 10) Your application states that you will not be taking any deductions on your 2017 tax return. You testified that you may be claiming some deductions on your 2017 including charitable donations, as well as some travel and business expenses, some of which are reimbursed by your employer. You further testified that these deductions would be small and you were not sure of the exact amount.
- 11)Your application states, and you confirmed, that you live in
- 12) You testified that you have bills including rent of \$1,900.00 per month, car payments of \$295.00 per month, car insurance of \$188.00 per month, train and subway expenses of \$100.00 per month, electric of \$150.00 to \$200.00 per month, heat of around \$150.00 to \$200.00 per month for the winter months, one credit card bill of \$1,000.00 per month, as well as credit card debt of \$30,000.00, and other expenses such as food, that you would like considered when determining your eligibility for financial assistance with health insurance.

Conflicting evidence, if any, was considered and found to be less credible than the evidence noted above.

# **Applicable Law and Regulations**

## Household Composition

For purposes of advance premium tax credit (APTC) and cost-sharing reductions (CSR), the household size equals the number of individuals for whom the taxpayer is allowed a deduction under 26 USC § 151 for the taxable year, which typically includes: (1) the taxpayer, (2) his or her spouse, and (3) any claimed dependents (26 USC § 36B(d)(1)).

With regard to the Essential Plan, the household size is determined using the above methodology for individuals who file a tax return. (New York's Basic Health Plan Blueprint, p. 19-20, as approved January 2017; see https://www.medicaid.gov/basic-health-program/basic-health-program.html).

For purposes of Medicaid eligibility, however, the household size of either a pregnant woman or a person who is in the family of a pregnant woman includes not only the pregnant woman, but also the number of children she expects to deliver (42 CFR § 435.603(b); State Plan Amendment (SPA) 13-0055-MM3, as approved by the US Department of Health and Human Services, March 19, 2014).

## Advance Payments of Premium Tax Credit

Advance payments of the premium tax credit (APTC) are generally available to a person who is eligible to enroll in a qualified health plan (QHP) and (1) expects to have a household income between 138% and 400% of the applicable federal poverty level (FPL), (2) expects to file a tax return and claim a personal exemption deduction for a person who meets the eligibility requirements to enroll in a QHP, and (3) is not otherwise eligible for minimum essential coverage except through the individual market (see 45 CFR § 155.305(f), 42 CFR § 435.119(b), 42 CFR § 435.911(b)(1), 42 CFR § 435.603(d)(4)).

The maximum amount of APTC that can be authorized equals:

 the cost of the health insurance premium for the taxpayer's coverage family in the second lowest cost silver plan offered through NY State of Health in the county where the taxpayer resides

minus

2) the taxpayer's expected contribution amount

(see 26 USC § 36B, 26 CFR § 1.36B-3).

The taxpayer's expected contribution amount is the amount that the taxpayer is expected to spend on health insurance premiums. The expected contribution for 2017 is set by federal law at 2.04% to 9.69% of household income (26 USC § 36B(b)(3)(A), 26 CFR § 1.36B-3T(g)(1), IRS Rev. Proc.2016-24).

In an analysis of APTC eligibility, the determination is based on the FPL for the first day of the open enrollment period of the benefit year for which coverage is requested (45 CFR §§ 155.300(a), 155.305(f)(1)(i)). On the date of your application, that was the 2016 FPL, which is \$20,160.00 for a three-person household (81 Federal Register 4036).

For annual household income in the range of at least 250% but less than 300% of the 2016 FPL, the expected contribution is between 8.21% and 9.69% of the household income (26 CFR § 1.36B-3T(g)(1), 45 CFR § 155.300(a), IRS Rev. Proc. 2016-24).

People who use the APTC to help pay health insurance premiums must file a federal tax return and reconcile their expected income (stated on NYSOH application) with their actual income (stated on their federal income tax return). Those who take less tax credit in advance than they claim on the tax return may get the rest of it as an income tax refund or have their tax bill reduced. Those who take more tax credit in advance than they can claim on their tax return will owe the difference as additional income taxes (26 CFR § 1.36B-4).

#### Cost-Sharing Reductions

Cost-sharing reductions (CSR) are available to a person who (1) is eligible to enroll in a QHP through NYSOH, (2) meets the requirements to receive APTC, (3) is expected to have an annual household income that does not exceed 250% of the FPL for the first day of the open enrollment period of the benefit year for which coverage is requested, and (4) is enrolled in a silver-level QHP (45 CFR § 155.300(a), 45 CFR § 155.305(g)(1)).

## Essential Plan

NYSOH must generally determine an applicant eligible for the Essential Plan, a basic health plan, if the person is (1) a resident of New York State, (2) expects to have a household income between 138% and 200% of the applicable federal poverty level (FPL) or, in the case of an individual who is a lawfully present noncitizen who is ineligible for Medicaid or Child Health Plus as a result of their immigration status, has a household income that is between 0% and 200% of the FPL, (3) is not otherwise eligible for minimum essential coverage except through the individual market, (4) is 64 years old or younger, (5) is a citizen or a lawfully present non-citizen, and (6) is not incarcerated (see 42 CFR § 600.305, 42 CFR § 435.603(d)(4), 45 CFR § 155.305(e), NY Social Services Law § 369-gg(3), 42 USC § 18051).

In an analysis of Essential Plan eligibility, the determination is based on the FPL in effect on the first day of the benefit year for which coverage is requested (45 CFR § 155.300(a)). On the date of your application, that was the 2016 FPL, which is \$20,160.00 for a three-person household (81 Fed. Reg. 4036).

A person who has a household income that is at or below 150% of the FPL has a \$0.00 premium contribution (New York's Basic Health Plan Blueprint, p. 21, as approved January 2016; see https://www.medicaid.gov/basic-health-program.html).

A person who has a household income greater than 150% of the FPL or below 200% of the FPL has a \$20.00 per month premium contribution (New York's Basic Health Plan Blueprint, as approved January 2016).

The Essential Plan is considered minimum essential coverage therefore, a person who is eligible for the Essential Plan is not eligible for any premium tax credit because they are eligible for minimum essential coverage through the individual market (see 26 CFR § 1.36B-2(c)(1), 26 USC § 5000A(f)(1)(C)).

#### Medicaid

Medicaid can be provided through NYSOH to adults who: (1) are age 19 or older and under age 65, (2) are not pregnant, (3) are not entitled to or enrolled for Medicare benefits under part A or B of title XVIII of the Act, (4) are not otherwise eligible for and enrolled for mandatory coverage under a State's Medicaid State plan in accordance with subpart B of this part, and (5) have a household modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) that is at or below 138% of the FPL for the applicable family size (42 CFR § 435.119(b), 42 CFR § 435.911(b)(1), 42 CFR § 435.603(d)(4)), NY Social Services Law § 366(1)(b)).

In an analysis of Medicaid eligibility, the determination is based on the FPL "for the applicable budget period used to determine an individual's eligibility" (42 CFR § 435.4). On the date of your application, that was the 2017 FPL, which is \$24,600.00 for a four-person household (82 Fed. Reg. 8831).

Financial eligibility for Medicaid for applicants who are not currently receiving Medicaid benefits is based on current monthly household income and family size (42 CFR § 435.603(h)(1); State Plan Amendment (SPA) 13-0055-MM3, as approved March 19, 2014).

## Modified Adjusted Gross Income

NYSOH bases its eligibility determinations on modified adjusted gross income as defined in the federal tax code (45 CFR § 155.300(a)). The term "modified adjusted gross income" means adjusted gross income increased by (1) any income that was excluded under 26 USC § 911 for United States citizens or residents living abroad, (2) tax-exempt interest received or accrued, and (3) Social Security benefits that were excluded from gross income under 26 USC § 86 (see 26 USC § 36B(d)(2)(B), 26 CFR § 1.36B-1(e)(2)).

"Adjusted gross income" means, in the case of an individual taxpayer, gross federal taxable income minus certain specific deductions, such as trade and business deductions if such trade or business does not consist of the performance of services by the taxpayer as an employee, trade and business expenses incurred by an employee where such employee is reimbursed by an employer for those expenses, losses from sale or exchange of property, losses from premature withdrawal of finds from time savings accounts, deductions attributable to royalties, and certain retirement savings (26 USC § 62(a)). Living expenses, such as rent and utilities are not an allowable deduction in computing adjusted gross income.

# Legal Analysis

The first issue is whether NYSOH properly determined that you were eligible for an APTC of up to \$49.00 per month.

The application that was submitted on May 16, 2017 listed an annual household income of \$55,000.92 and the eligibility determination relied upon that information.

During the hearing, you testified that the amount you provided in your application was correct. However, you asked that your current expenses, which include rent of \$1,900.00 per month, car payments of \$295.00 per month, car insurance of \$188 per month, train and subway expenses of \$100.00 per month, electric of \$150.00 to \$200.00 per month, heat of around \$150.00 to \$200.00 per month for the winter months, one credit card bill of \$1,000.00 per month, as well as credit card debt of \$30,000 per month, and other expenses such as food, be considered when calculating your annual household income.

Since the Internal Revenue Service rules do not allow living expenses such as rent, utilities, cable and phone to be deducted from the calculation of your adjusted gross income, they cannot be deducted when the NYSOH computes your modified adjusted gross income for APTC purposes.

Additionally, you testified that you plan to claim a deduction for charitable donations as well as business expenses, however, only some of these business expenses were reimbursed by your employer. The Internal Revenue Service rules do not permit charitable deductions or unreimbursed business expenses to be deducted from the calculation of your adjusted gross income. Therefore, NYSOH correctly determined your household income to be \$55,000.92.

You expect to file your 2017 income taxes as married filing jointly and will claim one dependent on that tax return.

You testified that your spouse is pregnant with one child and that her due date is January 2, 2017, therefore, the record reflects that your spouse was pregnant at the time of your May 16, 2017 application.

When calculating family size for APTC, cost-sharing reduction, and Essential Plan purposes, household size consists of the taxpayer, his or her spouse, and any claimed dependents. As you expect to claim only one dependent for 2017, you are in a three-person household.

You reside in Kings County, where the second lowest cost silver plan available for an individual through NYSOH costs \$456.46 per month.

An annual income of \$55,000.92 is 272.82% of the 2016 FPL for a three-person household. At 272.82% of the FPL, the expected contribution to the cost of the health insurance premium is 8.89% of income, or \$407.26 per month.

The maximum amount of APTC that can be approved equals the cost of the second lowest cost silver plan available through NYSOH for an individual in your county (\$456.46 per month) minus your expected contribution (\$407.26 per month), which equals \$49.20 per month. Therefore, rounding to the nearest dollar, NYSOH correctly determined you to be eligible for up to \$49.00 per month in APTC.

The second issue is whether you were properly found ineligible for cost-sharing reductions. Cost-sharing reductions are available to a person who has a household income no greater than 250% of the FPL. Since a household income of \$55,000.92 is 272.82% of the applicable FPL, NYSOH correctly found you to be ineligible for cost sharing reductions.

The third issue under review is whether NYSOH properly determined that you were ineligible for the Essential Plan.

The Essential Plan is provided through NYSOH to individuals who meet the nonfinancial requirements and have a household modified adjusted gross income that is between 138% and 200% of the FPL for the applicable family size. On the date of your application, the relevant FPL was \$20,160.00 for a three-person household. Since an annual household income of \$55,000.92 is 272.82% of the 2016 FPL, NYSOH properly found you to be ineligible for the Essential Plan.

The fourth issue is whether NYSOH properly determined that you were ineligible for Medicaid.

When calculating family size for Medicaid purposes, the household size of either a pregnant woman or a person who is in the family of a pregnant woman includes not only the pregnant woman but also the number of children she expects to deliver. On the date of your May 16, 2017 application, your wife was pregnant. Therefore, for Medicaid purposes, you were in a four-person household.

Medicaid can be provided through NYSOH to adults between the ages of 19 and 65 who meet the non-financial requirements and have a household modified adjusted gross income that is at or below 138% of the FPL for the applicable family size. On the date of your application, the relevant FPL was \$24,600.00 for a four-person household. Since \$55,000.92 is 223.58% of the 2017 FPL, NYSOH properly found you to be ineligible for Medicaid on an expected annual income basis, using the information provided in your application.

Since the May 17, 2017 eligibility determination properly stated that, based on the information you provided, you were eligible for up to \$49.00 per month in APTC, ineligible for cost-sharing reductions, ineligible for the Essential Plan and ineligible for Medicaid, it is correct and is AFFIRMED.

# Decision

The May 17, 2017 eligibility determination notice is AFFIRMED.

# Effective Date of this Decision: September 21, 2017

# How this Decision Affects Your Eligibility

You remain eligible for up to \$49.00 in APTC.

You are ineligible for cost-sharing reductions.

You are ineligible for the Essential Plan.

You are ineligible for Medicaid.

# If You Disagree with this Decision (Appeal Rights)

This Decision is final unless you submit an appeal request to the Federal Marketplace or bring a lawsuit under New York Civil Practice Law and Rules, Article 78.

You may bring a lawsuit on any Appeals Unit decision in New York State court in accordance with Article 78 of the New York Civil Practice Law and Rules. This must be done within four months of the Decision Date, which appears on the first page of this Decision.

Additionally, Appeals Unit decisions on issues involving eligibility for qualified health plans, advance premium tax credits, and cost-sharing reductions may be appealed to the Federal Marketplace. This must be done within 30 days of the Decision Date, which appears on the first page of this Decision (45 CFR § 155.520(c)).

If you have questions about appealing to the Federal Marketplace, you can contact them in any of the following ways:

- By calling the Customer Service Center at 1-800-318-2596
- By mail at:

Health Insurance Marketplace Attn: Appeals 465 Industrial Blvd. London, KY 40750-0061

• By fax: 1-877-369-0129

If you wish to be represented by an attorney in bringing an outside appeal and do not know how to go about getting one, you may contact legal resources available to you. You may, for example, contact the local County Bar Association, Legal Aid, or Legal Services.

# If You Have Questions about this Decision (Customer Service Resources):

You can contact us in any of the following ways:

- By calling the Customer Service Center at 1-855-355-5777
- By mail at:

NY State of Health Appeals P.O. Box 11729 Albany, NY 12211 • By fax: 1-855-900-5557

# Summary

The May 17, 2017 eligibility determination notice is AFFIRMED.

You remain eligible for up to \$49.00 in APTC.

You are ineligible for cost-sharing reductions.

You are ineligible for the Essential Plan.

You are ineligible for Medicaid.

# Legal Authority

We are sending you this notice in accordance with 45 CFR § 155.545.

A Copy of this Decision Has Been Provided To:



# Getting Help in a Language Other than English

This is an important document. If you need help to understand it, please call 1-855-355-5777. We can give you an interpreter for free in the language you speak.

#### Español (Spanish)

Este es un documento importante. Si necesita ayuda para entenderlo, llame al 1-855-355-5777. Le proporcionaremos un intérprete sin ningún costo.

#### 中文 (Traditional Chinese)

這是重要的文件。如果您需要獲得關於瞭解文件內容方面的協助,請致電 1-855-355-5777。我們可以為您 免費提供您所使用語言的翻譯人員。

#### Kreyòl Ayisyen (Haitian Creole)

Sa a se yon dokiman ki enpòtan. Si ou bezwen èd pou konprann li, tanpri rele nimewo 1-855-355-5777. Nou kapab ba ou yon entèprèt gratis nan lang ou pale a.

#### 中文 (Simplified Chinese)

这是一份重要的文件。如果您需要帮助理解此文件,请打电话至 1-855-355-5777。我们可以为您免费提供 相应语种的口译服务。

#### Italiano (Italian)

Questo è un documento importante. Per qualsiasi chiarimento può chiamare il numero 1-855-355-5777. Possiamo metterle a disposizione un interprete nella sua lingua.

## <u>한국어 (Korean)</u>

중요한 서류입니다. 이해하는 데 도움이 필요하시면 1-855-355-5777 번으로 연락해 주십시오. 귀하의 언어에 대한 무료 통역 서비스가 제공됩니다.

#### Русский (Russian)

Это важный документ. Если Вам нужна помощь для понимания этого документа, позвоните по телефону 1-855-355-5777. Мы можем бесплатно предоставить Вам переводчика Вашего языка.

#### (Arabic)العربية

هذه وثيقة مهمة. إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مساعدة لفهم محتواها، يُرجى الاتصال بالرقم 5777-355-355-1. يُمكننا توفير مترجم فوري لك باللغة التي تتحدثها مجانًا.

#### **DDDDD** (Bengali)

## Français (French)

Ceci est un document important. Si vous avez besoin d'aide pour en comprendre le contenu, appelez le 1-855-355-5777. Nous pouvons mettre gratuitement à votre disposition un interprète dans votre langue.

## <u>हिंदी (Hindi)</u>

यह एक महत्वपूर्ण दस्तावेज़ है। अगर आपको इसे समझने में सहायता चाहिए, तो कृपया 1-855-355-5777 पर कॉल करें। हम आपकी भाषा बोलने वाला एक दुभाषिया निःशुल्क उपलब्ध करवा सकते हैं।

#### 日本語 (Japanese)

これは重要な書類です。理解するために支援が必要な場合は、1-855-355-5777 にお電話ください。通訳を無料 で提供いたします。

## <u>नेपाली (Nepali)</u>

यो एउटा महत्त्वपूर्ण कागजात हो। यसलाई बुझ्न तपाईंलाई मद्दत चाहिन्छ भने, कृपया 1-855-355-5777 मा फोन गर्नुहोस्। हामीले तपाईंले बोल्ने भाषामा तपाईंलाई नि:शुल्क दोभाषे उपलब्ध गराउन सक्छौं।

#### Polski (Polish)

To jest ważny dokument. W przypadku konieczności skorzystania z pomocy w celu zrozumienia jego treści należy zadzwonić pod numer 1-855-355-5777. Istnieje możliwość uzyskania bezpłatnej usługi tłumacza języka, którym się posługujesz.

#### <u>Twi (Twi)</u>

Krataa yi ye tow krataa a ho hia. Se wo hia eho nkyerekyeremu a, ye sre wo, fre 1-855-355-5777. yEbEtumi ama wo obi a okyerE kasa a woka no ase ama wo kwa a wontua hwee.

#### اردو(Urdu)

یہ ایک اہم دستاویز ہے۔ اگر آپ کو اسے سمجھنے کے لیے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو براہ کرم5777-355-1855 پر کال کریں۔ ہم آپ کو آپ کی مادری زبان میں ایک مفت مترجم فراہم کر سکتے ہیں۔

## Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese)

Đây là tài liệu quan trọng. Nếu quý vị cần trợ giúp để hiểu tài liệu này, vui lòng gọi 1-855-355-5777. Chúng tôi có thể cung cấp thông dịch viên miễn phí nói ngôn ngữ của quý vị.

#### אידיש **(Yiddish)**

דאס איז א וויכטיגער דאקומענט. אויב איר דארפט הילף עס צו פארשטיין, ביטע רופט 1-855-355-5777. מיר קענען אייך געבן א דאלמעטשער פריי פון אפצאל אין די שפראך וואס איר רעדט.