

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
STATE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS AND RULES  
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS FOR THE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

IN THE MATTER OF:



Reg. No.: 2009 27836  
Issue No.: 5016  
Case No.: [REDACTED]  
Load No.: [REDACTED]  
Hearing Date: July 12, 2010  
Wayne County DHS (43)

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE:** Michael J. Bennane

**HEARING DECISION**

This matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9 and MCL 400.37 upon the claimant's request for a hearing. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on July 12, 2010. The claimant appeared and testified.

**ISSUE**

Did the Department properly deny the claimant's application for State Emergency Relief (SER)?

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the competent, material, and substantial evidence on the whole record, finds as material fact:

1. On May 19, 2009, the claimant applied for SER for utility services.
2. On May 27, 2009, the department sent the claimant notice that her application for SER was denied for lack of verification of income. (Department exhibit 5).
3. On June 5, 2009, the claimant filed a request for a hearing.

**CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

The State Emergency Relief (SER) program is established by 2004 PA 344. The SER program is administered pursuant to MCL 400.10, et seq., and by final administrative rules filed with the Secretary of State on October 28, 1993. MAC R 400.7001-400.7049. Department of Human Services (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) policies are found in the State Emergency Relief Manual (SER).

At the hearing the department testified that it was relying on the SER application to supply notice to the claimant of income verification required. In addition the application was handled as a mail-in although the claimant turned in her application personally on the date she received it May 19, 2009.

### **VERIFICATION**

Clients must be told what verification is required, how to obtain it, and the **due date of eight days** beginning with the date of application. Use the DHS-3503, Verification Checklist, to request verification.

In the event the application is not processed on the application date, the client must always be allowed eight days to provide verification. The deadline is eight days from the date verification is requested. This does not change the standard of promptness date.

The client must make a reasonable effort to obtain required verification, but the specialist must assist if the applicant needs and requests help. If neither the client nor the specialist can obtain verification despite a reasonable effort, use the best available information. If no evidence is available, the specialist must use their best judgment. (ERM 103, p.5)

In the instant case the department admitted that the claimant's SER application "was not handled properly." The department did not tell the claimant anything and did not accept documentation of income that the claimant testified she had with her when she filed the application on May 19, 2009.

This ALJ finds the department erred in denying the claimant's SER application.

**DECISION AND ORDER**

The Administrative Law Judge based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law REVERSES AND ORDERS the department to reregister the claimant's SER application back to May 19, 2009, and pay the benefits available to the claimant under the SER utility program at that time.



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Michael J. Bennane  
Administrative Law Judge  
For Ismael Ahmed, Director  
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: 07/21/2010

Date Mailed: 07/21/2010

**NOTICE:** Administrative Hearings may order a rehearing or reconsideration on either its own motion or at the request of a party within 30 days of the mailing date of this Decision and Order. Administrative Hearings will not order a rehearing or reconsideration on the Department's motion where the final decision cannot be implemented within 90 days of the filing of the original request.

The Claimant may appeal the Decision and Order to Circuit Court within 30 days of the mailing of the Decision and Order or, if a timely request for rehearing was made, within 30 days of the receipt date of the rehearing decision.

MJB/jlg

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