

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.: 2010-14270
Issue No.: 1005
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Load No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date:
February 17, 2010
Macomb County DHS

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Aaron McClintic

HEARING DECISION

This matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge upon pursuant to MCL 400. 9; MCL 400.37 upon Claimant's request for a hearing. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on February 17, 2010. The Claimant appeared and testified. [REDACTED] FIS appeared on behalf of the Department.

ISSUE

Was it proper for the Department to close Claimant's FIP benefits?

FINDINGS OF FACT

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

1. Claimant was an ongoing recipient of FIP benefits.
2. Claimant and household member [REDACTED] were referred to JET/Work First.
3. On August 31, 2009 notice of Noncompliance was sent to Claimant with a notice of a September 15, 2009 triage meeting.

4. At the triage meeting on September 15, 2009 the Department determined that good cause did not exist for Claimant's failure to participate in required activity. Household member [REDACTED] agreed to return to Work First on September 16, 2009 and comply with JET.
5. On September 16, 2009 [REDACTED] did not appear at the Work First site and noncompliance was entered on the system and FIP benefits closed.
6. On September 16, 2009 [REDACTED] had a job interview with [REDACTED]. At the interview he was hired to work and he began working on September 17, 2009.
7. Verification of Employment was submitted by Claimant on September 30, 2009.
8. Claimant requested a hearing contesting the proposed closure on October 12, 2009. Benefits have continued pending the hearing.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

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 Dependant 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).

The Family Independence Program (FIP) provides temporary cash assistance to support a family's movement to self-sufficiency. The recipients of FIP engage in employment and self-sufficiency-related activities so they can become self-supporting. Federal and State laws require

each work eligible individual (WEI) in the FIP group to participate in the Jobs, Education and Training (JET) Program or other employment-related activities unless temporarily deferred or engaged in activities that meet participation requirements. These clients must participate in employment and/or self-sufficiency related activities to increase their employability and obtain stable employment. PEM 230A.

JET is a program administered by the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG) through the Michigan Works Agencies (MWAs). The JET program serves employers and job seekers for employers to have skilled workers and job seekers to obtain jobs that provide economic self-sufficiency. PEM 230 A. A mandatory participant in the JET program who fails without good cause to participate in employment activity must be penalized. PEM 233(a). The penalty for the first occurrence of noncompliance in the JET program is a closure for a minimum of three calendar months under the FIP program. PEM 233(a). Good cause is a valid reason for noncompliance with employment related activities. A claim of good cause must be verified and documented for applicants, members, and recipients. PEM Manual Item 230(a), PEM Manual Item 230(b); 7 CFR Parts 272 and 273.

In the present case, household member [REDACTED] missed an appointment with the Work First agency on September 16, 2009 because he had a job interview and his case was closed. The objective of the Work First program is to assist benefit recipients to obtain employment. To penalize Claimant for taking steps to successfully obtain employment would be unfair and unjust. Household member [REDACTED] had good cause to miss his appointment with the Work First program when he had a job interview, therefore the closure of FIP benefits was improper.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law decides that the Department was incorrect in the closure of FIP benefits, and it is ORDERED that the Department's decision in this regard be, and is hereby REVERSED. Claimant's FIP benefits shall be reinstated and reprocessed taking into account employment income for Joseph Council.

/s/ Aaron McClintic

Aaron McClintic
Administrative Law Judge
for Ismael Ahmed, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: March 19, 2010

Date Mailed: March 19, 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.

AM/hw

cc:

