

STATE OF MICHIGAN
STATE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS AND RULES
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

IN THE MATTER OF:



Reg. No.: 201351131
Issue No.:
Case No.:
Hearing Date: October 8, 2013
County: Wayne

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Gary F. Heisler

HEARING DECISION

This matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9 and MCL 400.37 and in accordance with 7 CFR 273.16 and Mich. Admin Code, Rule 400.3130 upon the Department of Human Services' (Department) request for a hearing. After due notice, a hearing was held on October 8, 2013. Respondent did not appear. The record did contain returned mail. In accordance with Bridges Administration Manual (BAM) 720 the hearing proceeded without Respondent. The Department was represented by RA of the Office of Inspector General (OIG).

ISSUE

Whether Respondent committed an Intentional Program Violation (IPV) and whether Respondent received a over-issuance of Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits from October 1, 2012, to May 31, 2013, which the Department is entitled to recoup?

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the clear and convincing evidence on the whole record, finds as material fact:

- (1) Respondent intentionally failed to report information or gave incomplete or inaccurate information needed to make a correct benefit determination by signing an application for assistance on October 18, 2012, which fraudulently stated he had not been convicted of any drug-related felonies after August 22, 1996.
- (2) Respondent was clearly and correctly instructed regarding reporting responsibilities as evidenced by his signature of the assistance application.
- (3) Respondent has no apparent physical or mental impairment that limits his or her understanding or ability to fulfill their reporting responsibilities.
- (4) Respondent committed an Intentional Program Violation (IPV) by submitting a fraudulent assistance application.

(5) October 1, 2012, to May 31, 2013, has correctly been determined as the over-issuance period in this case.

(6) As a result of the Intentional Program Violation (IPV) Respondent received a [REDACTED] over-issuance of Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits during the over-issuance period.

(7) On June 11, 2013, the Office of Inspector General submitted this request for a hearing to disqualify Respondent from receiving Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits.

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 (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers FAP pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and 1997 AACR 400.3001-3015.

In this case, the Department has requested a disqualification hearing to establish an over-issuance of benefits as a result of an Intentional Program Violation (IPV) and the Department has asked that Respondent be disqualified from receiving benefits. Department policies provide the following guidance and are available on the internet through the Department's website.

BAM 720 INTENTIONAL PROGRAM VIOLATIONS DEPARTMENT POLICY

All Programs

Recoupment policies and procedures vary by program and over-issuance (OI) type. This item explains Intentional Program Violation (IPV) processing and establishment.

BAM 700 explains OI discovery, OI types and standards of promptness. BAM 705 explains agency error and BAM 715 explains client error.

DEFINITIONS

All Programs

Suspected IPV means an OI exists for which all three of the following conditions exist:

- The client **intentionally** failed to report information **or intentionally** gave incomplete or inaccurate information needed to make a correct benefit determination, **and**;
- The client was clearly and correctly instructed regarding his or her reporting responsibilities, **and**;

- The client has no apparent physical or mental impairment that limits his or her understanding or ability to fulfill their reporting responsibilities.

IPV is suspected when there is clear and convincing evidence that the client or CDC provider has intentionally withheld or misrepresented information for the **purpose** of establishing, maintaining, increasing or preventing reduction of program benefits or eligibility.

OIG RESPONSIBILITIES

All Programs

Suspected IPV cases are investigated by OIG. Within 18 months, OIG will:

- Refer suspected IPV cases that meet criteria for prosecution to the Prosecuting Attorney.
- Refer suspected IPV cases that meet criteria for IPV administrative hearings to the Michigan Administrative Hearing System (MAHS).
- Return non-IPV cases to the RS.

IPV Hearings

FIP, SDA, CDC, MA and FAP

OIG represents DHS during the hearing process for IPV hearings.

OIG requests IPV hearings when no signed DHS-826 or DHS-830 is obtained, and correspondence to the client is not returned as undeliverable, or a new address is located.

Exception: For FAP only, OIG will pursue an IPV hearing when correspondence was sent using first class mail and is returned as undeliverable.

OIG requests IPV hearing for cases involving:

1. FAP trafficking OIs that are not forwarded to the prosecutor.
2. Prosecution of welfare fraud or FAP trafficking is declined by the prosecutor for a reason other than lack of evidence, **and**;
 - The total OI amount for the FIP, SDA, CDC, MA and FAP programs combined is [REDACTED] or more, **or**;
 - The total OI amount is less than [REDACTED], **and**;
 - The group has a previous IPV, **or**;
 - The alleged IPV involves FAP trafficking, **or**;

- The alleged fraud involves concurrent receipt of assistance (see BEM 222),
or;
- The alleged fraud is committed by a state/government employee.

Excluding FAP, OIG will send the OI to the RS to process as a client error when the DHS-826 or DHS-830 is returned as undeliverable and no new address is obtained.

The evidence in this record indicates that Respondent was approved for State Disability Assistance (SDA) benefits as well as Food Assistance Program (FAP). The entire record and particularly the October 18, 2012 application were closely reviewed for indications of an impairment that limited Respondent's understanding or ability to fulfill their reporting responsibilities. Department of Human Services Department of Human Services Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) 261 Disability-SDA (2013) describes the non-financial eligibility factors for SDA. Eligibility can be based on many factors that do not entail mental deficiencies. There is no evidence in the record which even hints that Respondent was incapable of filling out the application truthfully. A more detailed analysis of the evidence presented, applicable Department policies, and reasoning for the decision are contained in the recorded record.

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 has established by clear and convincing evidence that Respondent committed an Intentional Program Violation (IPV) which resulted in a [REDACTED] over-issuance of Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits that the Department is entitled to recoup. This is Respondent's 1st Intentional Program Violation (IPV) of the Food Assistance Program (FAP) and the Department may disqualify Respondent from receiving Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits in accordance with Department of Human Services Bridges Administration Manual (BAM) 720 (2013).

It is ORDERED that the actions of the Department of Human Services, in this matter, are **UPHELD**.

/s/ _____
Gary F. Heisler
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura D. Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: 10/21/2013

Date Mailed: 10/22/2013

201351131/GFH

NOTICE: The law provides that within 30 days of receipt of the above Decision and Order, the Respondent may appeal it to the Circuit Court for the County in which he/she lives.

GFH/sw

cc:

