

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No.: 201325848
Issue No.: 1005
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: July 17, 2013
County: Kent

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: C. Adam Purnell

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 July 17, 2013 from Lansing, Michigan. Claimant personally appeared and provided testimony. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included [REDACTED] (Family Independence Manager) and [REDACTED] (Case Manager).

ISSUE

Due to a failure to comply with the verification requirements, did the Department properly close Claimant's case for Family Independence Program (FIP)?

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the competent, material, and substantial evidence on the whole record, including testimony of witnesses, finds as material fact:

1. Claimant was receiving FIP.
2. Claimant was required to submit requested verification by November 13, 2012.
3. On November 19, 2012, the Department closed Claimant's case.
4. On November 19, 2012, the Department sent notice of the closure of Claimant's case.
5. On January 28, 2013, Claimant filed a hearing request, protesting the closure of her case.

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 1997 AACS R 400.3101-3131. FIP replaced the Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) program effective October 1, 1996.

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 1997 AACS R 400.3001-3015

The Medical Assistance (MA) program is established by the Title XIX of the Social Security Act and is implemented by Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The Department (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers the MA program pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and MCL 400.105.

The State Disability Assistance (SDA) program which provides financial assistance for disabled persons is established by 2004 PA 344. The Department (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers the SDA program pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and 1998-2000 AACS R 400.3151-400.3180.

The Child Development and Care (CDC) program is established by Titles IVA, IVE and XX of the Social Security Act, the Child Care and Development Block Grant of 1990, and the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. The program is implemented by Title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 98 and 99. The Department provides services to adults and children pursuant to MCL 400.14(1) and 1997 AACS R 400.5001-5015.

The Department must periodically redetermine an individual's eligibility for active programs. BAM 210. The redetermination process includes thorough review of all eligibility factors. BAM 210. Redetermination, semi-annual and mid-certification forms are often used to redetermine eligibility of active programs. BAM 210. A complete redetermination is required at least every 12 months. BAM 210.

Bridges generates a redetermination packet to the client 3 (three) days prior to the negative action cut-off date in the month before the redetermination is due. BAM 210. The packet is sent to the mailing address in Bridges. The packet is sent to the physical address when there is no mailing address. BAM 210.

For all programs, a redetermination/review packet is considered complete when **all** of the sections of the redetermination form including the signature section are completed. BAM 210. When a complete packet is received, the Department worker shall record the receipt in Bridges as soon as administratively possible. BAM 210. If the redetermination is submitted through MI Bridges, the receipt of the packet will be automatically recorded. BAM 210. If the redetermination packet is not logged in by the negative action cutoff date of the redetermination month, Bridges generates a DHS-1605, Notice of Case Action, and automatically closes the EDG. BAM 210.

For FIP, verifications are due the same date as the redetermination/review interview. BAM 210.

Here, the Department closed Claimant's FIP case after she allegedly failed to return her redetermination packet prior to the November 13, 2012 due date. Claimant, on the other hand, contends that the Department improperly closed her FIP case. Claimant testified that she faxed the packet on or about November 20, 2012 and then again on December 3, 2012. Claimant also testified that she called her caseworker and left a voicemail message indicating that she was unable to make the telephone interview. Claimant was not clear about the exact date she faxed the packet and did not provide any documentation to support that she faxed the packet prior to the due date. Claimant did not provide a fax transmittal sheet. The Department worker who attended the hearing testified that there was no record of the redetermination packet being received prior to the November 13, 2012 due date.

Testimony and other evidence must be weighed and considered according to its reasonableness. *Gardiner v Courtright*, 165 Mich 54, 62; 130 NW 322 (1911); *Dep't of Community Health v Risch*, 274 Mich App 365, 372; 733 NW2d 403 (2007). The weight and credibility of this evidence is generally for the fact-finder to determine. *Dep't of Community Health*, 274 Mich App at 372; *People v Terry*, 224 Mich App 447, 452; 569 NW2d 641 (1997). Moreover, it is for the fact-finder to gauge the demeanor and veracity of the witnesses who appear before him, as best he is able. See, e.g., *Caldwell v Fox*, 394 Mich 401, 407; 231 NW2d 46 (1975); *Zeeland Farm Services, Inc v JBL Enterprises, Inc*, 219 Mich App 190, 195; 555 NW2d 733 (1996).

This Administrative Law Judge has carefully considered and weighed the testimony and other evidence in the record. The Department worker's evidence and testimony was more credible than Claimant's.

Based upon the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Administrative Law Judge concludes that the Department properly closed Claimant's case.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, finds that the Department did act properly

Accordingly, the Department's decision is **AFFIRMED**.

/s/ _____
C. Adam Purnell
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: July 19, 2013

Date Mailed: July 22, 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 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 affect the substantial rights of the claimant,
 - failure of the ALJ to address other relevant issues in the hearing decision.

201325848/CAP

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

CAP/aca

cc:

