



Energy Efficiency Subcommittee
 Meeting Minutes
 November 27, 2018
 1:00pm – 2:30pm

Facilitator:	Susan Cervantes		
Meeting Attendees:	Susan Cervantes, Sherrie Gillepsie, Kendrick Heinlein, Tom Oosterban, John Mitchell, Donata Kidd, Monica Light Staff: Brianne Czyzio		
Time Convened:	1:00	Time Adjourned:	2:20

Introductions	
Coalition to Keep Michigan Warm Update	
Discussion	
There will be an update in December.	
MEAP 2019 Updates	All
Discussion	
<p>Donata reminded everyone that at last meeting there was questions about SER policies. She brought some excerpts from the manuals to this meeting. The document is an update to the limits based on SER size. Size is the number of people who live in the household. Participants who have a copay, if they are enrolled by an agency, can complete the forms to show proof of them completing their copay. Then the state can release the SER payment. Donata can send the form to the group.</p> <p>The good cause table is based on group size as well. DHHS looks at whether the income is above that amount. If participants have over this income in every month but have not made payments in the past 6 months, they may be ineligible. However, there can be client cause. For example, if a participant needed the income for a car payment for example, that can be verified. If for one month their income was below the good cause table then they would not be required to make payments for that month.</p> <p>Income limit for Energy: If the participants are over the income then they are not eligible for any SER payments.</p> <p>Max for Reallocation: the amount that DHHS will pay. The required payments table is based on group size. This can show that participants are making at least the required payments and could be eligible. DHHS staff will look at heat and electricity payments in the past 6 months and use which ever is most beneficial for the client.</p> <p>The far column shows the fiscal cap for each service. This cap is for each utility one time. The required payment policy has been a policy for a while.</p> <p>For cash, the first \$50 is excluded. Noncash assets are limited to \$1750 for one person or \$3000 for multiple persons. See page 3 and 4 for assets and excluded assets. One vehicle is excluded, if there is more than one vehicle, the value is determined from Kelly Blue Book. If a client goes over the asset limit, then their claim would be denied, or the copay would meet a portion of the bill and then SER would kick in. If a client’s assets exceed the need, then they will be denied. Susan shared that she thinks this will be tough with seniors because they often have different assets. However, Donata</p>	



Energy Efficiency Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes
November 27, 2018
1:00pm – 2:30pm

shared that life insurance and burial plots are excluded. DHHS always looks at gross assets but would look at medical expense deductions. Medicare cost sharing is likely included in this. The last page looks at how the assets are counted and the criteria for eligibility. Staff must gather and input all the data about the eligibility requirements. Susan asked if someone is denied based on other issues besides income eligibility from DHHS, would they still qualify for KCCA's financial payment. It seems like they would not be eligible for secondary funds. Susan shared that the extra hoops that participants would have to jump to are not good news for the public, even if they are good for financial eligibility. Tom shared that this can be a struggle to get through this process for extremely poor people. Susan is concerned that in the late winter they will not be able to help them if they already got a SER assist earlier in the season. And the eligibility period is one year, unless a participant reapplies, and something has changed in their circumstances. Senior Neighbors went through a lot of funds in October because they are the only ones with money besides church. They do not have an income guideline.

Donata asked what reasons agencies are seeing for denials. Several people shared that agencies have not been seeing denials yet. The eligibility criteria could change in the future depending on what the issues seem to be. The state's standard of promptness is 10 days. Extensions can be done if clients ask. One goal of the state verifying everything is that do not have to re-do verifications like in the past. The agency cap does not include the \$2000 SER cap. Susan suggested that as a group, agencies need to advocate for participants to reapply if they have something that could have changed their eligibility.

Tom shared that Senior Neighbors is dealing with copays. If participants have an unexpected expense, but their income stayed the same, the residents still have to pay the copay on top of the unexpected expense. Tom asked if there is a way to show that there is unexpected hardship that came up. Donata shared that this is where the good cause comes in to show that their income was below in a certain month. Copay is explained on the letter given to the customer. In order to show a good cause, they need to be enrolled in an affordable payment plan. There are only specific expenses that meet the criteria that can be deducted from income to meet good cause. One is employment related expenses, another is medical. For example, if someone had bed bugs in their apartment and were charged \$400, would good cause work? Potentially, but there is also assistance for homeowners or renters from different funds. With the HCV programs, KCCA cannot pay out voucher because landlord is responsible for the bedbugs. The decision makers for these rules are the federal agencies and state government agencies.

Sherrie saw something about the affordable payment plan, that potentially participants could be enrolled in the plan and then they wouldn't need to use their SER. Donata shared that there should be an automatic denial if they already are going to receive a SER. Enrolling them could count that as their copay.

Tom asked if someone will be looking at outcomes. Susan shared that the state asked KCCA to keep an agency log of concerns. If you have concerns, send them to Susan and they will put them in the log. They are trying to figure out how to give that feedback to the state. There are concerns that counties are getting different answers when the SER policies should be the same throughout the state.

Thinking Forward



Energy Efficiency Subcommittee
 Meeting Minutes
 November 27, 2018
 1:00pm – 2:30pm

Discussion	
This will be tabled until next meeting.	
Agency Updates	All
Discussion	
<p><u>Kent County Community Action</u>: KCCA’s MEAP contract will be signed on Thursday so they will be up and running. In addition, they will be doing rent assistance and mortgage arrears starting probably tomorrow. This funding is from CDBG. The criteria are: 125% of poverty; assistance once every 24 months form date of assistance; eviction notice, past due, or due within 10 days, demand for possession; up to \$2500 with discretion. Sherrie can send out program guidelines. They still have some money from Grand Rapids Water. TFAF distribution is the first Tuesday in December from 1-6. The quarterly distribution of food for persons who say they are hungry. At Eastern and Sherman. Susan will send flyer. Brianne will share. 2019 Walk for Warmth will be February 22.</p> <p><u>Flat River Outreach Ministries</u>: no updates at this time.</p> <p><u>211</u>: They are getting lots of calls all the time. They are struggling to understand the MEAP requirements.</p> <p><u>Senior Neighbors</u>: down to about \$1700 dollars, they will get money back again in January when the millage starts up again in January. Right now, they are being selective.</p>	
Adjournment	