



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

# Bulletin

**NUMBER**

#15-21-07C

**DATE**

October 1, 2015

**OF INTEREST TO**

County Directors

Social Services Supervisors  
and Staff

**ACTION/DUE DATE**

Please read information  
and prepare for  
implementation.

**EXPIRATION DATE**

October 1, 2017

## **Corrected #15-21-07: Changes to Medical Assistance for Employed Persons with Disabilities (MA-EPD) Premiums and Billing**

**TOPIC**

MA-EPD premium and billing changes

**PURPOSE**

To correct an effective date in the original bulletin

**CONTACT**

Health Care Eligibility Operations (HCEO), counties, and tribal agencies should submit policy questions to HealthQuest.

All others should direct questions to the following:  
Health Care Eligibility and Access (HCEA) Division  
PO Box 64989  
540 Cedar Street  
St. Paul, MN 55164-0989

**SIGNED**

NATHAN MORACCO  
Assistant Commissioner  
Health Care Administration

**TERMINOLOGY NOTICE**

The terminology used to describe people we serve has changed over time. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the use of "People First" language.

**Note about corrected information:** On September 1, 2015, the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) issued bulletin #15-21-07, which outlined MA-EPD premium and billing changes. In subsection III.C, Past-Due-Premium Policy Is No Longer in Effect, the first sentence of the second paragraph stated, “Effective November 1, 2015, enrollees will no longer be required to pay past-due premiums to establish MA-EPD eligibility.” However, this policy change became effective immediately with publication of the bulletin on September 1. In this corrected bulletin, the sentence has been corrected to read, “Effective **immediately**, enrollees **are** no longer required to pay past-due premiums to establish MA-EPD eligibility.”

## I. Background

Note: In this bulletin, “we,” “us,” and “our” refer to the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), and “you” and “your” refer to a county or tribal agency worker.

In 2011, the Minnesota Legislature increased the MA-EPD minimum premium from \$35 to \$65. In addition, the legislature increased the unearned income obligation (the percentage of an enrollee’s unearned income the enrollee must pay toward his or her monthly premium) from 0.5 percent to 5 percent. These increases were implemented in October 2014. These changes have now been reversed by the 2015 legislature, as discussed in Section II below.

MA-EPD premium billing has never been linked to the MA-EPD eligibility system (MAXIS). This has resulted in challenges in ensuring that an enrollee pays the MA-EPD premium before the month the enrollee has access to coverage. Additionally, the increase in MA-EPD premiums in October 2014 led to an increase in “good cause” requests, which are enrollee requests for premium relief. These issues led us to look closely at our premium-billing policies and processes through a continuous-improvement project. The project has resulted in new policies and procedures to ensure that MA-EPD coverage is linked to payment of a premium. This bulletin discusses these new policies and procedures in Sections III and IV below.

## II. Decreases in MA-EPD Premiums and Unearned Income Obligation

The 2015 Minnesota Legislature decreased MA-EPD premiums and the unearned income obligation, effective for September 2015 coverage. The minimum premium is now \$35, and the unearned income obligation is 0.5 percent. We notified county agencies and MA-EPD enrollees of the change in the premium calculation in July 2015. The new premium

amounts were reflected in the invoices mailed to MA-EPD enrollees in July for September 2015 coverage.

### **III. New Billing Policies and Procedures**

Currently, enrollees are billed monthly for their MA-EPD premium. An invoice is mailed to the enrollee on or about the 4th of every month, with payment due by the 15th of the next month, for coverage in the month after the payment month. This timeline makes it difficult for counties to timely close MA-EPD coverage for nonpayment of premiums, which often results in an enrollee's continuing coverage and owing a past-due premium. The following changes in policy and procedure beginning with the November 2015 coverage month will help ensure that premiums have been paid before MA-EPD coverage is provided.

#### **A. MA-EPD Premium Due Date Is Changing**

The premium due date is changing from the 15th of each month to the 4th of each month. When a payment is not received by the due date, DHS rather than the county or tribal agency will close MA-EPD coverage with timely notice. We will notify county and tribal agencies of enrollees whose MA-EPD coverage closed for nonpayment of premiums. Within 10 days of that notification, the county or tribal agency must determine whether an enrollee whose MA-EPD coverage was closed for nonpayment is eligible for MA under another eligibility basis.

Invoices for November 2015 coverage will be mailed on September 4, 2015, with the new due date, October 4, 2015. The invoice will include a "stuffer" (Attachment A) with the following:

- a reminder that coverage will close if the premium is not received on time
- options for paying MA-EPD premiums
- a reminder that the enrollee should change the automatic payment date if the enrollee has set up automatic payment through an electronic method
- information about how an enrollee can submit a "good cause" request if the enrollee is unable to pay a premium
- information about continuing coverage during a temporary job loss or during an illness that prevents the enrollee from working
- information about how the Disability Linkage Line can help with questions about the MA-EPD program

## **B. MA-EPD Coverage May Be Reinstated After Late Payment**

When payments are received after the due date, MA-EPD eligibility can be reinstated for the coverage month when the enrollee does either of the following:

- pays the premium for the coverage month by the last day of the month in which the premium is due
- pays the premium for the coverage month by the last day of the coverage month **and**, in that same month, pays the premium for the next coverage month

### Example 1: Enrollee pays premium by due date

On September 4, 2015, Jeff is mailed the invoice for his November 2015 premium, which is due October 4. He mails his premium payment to DHS, and we receive it September 16. Jeff has MA-EPD coverage for November 2015.

### Example 2: Enrollee does not pay premium by due date

On September 4, 2015, Jeff is mailed the invoice for his November 2015 premium, which is due October 4. Jeff does not pay his November premium by October 4. We close Jeff's MA-EPD coverage, with closure effective November 1, and notify the county agency of the closure. The county agency determines whether Jeff is eligible for MA under another eligibility basis.

### Example 3: Enrollee pays premium after due date but during payment month

On September 4, 2015, Jeff is mailed the invoice for his November 2015 premium, which is due October 4. After not receiving Jeff's premium payment by the due date, we close Jeff's MA-EPD coverage, with closure effective November 1. On October 12, Jeff mails his November premium payment to DHS. We receive the payment October 17 and notify the county agency that coverage can be reinstated. The county agency reinstates Jeff's MA-EPD coverage, with reinstatement effective November 1.

### Example 4: Enrollee pays premium after due date but during coverage month

On September 4, 2015, Jeff is mailed the invoice for his November 2015 premium, which is due October 4. After not receiving Jeff's premium payment by the due date, we close Jeff's MA-EPD coverage, with closure effective November 1. On November 10, Jeff mails his November and December premium payments to DHS.\* We receive the payments November 16 and notify the county agency that coverage can be reinstated. The county agency reinstates Jeff's MA-EPD coverage, with reinstatement effective November 1.

\*If Jeff had sent only his premium payment for November coverage and we did not receive a payment for December coverage by November 30, his coverage would

remain closed. Jeff could either request a refund of the November payment or have it applied to a future premium.

### **C. Past-Due-Premium Policy Is No Longer in Effect**

With the new policies for MA-EPD billing and for closing an enrollee's coverage when the enrollee does not pay a premium, it will no longer be possible for an enrollee to have past-due premiums.

Effective immediately, enrollees are no longer required to pay past-due premiums to establish MA-EPD eligibility. A notice (Attachment B) will be sent to each person whose MA-EPD coverage was closed on or after October 1, 2014, and who has not had MA-EPD coverage reopened. The notice will explain that the person can reapply and be approved for MA-EPD coverage without paying past-due premiums provided all other eligibility requirements are met.

### **D. "Good Cause" Policy Has Been Modified**

A "good cause" request is an enrollee's request for premium relief because of circumstances outside the enrollee's control. If we determine that the enrollee cannot pay his or her premiums because of an event outside his or her control (that is, if the enrollee has "good cause"), we approve the request.

In the past, an enrollee could request premium relief for the purpose of allowing the enrollee to regain eligibility without paying past-due premiums first. When we approved a request, we put the enrollee on a payment plan to catch up on past-due premiums within six months. If the enrollee did not comply with the plan, MA-EPD coverage was closed.

Beginning with the November 2015 coverage month, the premium relief available to enrollees will be a waiver of premiums. When we approve a request, we will waive premiums for the period necessary for the enrollee to resolve the situation preventing him or her from paying premiums.

Example:

Kari has a \$200 MA-EPD premium. Kari's roof suffers major damage during a recent storm, and her homeowner's insurance has a \$1,000 deductible. The roofing company gives her four months to pay the \$1,000 deductible. Paying both the deductible and the MA-EPD premiums would cause a financial hardship. The MA-EPD premium may be waived for up to four months while Kari pays off the \$1,000 roof repair bill.

We have established a committee to evaluate each good cause request; determine whether to approve it; and notify the enrollee, county or tribal agency, and DHS billing area of the committee's decision.

When we approve a request, once the period for which premiums are waived ends, the enrollee must resume paying the regular premium amount for MA-EPD coverage to continue.

## **IV. New Procedures: Action Required**

Follow the policy related to reduced MA-EPD premiums and unearned income obligations beginning with the September 2015 coverage month.

Follow the new policies and procedures related to the MA-EPD billing process beginning with the November 2015 coverage month. We will make procedures and system instructions available to you on or before September 20, 2015.

## **V. Legal Authority**

Minnesota Statutes, section 256.075

Minnesota Rules, section 9506.0040

Laws of Minnesota, 2015 Regular Session, chapter 71, article 7, section 28

## **VI. Attachments**

Attachment A: Announcements Included in Invoice Mailed September 4, 2015

Attachment B: Notice to Client Whose MA-EPD Coverage Was Closed on or after October 1, 2014, and Who Has Not Had MA-EPD Coverage Reopened

## **VII. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advisory**

This information is available in accessible forms for people with disabilities by calling 651-431-2283 (voice) or toll free at 888-938-3224 or by using your preferred relay service. For other information on disability rights and protections, contact the agency's ADA coordinator.



Minnesota Department of Human Services

## Important MA-EPD Information:

### Changes in MA-EPD Premium Due Date

- Premiums are now due by the **fourth of each month** instead of the 15th.
- Your September 4 premium bill for the November coverage month shows the new due date.
- If you do not pay your premium by the due date, your coverage will close.
- In some circumstances, eligibility may be reinstated if your payment is received late.

### What Options Do I Have for Paying My Premium?

You can pay in any of these ways:

- By mail (check or money order):
  - Department of Human Services
  - MA-EPD
  - PO Box 64835
  - St. Paul, MN 55164-0835
- Online at <http://payments.dhs.state.mn.us/> (one-time and recurring payments)
  - Note:** If you have set up automatic payment of your premium through DHS Web Payments, you will need to change the automatic payment date so that your premium is paid by the fourth of each month.
- Through a bill payment service that you set up through your own bank
- In person at 540 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN 55101
  - The St. Paul office accepts only exact payment amounts (cash, check or money order) along with your premium billing stub.

The option to pay by phone is not currently available.

### What If I Can't Pay My Premium Because of an Event That Is Out of My Control?

- You can request to not pay your premium if you have an event that is out of your control and affects your ability to pay your premium. This request is called a “good cause” request.
- The Disability Linkage Line (**866-333-2466**) can help you complete the online “good cause” request form to request that your premiums be temporarily stopped.
- We will let you know if your request is approved.

### What If I Lose My Job or Can't Work Because of Illness?

If you lose your job through no fault of your own, you can stay on MA-EPD for up to four months while you look for a new job. You will continue to pay your premium (which may be lowered because you don't have income) while you are out of work.

If you can't work because of an illness, you can stay on MA-EPD for up to four months. Your doctor will need to let us know you can't work, and you will still pay a premium (which may be lowered because you don't have income) during this time.

### Need More Help?

Call the Disability Linkage Line. The Disability Linkage Line is a service that can help you find answers. You can reach them by phone at **866-333-2466**, or you can chat with them online at [www.mn.db101.org](http://www.mn.db101.org).

**Attention. If you need free help interpreting this document, call 1-866-333-2466.**

ملاحظة: إذا أردت مساعدة مجانية لترجمة هذه الوثيقة، اتصل على الرقم 1-866-333-2466.

**សំណួរសំណួរ ។ បើអ្នកត្រូវការជំនួយក្នុងការអានឯកសារនេះដោយឥតគិតថ្លៃ សូមទាក់ទងមន្ត្រីស្តីពីការងារ 1-866-333-2466 ។**

**Paznja. Ako vam treba besplatna pomoć za tumačenje ovog dokumenta, nazovite 1-866-333-2466.**

**Thov na twb zoo nyeeem. Yog hais tias koj xav tau kev pab txhais hus rau tsab ntawb ntawv no pub dawb, ces hu rau 1-866-333-2466.**

**ໄປເຂດຊາບ. ຖ້າທ່ານ ຈຳເປັນຕ້ອງການການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອ ໃນການແປເຂດສາຂາພາສາ ມື້ນີ້, ຈົ່ງໂທສູນໂທ 1-866-333-2466.**

**Hubachiisa. Dokumentiin kun hahaha sūf hikamaa gargaarsa hoo feete, lakkoobsi hahilku 1-866-333-2466.**

**Внимание: если вам нужна бесплатная помощь в услном переводе данного документа, позвоните по телефону 1-866-333-2466.**

**Dignin. Haddii aad u baahantahay caawimaad lacag-la'aan ah ee tarjumaadda qoraalka, wac 1-866-333-2466.**

**Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para interpretar este documento, llame al 1-866-333-2466.**

**Chú ý. Nếu quý vị cần được giúp đỡ dịch tài liệu này miễn phí, xin gọi số 1-866-333-2466.**

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ADA1 (12-12)

This information is available in accessible formats for individuals with disabilities by calling toll-free 866-333-2466, or by using your preferred relay service. For other information on disability rights and protections, contact the agency's ADA coordinator.



Minnesota Department of **Human Services** \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Former MA-EPD Enrollee:

Our records show that your coverage under Medical Assistance for Employed Persons with Disabilities (MA-EPD) closed October 1, 2014, or later.

We are writing to let you know that you can reapply for MA-EPD without having to pay any past-due premiums you may owe.

To be eligible for MA-EPD, you must be working and making more than \$65 per month. You also must have Social Security and Medicare withheld from your earnings.

The premiums for MA-EPD have gone down. Starting September 2015, the minimum premium is \$35. Also, the amount of your unearned income (Social Security and other) that must be paid toward the monthly premium went down. It decreased from 5 percent to 0.5 percent (half of 1 percent). These changes may make MA-EPD more affordable for you.

If you want to reapply for MA-EPD, please contact your county.

If you have questions, please call the Disability Linkage Line (DLL). You can reach them at 866-333-2466. They can tell you about how much your premium would be. They can also help with questions about employment.

Sincerely,

Minnesota Department of Human Services