

NUMBER

#21-21-08

DATE

June 21, 2021

OF INTEREST TO

County Directors

Social Services Supervisors and
Staff

Financial Assistance Supervisors
and Workers

Mille Lacs Tribal TANF

Tribal Chairpersons and Tribal
Health Directors

Health Care Eligibility
Operations (HCEO) Managers,
Supervisors, and Staff

ACTION/DUE DATE

Please read and follow issued
instructions

EXPIRATION DATE

June 21, 2023

DHS Explains Treatment of RentHelpMN Assistance and Child Tax Credit Payments for Minnesota Health Care Programs

TOPIC

How to treat RentHelpMN assistance and child tax credit payments when determining eligibility for Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP).

PURPOSE

This bulletin provides information about how to treat RentHelpMN assistance and child tax credit payments when determining eligibility for MHCP.

CONTACT

Counties, tribal agencies and HCEO should submit policy questions via 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

JULIE MARQUARDT
Acting Assistant Commissioner/Acting State Medicaid Director
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.

I. Background

This bulletin describes how RentHelpMN assistance and child tax credit payments are treated for Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP). The policies in this bulletin apply to all MinnesotaCare populations and the following Medical Assistance populations and subprograms:

- Medical Assistance for Families with Children and Adults (MA-FCA)
- Medical Assistance for People Age 65 and Older, Blind or Disabled (MA-ABD)
- Medical Assistance for Employed Persons with Disabilities (MA-EPD)
- Medical Assistance under the TEFRA Option
- Medical Assistance Northstar Care for Children
- Medical Assistance for the Treatment of Breast and Cervical Cancer (MA-BC)
- Medical Assistance for People Receiving Services at the Center for Victims of Torture (MA-CVT)
- Medicare Savings Programs (MSP): Qualified Medicare Beneficiaries (QMB), Service Limited Medicare Beneficiaries (SLMB), Qualified Individuals (QI) and Qualified Working Disabled (QWD)
- Emergency Medical Assistance (EMA)
- Minnesota Family Planning Program (MFPP)

II. RentHelpMN Assistance

The Emergency Rental Assistance program was established by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (CAA). In Minnesota, the program is known as RentHelpMN COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance (RentHelpMN). RentHelpMN helps eligible renters get caught up on overdue rent and utilities dating back to March 13, 2020. RentHelpMN may pay a person's past due rent, upcoming rent, past due utilities or other housing-related costs.

Minnesota households are eligible for RentHelpMN if they rent their home from a property owner, they have experienced a hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic that has directly or indirectly impacted their ability to pay rent or utilities, and they are behind on rent. The household must have income not exceeding 80% of the area median income (AMI) for the area where the household is located, as determined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the applicant's home county. Renters who need help should apply for RentHelpMN benefits at www.renthelpmn.org.

Receipt of RentHelpMN assistance does not affect eligibility for Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP).

Do not count RentHelpMN assistance:

- as **income** for MHCP applicants or enrollees, or
- as an **asset** for any MHCP applicant or enrollee with an asset test.

III. Child Tax Credit Payments

The federal child tax credit (CTC) was recently expanded for the tax year 2021 by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). The ARPA increased the maximum CTC to \$3,600 for each child under age 6 and \$3,000 for each child between ages 6 and 17. In addition, eligible families will receive their 2021 tax credit amount in advance, divided into monthly payments from July to December 2021, instead of receiving it as a tax refund after they file their 2021 federal 1040 income tax return. The first payment will be made to eligible families on July 15, 2021, with subsequent payments on the 15th of each month, unless the 15th falls on a weekend or holiday. Eligible families will receive payments through direct deposit, paper check or debit cards, and may opt out of monthly payments if they wish to receive the credit when they file their 2021 federal income tax return.

CTC payments are advance payments of a taxpayer's 2021 tax refund.

- **Do not count** CTC payments as income for Medical Assistance (MA) applicants or enrollees.
- **Do not count** CTC payments in a person's projected annual income for MinnesotaCare applicants or enrollees.
- CTC payments are an **excluded asset** for MA for Families and Children and Adults (MA-FCA) applicants and enrollees who have a spenddown and are subject to an asset test.
- CTC payments are an **excluded asset for 12 months after the month of receipt** for MA for a person who is age 65 or older, blind or has a disability (MA-ABD) and MSP applicants and enrollees who have an asset test.

IV. Action Required

County, tribal and DHS workers must follow the policies outlined in this bulletin and instructions issued in advance of, and following, the publication of this bulletin.

IV. Legal Authority

Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law Number 116-260)

American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Public Law Number 117-2)

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advisory

This information is available in accessible formats for people with disabilities by calling (651) 297-3862 or toll free at 800-657-3672, or by using your preferred relay service. For other information on disability rights and protections, contact the agency's ADA coordinator.