

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: 2011-1029
Issue No: 3008
Case No: [REDACTED]
Load No: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date:
November 1, 2010
Ottawa County DHS

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Suzanne L. Morris

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 November 1, 2010. The claimant personally appeared and provided testimony, along with her mother, Beverly Stone.

ISSUE

Did the department properly deny the claimant's Food Assistance Program (FAP) application for failure to return the required verifications?

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 submitted an application for FAP benefits on June 7, 2010.
2. On June 11, 2010, the claimant was mailed a Verification Checklist (DHS-3503) requiring the claimant to submit proof of disability and any unearned income. These items were due to the department by June 21, 2010. (Department Exhibit 2 - 3)

3. The department did receive any documents from the claimant. The claimant was mailed a Notice of Case Action (DHS-1605) on August 2, 2010 that indicated her FAP application had been denied for failure to provide the required verifications. (Department Exhibit 1 - 2)

5. The claimant submitted a hearing request on September 1, 2010.

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. Department policies are found in the Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), the Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) and the Program Reference Manual (PRM).

Department policy states:

CLIENT OR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility to Cooperate

All Programs

Clients must cooperate with the local office in determining initial and ongoing eligibility. This includes completion of the necessary forms. BAM, Item 105, p. 5.

Refusal to Cooperate Penalties

All Programs

Clients who are able but refuse to provide necessary information or take a required action are subject to penalties. BAM, Item 105, p. 5.

Verifications

All Programs

Clients must take actions within their ability to obtain verifications. DHS staff must assist when necessary. See BAM 130 and BEM 702. BAM, Item 105, p. 8.

Assisting the Client

All Programs

The local office must assist clients who ask for help in completing forms (including the DCH-0733-D) or gathering verifications. Particular sensitivity must be shown to clients who are illiterate, disabled or **not** fluent in English. BAM, Item 105, p. 9.

Verification is usually required at application/redetermination **and** for a reported change affecting eligibility or benefit level. BAM, Item 130, p. 1.

Obtaining Verification

All Programs

Tell the client what verification is required, how to obtain it, and the due date (see “**Timeliness Standards**” in this item). Use the DHS-3503, Verification Checklist, or for MA redeterminations, the DHS-1175, MA Determination Notice, to request verification. BAM, Item 130, p. 2.

The client must obtain required verification, but you must assist if they need and request help. BAM, Item 130, p. 2.

Timeliness Standards

All Programs (except TMAP)

Allow the client 10 calendar days (**or** other time limit specified in policy) to provide the verification you request. If the client cannot provide the verification despite a reasonable effort, extend the time limit at least once. BAM, Item 130, p. 4.

Send a negative action notice when:

- . the client indicates refusal to provide a verification, **or**
- . the time period given has elapsed and the client has not made a reasonable effort to provide it. BAM, Item 130, p. 4.

In this case, the claimant is disputing the denial of her FAP application for failure to submit the required verifications.

Claimants are required to comply with the local office to allow the department to determine initial or ongoing eligibility. BAM 105. The department informs the client what verification is required, how to obtain it, and the due date by using the Verification Checklist form (DHS-3503). BAM 130. Clients are provided ten days to return the verifications, but can request an extension of time to provide the verifications. BAM 130. If the time period to provide the verifications elapses and the verifications have not been provided, the department is directed to send a negative action notice. BAM 130.

The claimant testified that she is not sure if she received the Verification Checklist (DHS-3503). The claimant's mother testified that if she gets any mail addressed to her daughter, she usually gives the mail to the claimant. However, the claimant's mother did indicate that her daughter was in a rehabilitation center from June 27 through July 12, 2010. The claimant's mother testified that she is not sure if she saw a Verification Checklist that was mailed from the department.

The claimant does not dispute that the requested documents were not returned to the department. There is no evidence to suggest that the Verification Checklist was not received by the claimant. Department policy directs the department to deny an application once the time period has elapsed to provide the required verifications.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides that the department properly denied the claimant's FAP application for failure to turn in the required verifications.

Accordingly, the department's actions are UPHeld. SO ORDERED.

/s/
Suzanne L. Morris
Administrative Law Judge
for Ismael Ahmed, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: November 9, 2010

Date Mailed: November 9, 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.

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