

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: 2010-30258
Issue No: 3014
Case No: [REDACTED]
Load No: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date:
May 5, 2010
Lenawee County DHS

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Kevin Scully

HEARING DECISION

This matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge by authority of MCL 400.9 and MCL 400.37. Claimant's request for a hearing was received on April 4, 2010. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on Wednesday, May 5, 2010.

ISSUE

Whether the Department of Human Services (Department) properly determined the Claimant's Food Assistance Program (FAP) eligibility?

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 received FAP benefits.
- (2) On March 1, 2010, the Claimant moved into the basement of her husband's home.
- (3) On March 1, 2010, the Department sent the Claimant a Verification Checklist

with a due date of March 11, 2010.

(4) On March 12, 2010, the Department notified the Claimant that her FAP benefits had been terminated.

(5) The Department received the Claimant's request for a hearing on April 4, 2010, protesting the amount of her FAP allotment.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Food Assistance Program (FAP) (formerly known as the Food Stamp 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 Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), the Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM), Reference Table Manual (RFT), and the Bridges Reference Manual (BRM).

Clients must cooperate with the local office in determining initial and ongoing eligibility. This includes the completion of necessary forms. BAM 105, p. 5. Verification means documentation or other evidence to establish the accuracy of the client's verbal or written statements. BAM 130, p. 1. Verification is usually required at application/redetermination and for a reported change affecting eligibility or benefit level when it is required by policy, required as a local office option, or information regarding an eligibility factor is unclear, inconsistent, incomplete, or contradictory. BAM 130, p. 1. The Department uses documents, collateral contacts, or home calls to verify information. BAM 130, p. 1. A collateral contact is a direct contact with a person, organization, or agency to verify information from the client. BAM 130, p. 2. When documentation is not available, or clarification is needed, collateral contact may be necessary. BAM 130, p. 2.

The Department uses the composition of the group of people living within the client's household as a variable for determining FAP benefits. The FAP group is determined by

- who lives together,
- the relationship of the people who live together,
- whether the people living together purchase and prepare food together or separately,
- and whether the person(s) reside in an eligible living situation. BEM 212.
- Spouses who are legally married and live together must be in the same group. BEM 212.

In this case, the Claimant reported to the Department that she had moved in with her husband. Even though the Claimant paid her husband rent to live in his house, and may purchase and prepare her food separately, policy requires that spouses living in the same household be counted in the same FAP group. Because it is mandatory for her spouse to be included in her FAP group, the Department was justified in requesting verification of the spouse's income. When the Department did not receive this verification information before the due date, the Department was justified in terminating the Claimant's FAP benefits.

Therefore the Department has established that it acted in accordance with policy when it terminated the Claimant's FAP benefits for failure to provide requested verifications.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides that the Department acted in accordance with policy in terminating the Claimant's FAP benefits for failure to provide requested verifications.

The Department's FAP eligibility determination is AFFIRMED, it is SO ORDERED.

/s/ _____
Kevin Scully
Administrative Law Judge
for Ismael Ahmed, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: May 17, 2010

Date Mailed: May 18, 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 60 days of the filing of the original request.

The Claimant may appeal the Decision and Order to Circuit Court within 30 days of the receipt 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.

KS/vc

cc:

