

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

IN THE MATTER OF:



Reg. No. 2012-76625
Issue No. 1038
Case No. [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: January 28, 2013
County: WAYNE (76)

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 January 28, 2013, from Detroit, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included Claimant and [REDACTED]. Participants on behalf of Department of Human Services (Department) included [REDACTED].

ISSUE

Whether the Department properly closed Claimant's case for benefits under the 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 and was required to participate in employment-related activities.
2. On June 5, 2012, the Department sent Claimant a Notice of Noncompliance informing Claimant of a failure to participate in employment-related activities and setting a triage date of June 19, 2012. (Exhibit 4)
3. A Triage Outcome Form dated June 19, 2012, indicates, "Good cause could not be determined. Client understands case will be sanctioned if grades are not provided." (Exhibit 5)

4. Claimant submitted grades to the Department.
5. On July 23, 2012, a Notice of case Action was issued, closing Claimant's FIP case, effective September 1, 2012 due to failure to participate in employment and/or self-sufficiency-related activities without good cause. (Exhibit 8)
6. On September 7, 2012, 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, a Triage Outcome Form dated June 19, 2012, indicates, "Good cause could not be determined. Client understands case will be sanctioned if grades are not provided." (Exhibit 5) First, the Department did not indicate to which grades it

was referring. Second, the Department did not indicate by when and to whom the grades were to be provided. Third, Claimant testified without contradiction from the Department that she provided grades to her worker via facsimile. The Department nevertheless issued a Notice of Case Action on July 23, 2012, closing Claimant's FIP case, effective September 1, 2012.

I cannot find that with such vague instructions from the Department on its Triage Outcome Form that the Department could reasonably hold Claimant responsible for not participating in employment-related activities. Moreover, Claimant testified credibly and without contradiction from the Department that she did fax grades to her worker. I therefore find that Claimant did participate in employment-related activities.

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.

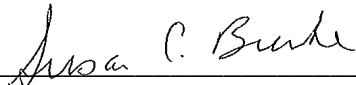
DECISION AND ORDER

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 SHALL INITIATE WITHIN 10 DAYS THE FOLLOWING:

1. Remove the sanction from Claimant's case.
2. Initiate reinstatement of Claimant's FIP case, effective September 1, 2012, if Claimant is otherwise eligible for FIP.
3. Issue FIP supplements, in accordance with Department policy.



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

2012-76625//SB

Date Signed: January 30, 2013

Date Mailed: January 30, 2013

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 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/tm

cc:

