

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

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Reg. No.: 2013-62624
Issue No.: 3052
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: October 28, 2013
County: Wayne (82-35)

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Alice C. Elkin

HEARING DECISION FOR INTENTIONAL PROGRAM VIOLATION

Upon the request for a hearing by the Department of Human Services (Department), this matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9, and in accordance with Titles 7, 42 and 45 of the Code of Federal Regulation (CFR), particularly 7 CFR 273.16, and with Mich Admin Code, R 400.3130 and R 400.3178. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on October 28, 2013 from Detroit, Michigan. The Department was represented by [REDACTED], Regulation Agent of the Office of Inspector General (OIG).

Participants on behalf of Respondent included: .

Respondent did not appear at the hearing and it was held in Respondent's absence pursuant to 7 CFR 273.16(e), Mich Admin Code R 400.3130(5), or Mich Admin Code R 400.3178(5).

ISSUES

1. Did Respondent receive an overissuance (OI) of
 Family Independence Program (FIP) State Disability Assistance (SDA)
 Food Assistance Program (FAP) Child Development and Care (CDC)
 Medical Assistance (MA)
benefits that the Department is entitled to recoup?
2. Did Respondent commit an Intentional Program Violation (IPV)?
3. Should Respondent be disqualified from receiving
 Family Independence Program (FIP)? State Disability Assistance (SDA)?
 Food Assistance Program (FAP)? Child Development and Care (CDC)?

FINDINGS OF FACT

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

1. The Department's OIG filed a hearing request on August 12, 2013, to establish an OI of benefits received by Respondent as a result of Respondent having allegedly committed an IPV by receiving Michigan-issued FAP benefits while not a Michigan resident.
2. The OIG has has not requested that Respondent be disqualified from receiving program benefits.
3. Respondent was a recipient of FIP FAP SDA CDC MA benefits issued by the Department.
4. Respondent was was not aware of the responsibility to report any changes in circumstances, including moving out of state.
5. Respondent had no apparent physical or mental impairment that would limit the understanding or ability to fulfill this requirement.
6. The Department's OIG indicates that the time period they are considering the fraud period is May 1, 2012, through April 30, 2013.
7. During the alleged fraud period, the Department alleges that Respondent received an OI in FIP FAP SDA CDC MA benefits in the amount of \$2,400.
8. This was Respondent's first second third alleged IPV.
9. A notice of hearing was mailed to Respondent at the last known address and was was not returned by the US Post Office as undeliverable.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Department policies are contained in the Department of Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), Department of Human Services Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM), and Department of Human Services Reference Tables Manual (RFT). Prior to August 1, 2008, Department policies were contained in the Department of Human Services Program Administrative Manuals (PAM), Department of Human Services Program Eligibility Manual (PEM), and Department of Human Services Reference Schedules Manual (RFS).

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 Mich Admin Code, R 400.3001 through R 400.3015.

The Department's OIG requests IPV hearings for the following cases:

- FAP trafficking OIs that are not forwarded to the prosecutor,
- 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 is \$1000 or more, or
 - the total OI amount is less than \$1000, **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.

BAM 720 (February 2013), p. 12.

Intentional Program Violation

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 reporting responsibilities.

BAM 700 (July 2013), p. 6; BAM 720, p. 1.

An IPV is also suspected for a client who is alleged to have trafficked FAP benefits. BAM 720, p. 1.

An IPV requires that the Department establish by clear and convincing evidence that the client has intentionally withheld or misrepresented information for the **purpose** of establishing, maintaining, increasing or preventing reduction of program benefits or eligibility. BAM 720, p. 1 (emphasis in original). Clear and convincing evidence is evidence sufficient to result in a clear and firm belief that the proposition is true. See M Civ JI 8.01.

In this case, the Department alleges that Respondent committed an IPV of his FAP benefits because he failed to notify the Department that he no longer resided in Michigan but continued to receive and use Michigan-issued FAP benefits while out of state. To be eligible for FAP benefits issued by the Department, an individual must be a Michigan resident. BEM 220 (January 2012 and March 2013), p. 1. A person is considered a resident while living in Michigan for any purpose other than a vacation, even if he has no intent to remain in the state permanently or indefinitely. BEM 220, p. 1. A client who resides outside the State of Michigan for more than thirty days is not eligible for FAP benefits issued by the State of Michigan. BEM 212 (April 2012 and November 2012), pp. 2-3.

The Department established that from April 14, 2012, through March 24, 2013, Respondent used FAP benefits issued by the State of Michigan exclusively out of state in Florida. While this evidence may be sufficient to establish that Respondent no longer resided in Michigan and was no longer eligible for FAP benefits, to establish an IPV the Department must present clear and convincing evidence that Respondent **intentionally** withheld or misrepresented information for the purpose of maintaining benefits.

In this case, the Department presented a redetermination Respondent submitted to the Department on May 22, 2012. In his redetermination, Respondent reported a Michigan address even though he had been using his FAP benefits exclusively in Florida beginning April 14, 2012, more than a month earlier. Evidence that Respondent reported a Michigan address while he used the Michigan-issued FAP benefits exclusively in Florida was sufficient to establish, by clear and convincing evidence, in the absence of any explanation to the contrary, that Respondent intentionally withheld information concerning an out-of-state move for the purpose of maintaining benefits. As such, the Department has established that Respondent committed an IPV of FAP benefits.

Disqualification

A court or hearing decision that finds a client committed IPV disqualifies that client from receiving program benefits. BAM 720, p. 12. A disqualified recipient remains a member of an active group as long as he lives with them, and other eligible group members may continue to receive benefits. BAM 720, p. 13.

Clients who commit an IPV are disqualified for a standard disqualification period except when a court orders a different period, or except when the OI relates to MA. BAM 720, p. 13. Refusal to repay will not cause denial of current or future MA if the client is otherwise eligible. BAM 710 (May 2013), p. 2. Clients are disqualified for periods of

one year for the first IPV, two years for the second IPV, lifetime disqualification for the third IPV, and ten years for a FAP concurrent receipt of benefits. BAM 720, p. 16.

Because the Department satisfied its burden of showing that Respondent committed an IPV concerning FAP benefits and this is his first IPV, Respondent is subject to a one-year disqualification under the FAP program.

Overissuance

When a client group receives more benefits than they are entitled to receive, the Department must attempt to recoup the OI. BAM 700, p. 1. The amount of the OI is the benefit amount the client actually received minus the amount the client was eligible to receive. BAM 720, p. 6; BAM 715 (February 2013), pp. 1, 5; BAM 705 (February 2013), p. 5.

Clients are not eligible for FAP benefits if they do not reside in Michigan. BEM 220, p. 1. At the hearing, the Department presented a FAP transaction history that established that Respondent began using Michigan-issued FAP benefits out of state on April 14, 2012, and this out-of-state use continued through March 24, 2013. The Department's evidence also showed that Respondent had been issued a Florida driver's license on March 27, 2013. This evidence established that Respondent did not reside in Michigan. Thus, he was was not eligible for FAP benefits and was overissued FAP benefits for any period he was ineligible to receive FAP benefits.

In this case, the Department alleges that Respondent was overissued [REDACTED] benefits for the period between May 1, 2012, and April 30, 2013, when his case closed and presented a benefit summary inquiry showing the monthly benefits totaling [REDACTED] during this period. Under Department policy, the calculation of the first month of the OI requires that the Department allow time for the 10-day client reporting period, the processing period provided in BAM 220, and the full negative action suspense period. BAM 720, p. 6; BAM 715, p. 4. BAM 220 (May 2012 and November 2012), pp. 3-4 provides that when reliable information indicates that the FAP group left the state, the action must take effect no later than the month after the change. In consideration of out-of-state use that began April 14, 2012, the Department properly determined that the OI period began May 1, 2013. Thus, the Department is entitled to recoup [REDACTED] [REDACTED] it issued to Respondent between May 1, 2012, and April 30, 2013.

DECISION AND ORDER

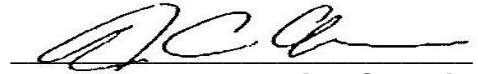
The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, concludes that:

1. Respondent did did not commit an IPV.
2. Respondent did did not receive an OI of program benefits in the amount of \$2,400 from the following program(s) FIP FAP SDA CDC MA.

The Department is ORDERED to initiate recoupment procedures for the amount of [REDACTED] for the period May 1, 2012, to April 30, 2013, in accordance with Department policy.

It is FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent be disqualified from

- FIP FAP SDA CDC for a period of
 12 months. 24 months. lifetime.



Alice C. Elkin
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: November 7, 2013

Date Mailed: November 7, 2013

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.

ACE/pf

cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]