

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No: 2010-49033  
Issue No: 1003  
Case No: [REDACTED]  
Load No: [REDACTED]  
Hearing Date:  
September 21, 2010  
Kalamazoo County DHS

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Gary F. Heisler

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 hearing was held on September 21, 2010. Claimant appeared and testified.

ISSUE

Did the Department of Human Services properly close Claimant's Family Independence Program (FIP) case due to non-cooperation with the Office of Child Support?

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 Family Independence Program (FIP) benefit.
- (2) On May 20, 2010, the Office of Child Support issued a non-cooperation notice for Claimant.
- (3) On June 4, 2010, the Office of Child Support issued a cooperation notice for Claimant.
- (4) On June 16, 2010, Claimant was sent a Notice of Case Action (DHS-1605) stating her Family Independence Program (FIP) case would close July 1, 2010, due to non-cooperation in establishing paternity.
- (5) On June 24, 2010, Claimant filed a timely request for 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 Dependent Children (ADC) program effective October 1, 1996. Department policies are found in the Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), the Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) and the Program Reference Manual (PRM).

Department policy provides the following guidance for case workers. The Department's policies are available on the internet through the Department's website.

### **CHILD SUPPORT**

#### **DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY**

Families are strengthened when children's needs are met. Parents have a responsibility to meet their children's needs by providing support and/or cooperating with the department including the Office of Child Support (OCS), the Friend of the Court (FOC) and the prosecuting attorney to establish paternity and/or obtain support from an absent parent.

#### **DEPARTMENT POLICY**

##### **FIP, CDC Income Eligible, MA and FAP**

Clients must comply with all requests for action or information needed to establish paternity and/or obtain child support on behalf of children for whom they receive assistance, unless a claim of good cause for not cooperating has been granted or is pending.

Absent parents are required to support their children. Support includes **all** of the following:

- Child support.
- Medical support.
- Payment for medical care from any third party.

**Note:** For purposes of this item, a parent who does not live with the child due solely to the parent's active duty in a uniformed service of the U.S. is considered to be living in the child's home.

Failure to cooperate without good cause results in disqualification. Disqualification includes member removal, as well as denial or closure of program benefits, depending on the type of assistance (TOA). See [Support Disqualification](#) in this item.

## **SUPPORT DISQUALIFICATION**

### **FIP, CDC Income Eligible, MA and FAP**

You will be notified of a client's failure to cooperate by the SS or the child support non-cooperation report. Start the support disqualification procedure upon receipt of this notice. See Wizards for specific instructions.

Do **not** impose the disqualification if any of the following occur on or before the timely hearing request date:

- You are notified by OC S that the individual has cooperated.
- The case closes for another reason.
- The non-cooperative client leaves the group.
- Support/paternity action is no longer a factor in the child's eligibility (for example, the child leaves the group).
- Client cooperates with the requirement to return assigned support payments to DHS or the support is certified. (BEM 255)

In this case the Claimant became cooperative before the timely hearing request date on the Notice of Case Action (D HS-1605). The policy cited above clearly states that the disqualification should not be imposed.

### **DECISION AND ORDER**

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides the Department of Human Services DID NOT properly close Claimant's

Family Independence Program (FIP) case due to non-cooperation with the Office of Child Support.

It is ORDERED that the actions of the Department of Human Services, in this matter, are REVERSED.

It is further ORDERED that Claimant's Family Independence Program (FIP) case not be closed on the basis of non-cooperation with the Office of Child Support.

/s/

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Gary F. Heisler  
Administrative Law Judge  
for Ismael Ahmed, Director  
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: September 28, 2010

Date Mailed: September 29, 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.

GFH/alc

■ [REDACTED]