

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

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

[REDACTED]

Reg. No.: 2012-6604  
Issue No.: 1003; 3008  
Case No.: [REDACTED]  
Hearing Date: December 5, 2011  
County: Wayne County

**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 following Claimant's request for a hearing. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on December 5, 2011, from Detroit, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included Claimant. Participants on behalf of Department of Human Services (Department) included [REDACTED] FIM.

**ISSUE**

Did the Department properly propose to close Claimant's Family Independence Program (FIP) case and decrease Claimant's Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits due to noncooperation with child support issues?

**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  applied for benefits  received benefits for:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Family Independence Program (FIP). | <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Medical Assistance (AMP).    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Food Assistance Program (FAP).     | <input type="checkbox"/> State Disability Assistance (SDA). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Assistance (MA).                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development and Care (CDC).  |

2. The Department closed Claimant's FIP case and decreased Claimant's FAP benefits, effective November 1, 2011, due to refusal to cooperate in child support matters.
3. On October 17, 2011 Claimant filed a hearing request, protesting the Department's action.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

Department policies are contained 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, 8 USC 601, *et seq.* The Department administers the FIP program pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and MAC R 400.3101-3131.

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 (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers FAP pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and 1999 AC, Rule 400.3001 through Rule 400.3015.

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. Failure to cooperate without good cause results in disqualification. Disqualification includes member removal, denial of program benefits, and/or case closure, depending on the program. BEM 255.

BEM 255, p. 7 instructs:

Cooperation is required in all phases of the process to establish paternity and obtain support. It includes **all** of the following:

- Contacting the support specialist when requested.
- Providing all known information about the absent parent.
- Appearing at the office of the prosecuting attorney when requested.
- Taking any actions needed to establish paternity and obtain child support (including but not limited to testifying at hearings or obtaining blood tests).

In the present case, the Department presented no evidence that Claimant did not cooperate in child support matters except a screen showing that the Office of Child Support imposed a sanction. No witness from the Office of Child Support was called to

offer testimony regarding noncooperation. Claimant testified that she did not know why the sanction from the Office of Child Support was imposed.

Based upon the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated within the record, the Administrative Law Judge concludes that the Department improperly closed Claimant's FIP case and decreased Claimant's FAP due to refusal to cooperate in child support matters. It is noted that the Department presented documentation that purported to show that Claimant did not participate in work-related activities, but the Notice of Case Action dated October 10, 2011 indicates only the failure to cooperate in child support matters as the reason for closure.

**DECISION AND ORDER**

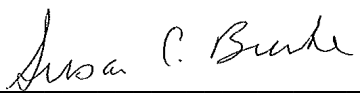
The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, finds that the Department

did act properly.  did not act properly.

Accordingly, it is ORDERED that the Department's  AMP  FIP  FAP  MA  SDA  CDC 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. Initiate removal of the child support and FIP sanctions on Claimant's FIP and FAP cases.
2. Initiate reinstatement of Claimant's FIP case, effective November 1, 2011 if Claimant is otherwise eligible for FIP.
3. Initiate restoration of Claimant's FAP benefits, November 1, 2011 and ongoing, if Claimant is otherwise eligible for FAP.
4. Initiate issuance of FIP and FAP supplements to Claimant for any missed or increased payments, if Claimant is otherwise eligible.

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

Date Signed: 12/9/11

Date Mailed: 12/9/11

**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

SCB/sm

cc: [REDACTED]