

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
**MICHIGAN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING SYSTEM**  
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS FOR THE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

**IN THE MATTER OF:**



Reg. No. 2012-11728  
Issue No. 1038  
Case No. [REDACTED]  
Hearing Date: December 12, 2011  
County: Wayne County

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE:** Susan C. Burke

**HEARING DECISION**

This matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge upon Claimant's request for a hearing made pursuant to MCL 400.9 and MCL 400.37, which govern the administrative hearing and appeal process. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on December 12, 2011, from Detroit, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included Claimant. Participants on behalf of Department of Human Services (Department) included [REDACTED]

**ISSUE**

Whether the Department properly closed Claimant's case for benefits under Family Independence Program (FIP) based on Claimant's failure to participate in employment-related activities.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

The Administrative Law Judge, based on the competent, material, and substantial evidence on the whole record, finds as material fact:

1. Claimant was an ongoing recipient of FIP benefits and was required to participate in employment-related activities.
2. On August 31, 2011, the Department sent Claimant a Notice of Noncompliance informing Claimant of a failure to participate in employment-related activities on August 29, 2011 and scheduled a triage on September 7, 2011.
3. Claimant did not attend the triage.
4. Claimant  did  did not participate in employment-related activities.

5. The Department closed Claimant's FIP case effective October 1, 2011 and imposed a sanction claiming Claimant failed to participate in work-related activities.
6. This was Claimant's  first  second  third sanction for failing to comply with JET obligations.
7. On November 8, 2011, Claimant requested a hearing disputing the Department's action.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

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

The Family Independence Program (FIP) was established pursuant to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Public Law 104-193, 42 USC 601, *et seq.* The Department (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers FIP pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and 1999 AC, Rule 400.3101 through Rule 400.3131. FIP replaced the Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) program effective October 1, 1996.

In order to increase their employability and obtain employment, work eligible individuals (WEI) seeking FIP are required to participate in the JET Program or other employment-related activity unless temporarily deferred or engaged in activities that meet participation requirements. BEM 230A; BEM 233A. Failing or refusing to attend or participate in a JET program or other employment service provider without good cause constitutes a noncompliance with employment or self-sufficient related activities. BEM 233A. Good cause is a valid reason for noncompliance which is beyond the control of the noncompliant person. BEM 233A. JET participants will not be terminated from a JET program without the Department first scheduling a triage meeting with the client to jointly discuss noncompliance and good cause. BEM 233A. Good cause must be based on the best information available at the triage and must be considered even if the client does not attend the triage. BEM 233A. In processing a FIP closure, the Department is required to send the client a Notice of Noncompliance (DHS-2444) which must include the date(s) of the noncompliance, the reason the client was determined to be noncompliant, and the penalty duration. BEM 233A.

In the present case, Claimant did not attend the triage. According to the Department Hearing Summary, "The client did not show or call. Therefore the agency (DHS) could not make a determination and the client was given no good cause." However, the Department is required to determine good cause based on the best information

available at the triage, even if Claimant is not present at the triage. It appears from the Department information, that Claimant was given a no good cause finding simply because she did not attend the triage. The Department was not correct in its action as it did not follow policy as recited in the preceding paragraph. In addition, it appears that Claimant did participate in work-related activities on the August 29, 2011 alleged date of non-participation. Claimant testified credibly that she was a full-time student and her JET worker told her that this would defer her from JET. No JET worker testified otherwise at the hearing. Therefore, the Department was not correct in imposing a sanction on Claimant's FIP case and in closing Claimant's FIP case.

Based upon the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, the Administrative Law Judge concludes that the Department  properly closed Claimant's FIP case.  improperly closed Claimant's FIP case.

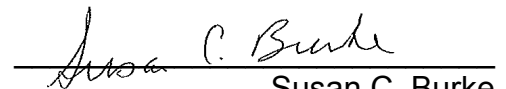
### **DECISION AND ORDER**

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, finds that the Department  did act properly.  did not act properly.

Accordingly, the Department's decision is  AFFIRMED  REVERSED for the reasons stated on the record.

THE DEPARTMENT IS ORDERED TO DO THE FOLLOWING WITHIN 10 DAYS OF THE DATE OF MAILING OF THIS DECISION AND ORDER:

1. Remove the sanction from Claimant's FIP case.
2. Initiate reinstatement of Claimant's FIP case, effective October 1, 2011, if Claimant is otherwise eligible.
3. Initiate issuance of FIP supplements October 1, 2011 and ongoing if Claimant is otherwise eligible for FIP.

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

Date Signed: 12/14/11

Date Mailed: 12/14/11

**NOTICE:** Michigan Administrative Hearing System (MAHS) 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. MAHS 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. (60 days for FAP cases)

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.

Claimant may request a rehearing or reconsideration for the following reasons:

- A rehearing **MAY** be granted if there is newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome of the original hearing decision.
- A reconsideration **MAY** be granted for any of the following reasons:
  - misapplication of manual policy or law in the hearing decision,
  - typographical errors, mathematical error, or other obvious errors in the hearing decision that effect the substantial rights of the claimant:
  - the failure of the ALJ to address other relevant issues in the hearing decision.

Request must be submitted through the local DHS office or directly to MAHS by mail at  
Michigan Administrative Hearings  
Reconsideration/Rehearing Request  
P. O. Box 30639  
Lansing, Michigan 48909-07322

SB/sm

cc:



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