

STATE OF MICHIGAN
STATE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS AND RULES

ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

IN THE MATTER OF: [REDACTED],
Claimant

Reg. No: 2009-33110
Issue No: 1005; 3008
Case No: [REDACTED]
Load No: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date:
September 16, 2009
Eaton County DHS

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Suzanne L. Keegstra

HEARING DECISION

This matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9 and MCL 400.37 upon claimant's request for a hearing. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on September 16, 2009. The claimant personally appeared and provided testimony.

ISSUE

Did the department properly deny the claimant's Food Assistance Program (FAP) and Family Independence Program (FIP) application for failure to return the required verifications in June, 2009?

FINDINGS OF FACT

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

1. The claimant applied for FAP and FIP on May 28, 2009.

(Department Exhibit 11).

2. On June 4, 2009, the department mailed a Verification Checklist (DHS-3503) to the claimant at [REDACTED]. The checklist required the claimant to

submit a driver's license and social security card for household members, a completed Shelter Verification (DHS-3688) and current records of any assets. These items were due to the department by June 15, 2009, which is when a personal interview was also scheduled for the claimant. (Department Exhibit 10).

3. The claimant was later sent a Change Report (DHS-2240) and Notice of Case Action (DHS-1605) to an incorrect address, [REDACTED]. (Department Exhibit 4 – 9).

4. The claimant submitted another application on July 8, 2009 and requested her application be considered retroactive to May 28, 2009 (original application date). The department declined to use the previous application date.

5. The claimant submitted a hearing request on August 5, 2009.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Food Assistance Program (FAP) (formerly known as the Food Stamp (FS) program) is established by the Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended, and is implemented by the federal regulations contained in Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The Department of Human Services (DHS or department) administers the FAP program pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and MAC R 400.3001-3015. Department policies are found in the Program Administrative Manual (PAM), the Program Eligibility Manual (PEM) and the Program Reference Manual (PRM).

The Family Independence Program (FIP) was established pursuant to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Public Law 104-193, 8 USC 601, *et seq.* The Department of Human Services (DHS or department) administers the FIP program pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and MAC R 400.3101-3131. The FIP program replaced the Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) program effective October 1, 1996. Department

policies are found in the Program Administrative Manual (PAM), the Program Eligibility Manual (PEM) and the Program Reference Manual (PRM).

Department policy states:

**CLIENT OR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE
RESPONSIBILITIES**

Responsibility to Cooperate

All Programs

Clients must cooperate with the local office in determining initial and ongoing eligibility. This includes completion of the necessary forms. PAM, Item 105, p. 5. Refusal to Cooperate Penalties

All Programs

Clients who are able but refuse to provide necessary information or take a required action are subject to penalties. PAM, Item 105, p. 5.

Verifications

All Programs

Clients must take actions within their ability to obtain verifications. DHS staff must assist when necessary. See PAM 130 and PEM 702. PAM, Item 105, p. 8.

Assisting the Client

All Programs

The local office must assist clients who ask for help in completing forms (including the DCH-0733-D) or gathering verifications. Particular sensitivity must be shown to clients who are illiterate, disabled or **not** fluent in English. PAM, Item 105, p. 9. Verification is usually required at application/redetermination **and** for a reported change affecting eligibility or benefit level. PAM, Item 130, p. 1.

Obtaining Verification

All Programs

Tell the client what verification is required, how to obtain it, and the due date (see “**Timeliness Standards**” in this item). Use the DHS-3503, Verification Checklist, or for MA redeterminations, the DHS-1175, MA Determination Notice, to request verification. PAM, Item 130, p. 2.

The client must obtain required verification, but you must assist if they need and request help. PAM, Item 130, p. 2.

Timeliness Standards

All Programs (except TMAP)

Allow the client 10 calendar days (**or** other time limit specified in policy) to provide the verification you request. If the client cannot provide the verification despite a reasonable effort, extend the time limit at least once. PAM, Item 130, p. 4.

Send a negative action notice when:

- . the client indicates refusal to provide a verification, **or**
- . the time period given has elapsed and the client has not made a reasonable effort to provide it. PAM, Item 130, p. 4.

MA Only

Send a negative action notice when:

- . the client indicates refusal to provide a verification, **or**
- . the time period given has elapsed. PAM, Item 130, p. 4.

The claimant testified that she did not receive the Verification Checklist from the department, informing her which verifications were needed and the time/date of her scheduled interview. The department produced the Verification Checklist and it does show that it was sent to the correct address, [REDACTED]. The proper mailing and addressing of a letter creates a presumption of receipt. That presumption may be rebutted by evidence. *Stacey v Sankovich*, 19 Mich App 638 (1969); *Good v Detroit Automobile Inter-Insurance Exchange*, 67 Mich App 270 (1976). In this case, the department did use an incorrect address for

a later Change Report and the Notice of Case Action; however, the Verification Checklist was mailed to the proper address. The claimant provided no reason why she would not have received mail at the proper address. Thus, the presumption is that the claimant did receive the mail since the Verification Checklist was mailed to the proper address.

Once the claimant received the Verification Checklist, she was required to provide the information to the department and attend the personal interview. PAM 130. The claimant did not request an extension of time to provide the verifications. Thus, the department properly denied her application in June, 2009.

It is noted that since this was a proper denial, the claimant was not eligible to have her July 8, 2009, application considered retroactive to the May 28, 2009 date of application.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides that the department properly denied the claimant's FAP and FIP application because the claimant had not participated in a personal interview and did not return the required verifications.

Accordingly, the department's actions are UPHELD. SO ORDERED.

/s/

Suzanne L. Keegstra
Administrative Law Judge
for Ismael Ahmed, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: October 28, 2009

Date Mailed: October 29, 2009

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.

SLK [REDACTED]

cc: [REDACTED]