
**DEPARTMENT
POLICY****Cash, Food and Medical Assistance**

Cash, Food and Medical Benefits are issued to clients based on information entered in Bridges.

This item includes time frames and other instructions to open, change or terminate program benefits.

DEFINITIONS**All Programs*****Cut-off Date***

The last date in which a change can be made to affect the next benefit issuance.

Cash Assistance Only***Availability Date***

The last number of the grantee's recipient identification number identifies the date benefits are available.

Issuance Systems

Benefits are issued using the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system. Clients have a Michigan Bridge card where their benefits are automatically deposited; see BAM 401E, Electronic Benefit Transfer Issuance System.

Negative Transaction Deadline

The last day for a specialist to send a timely notice of negative action to a client or to generate a DHS-1605, Notice of Case Action, with timely notice to the client, to affect the following month's benefits.

Pay Period (or Payment Period)

The half-month that a warrant/benefit covers. A pay period is either the first through the 15th day **or** the 16th through the last day of the month.

Payment (PA) Effective Date

The first day of the pay period (1st or 16th of the month) for which benefits will be paid.

Single Deadline Date

The last workday of the month. This is the last day the grant amount can be changed to affect the following month's payment amount.

Warrant

The cash benefit paid by the state to eligible groups in the form of a check.

Warrant Date

The date printed on the warrant or the date of the EBT deposit. It is the date the client can expect to receive the warrant or be able to access the EBT deposit.

CASH BENEFITS

Initial, ongoing, supplemental and issuance on closed cash assistance benefits of \$1,000 or less are electronically deposited into the eligible group's EBT account.

Benefit authorizations over \$1,000, and certain other supplemental benefits are issued as warrants.

Ongoing semi-monthly benefits are issued on a staggered schedule throughout the month, based on the grantee's recipient ID ending digit; see RFS 305, for specific issuance dates.

Openings

At opening, the group is eligible for benefits **no earlier** than the pay period in which the application becomes 30 days old; see BAM 115, Application Processing.

Supplemental Benefits

Bridges issues a supplement when benefits are authorized to correct underissuances.

**Immediate Effect
Actions**

When a change with immediate effect causes a benefit increase or decrease (including closures and transfers to MA), enter the change by the single deadline date to affect the following month's benefit amount.

**Negative Actions-
Requiring Timely
Notice**

When providing the client with timely notice of a benefit decrease (including closures and transfers to MA), complete the change by the negative transaction deadline to affect the following month's payment amount.

**Benefits Issued at
Closure**

When Cash programs are closed (including transfers to MA), and the negative action effective date is the second day of the month through the end of a calendar month, both regular benefits for that month will be issued. Closures effective on the first day of the month receive no benefits for that month.

Note: Vending stops when the FIP/SDA program closes. The grantee will receive the full monthly amount in any benefits issued after the closure effective date. (Recoupment **will** still be taken from these benefits.)

Address Change

A client or third-party address change must be entered **a** before the issuance date to affect that benefit.

Vendor Payments

BAM 425, Voluntary Vendor Payments, explains entry of vendor payments.

Benefit Issuance

A case payment history can be obtained through the View Benefits screen. By entering up to a 12-month time period and a specific case number, all payments for the case will be displayed on the screen(s).

Make a copy of the screen if a paper copy of the information is needed. For payment histories not available in Bridges, fax a request to the Specialized Action Center in Central Office at 517-432-6079 (professional use only). Include the case name, case number and the period for which the payment history is needed.

MEDICAL BENEFITS

(Plastic mihealth cards)

MDHHS has contracted with Medifax to produce and issue plastic mihealth cards. Each recipient who is eligible for Medicaid will receive a mihealth card. The mihealth card will be used every month that a client is eligible for Medicaid.

Openings (mihealth cards)

At initial case opening when full or emergency coverage is certified, a mihealth card will be mailed within 48 hours. At initial case opening of a deductible when the deductible is not met, no card is mailed. However, a card is mailed the first-time eligibility (full or emergency coverage) is certified.

If the case is being re-opened or reinstated, no card will be issued unless requested by the client. The client must call the beneficiary helpline at 1-800-642-3195 to request a card.

Replacing an mihealth card

Clients must contact the beneficiary helpline at 1-800-642-3195 to request a replacement mihealth card. The replacement card cannot be issued in the local MDHHS office. The address in Bridges will be verified for accuracy. If it is incorrect the beneficiary will be referred to the local MDHHS office for assistance to correct the address. A new card will not be issued until the address has been updated and the beneficiary contacts the helpline again. Beneficiaries should be advised to destroy the original mihealth card if found after a replacement has been issued.

**Medical History
Data Inquiry
Transaction****MA Only**

Each recipient's medical coverage history is available using the MMIS Preconversion Details or the Medicaid Eligibility screen.

FOOD ASSISTANCE BENEFITS**Issuance Systems**

Benefits are issued using the EBT system. Clients have a Michigan Bridge card where their benefits are automatically deposited; see BAM 401E, Electronic Benefit Transfer Issuance System.

Initial Benefits

Bridges authorizes initial benefits for the month a case opens **if** that month is part of the eligibility period. These benefits are issued as initial I benefits; see BAM 406.

**Retroactive
Benefits**

Bridges authorizes retroactive benefits if the group is eligible for a period that is both:

- Prior to the month eligibility was determined.
- Within 60 days of the application date.

If application processing is delayed beyond 60 days from the date of application, Bridges will issue a supplement to correct previous month's benefits which may result in offsetting.

These are supplemental benefits; see BAM 406, Supplemental Food Assistance Benefits.

Regular Benefits

The client's ongoing benefits are issued based on the last digit of the grantee's recipient identification number; see RFS 305 for issuance dates.

Supplemental Benefits

Bridges authorizes supplemental benefits when the regular issuance is less than the group is eligible for **or** for periods when the group was eligible but received no benefits; see BAM 406, Supplemental Food Assistance Benefits.

Accessing Benefits

Clients use a Bridge card and personal identification number to access food benefits; see BAM 401E, Electronic Benefit Transfer Issuance System.

Changes and Closures

The cut-off date for a benefit change or case closure is the last workday of the month **before** the month the change/closure takes effect.

Note: Administrative recoupment can reduce benefits to zero. The case remains open, and the client must continue to meet eligibility requirements.

Expunged Benefits

FAP benefits which have not been accessed for 365 days will be expunged. Once expunged, the client is no longer entitled to these benefits and the benefits cannot be replaced; see BAM 401E, Electronic Benefit Transfer Issuance System.

Benefit Issuance History

Obtain the client's food assistance benefit history in Bridges.

LEGAL BASE

FIP

42 USC 604-(g)
Social Welfare Act, P.A. 280 of 1939, as amended

SDA

Annual Appropriations Act

Mich Admin Code, R 400.3151-400.3180

MA

42 CFR 435.914

Mich Admin Code, R 400.2(4)

FAP

7 USC 2016(a),(j)(1)(A)

7 CFR 273.10(a)(1)(i)(ii)

7 CFR 274.2

7 CFR 274.1(a)(2),(d)(3)

7 CFR 274.7(d)