

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: 2010-4519

Issue No: 3008

Case No:

Load No:

Hearing Date:

January 28, 2010

Washtenaw County DHS

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Steven M. Brown

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 conducted from [REDACTED] on January 28, 2010.

ISSUE

Whether the Department properly denied Claimant's Food Assistance Program (FAP) application based upon her failure to provide requested verification(s)?

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 29, 2009, Claimant applied for FAP benefits.
- (2) On May 29, 2009, the Department gave Claimant a Verification Checklist which required that she return requested income verification(s) by June 15, 2009.

(Exhibit 1)

(3) On June 9, 2009, Claimant sent the Department an email to inquire whether it had received her paystubs she had sent. (Hearing Summary)

(4) On June 10, 2009, the Department sent Claimant an email that it had not received the information and “would let her know if I needed any information I would let her know.” (Hearing Summary)

(5) On June 23, 2009, there was additional contact between the Department and Claimant during which the Department told Claimant that it would check and let her know if it had received her information and/or needed anything more from her.

(6) On July 28, 2009, the Department denied Claimant’s FAP application because she failed to provide information needed to determine eligibility. (Exhibit 3)

(7) On September 1, 2009, the Department received Claimant’s hearing request protesting the denial of her application for FAP benefits.

#### 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. Departmental policies are found in the Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), the Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM), 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 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

Clients are allowed 10 calendar days (or other time limit specified in policy) to provide the verifications requested by the Department. BAM 130, p. 4 If the client cannot provide the verification despite a reasonable effort, the time limit should be extended at least once. BAM 130, p. 4 Verifications are considered timely if received by the date they are due. BAM 130, p. 4 A negative action notice should be sent when the client indicates a refusal to provide the verification or the time period provided has lapsed and the client has not made a reasonable effort to provide it. BAM 130, p. 4 For MA only, the Department should extend the time limit up to three times and the negative action notice should be sent when the client indicates a refusal to provide the verification or the time period given has elapsed. BAM 130, p. 5

Clients are allowed a reasonable opportunity to resolve any discrepancy between statements and information obtained through another source. BAM 130, p. 6 Disagreements and misunderstandings should be resolved at the lowest possible level to avoid unnecessary hearings. BAM 600, p. 11

In the instant case, Claimant sent the information it requested. Claimant contacted the Department to make sure it received the information. The Department told Claimant it would check on two occasions and let her know if it received it and/or needed anything further. Under these circumstances, I find that Claimant made a reasonable effort to provide the proofs requested by the Department. With that said, I do not find that the Department established that it acted in accordance with policy in denying Claimant's application for FAP benefits.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, does not find that the Department acted in accordance with policy in denying Claimant's application for FAP benefits.

Accordingly, the Department's FAP eligibility determination is REVERSED, it is SO ORDERED.

- (1) Request any information from Claimant necessary to process her FAP application and process it from the application date.
- (2) Issue Claimant supplemental benefits she is entitled to, if any.
- (3) Notify Claimant in writing of the Department's revised determination.
- (4) Claimant retains the right to request a hearing if she would like to contest the Department's revised determination.

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/S/  
Steven M. Brown  
Administrative Law Judge  
for Ismael Ahmed, Director  
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: February 2, 2010

Date Mailed: February 2, 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.

SMB/db

cc:

