

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.: 20119321
Issue No.: 1005; 3000
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Load No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: February 3, 2011
Wayne County DHS

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Susan C. Burke

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 February 3, 2011. Claimant appeared and testified. The Department of Human Services (Department) was represented by [REDACTED], Case Manager.

ISSUE

Was the Department correct in closing Claimant's Family Independence Program (FIP) case for failing to cooperate with the Department?

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 FIP recipient.

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2. On November 15, 2010 Claimant received correspondence requesting she contact the Child Support Agency to cooperate in establishing paternity.
3. Claimant requested a hearing on November 15, 2010.
4. The Department closed Claimant's FIP case effective December 1, 2010, due to non-cooperation in establishing paternity or securing child support.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

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 (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers FIP pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and MAC R400.3101-3131. FIP 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).

Clients must cooperate with the local Department office in obtaining verification for determining initial and ongoing eligibility. BAM 130. The questionable information might be from the client or a third party. *Id.* The Department can use documents, collateral contacts or home calls to verify information. *Id.* The client should be allowed 10 calendar days to provide the verification. If the client cannot provide the verification despite a reasonable effort, the time limit to provide the information should be extended at least once. BAM 130. If the client refuses to provide the information or has not made a reasonable effort within the specified time, then policy directs that a negative action be issued. BAM 130.

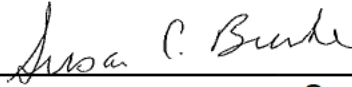
In the present case, the Department did not submit into evidence a Notice of Noncooperation issued to Claimant, nor did it submit testimony from the Office of Child Support or any other evidence substantiating Claimant's alleged noncooperation. Claimant testified credibly that she made several attempts to contact the Office of Child Support by phone, but no one from that agency would explain to her what she was required to do. Without detailed proof of noncooperation, this Administrative Law Judge cannot find that Claimant failed to cooperate with respect to child support. Therefore, the Department was incorrect in closing Claimant's FIP case. It is noted that Claimant requested a hearing on Food Assistance as well, but it appears that the Department did not take a negative action with respect to this issue and the evidence shows that Claimant has yet to apply for Food Assistance.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, finds that the Department was not correct in its decision to close Claimant's FIP case, and its decision is, therefore, REVERSED. It is ORDERED that Claimant's FIP benefits shall be reinstated as of December 1, 2010, if Claimant otherwise qualifies, and all missed benefits shall be made in the form of supplemental payments. The issue regarding Food Assistance is DISMISSED pursuant to MAC R 400.903(1) and BAM 600, as no negative action was taken on Claimant's Food

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Assistance application or case.



Susan C. Burke
Administrative Law Judge
For Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: February 14, 2011

Date Mailed: February 14, 2011

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 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.

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