

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

IN THE MATTER OF:



Reg. No.: 201368111
Issue No(s):
Case No.:
Hearing Date: November 20, 2013
County: Kent

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Kevin Scully

**HEARING DECISION FOR CONCURRENT BENEFITS
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 Regulations, 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 November 20, 2013 from Lansing, Michigan. The Department was represented by [REDACTED] 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) Food Assistance Program (FAP)
 Medical Assistance Program (MA)
benefits that the Department is entitled to recoup?
2. Did Respondent, by clear and convincing evidence, commit an Intentional Program Violation (IPV)?
3. Should Respondent be disqualified from receiving
 Family Independence Program (FIP) Food Assistance Program (FAP)

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 September 6, 2013 to establish an OI of benefits received by Respondent as a result of Respondent having received concurrent program benefits and, as such, allegedly committed an IPV.
2. The OIG has has not requested that Respondent be disqualified from receiving program benefits.
3. Respondent was a recipient of FAP FIP MA benefits issued by the Department.
4. On the Assistance Application signed by Respondent on September 9, 2011, Respondent reported that she/he intended to stay in Michigan.
5. Respondent was aware of the responsibility to report changes in her/his residence to the Department.
6. Respondent had no apparent physical or mental impairment that would limit the understanding or ability to fulfill this requirement.
7. Respondent began using FAP FIP MA benefits outside of the State of Michigan beginning in December 29, 2011.
8. The OIG indicates that the time period they are considering the fraud period is December 1, 2011, through August 31, 2012.
9. During the alleged fraud period, Respondent was issued [REDACTED] in FAP FIP MA benefits from the State of Michigan.
10. During the alleged fraud period, Respondent was issued FAP FIP MA benefits from the State of Florida.
11. This was Respondent's first second third alleged IPV.
12. 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 program] is established by the Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended, 7 USC 2011 to 2036a and is implemented by the federal regulations contained in 7 CFR 271.1 to 285.5. The Department (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers FAP pursuant to MCL 400.10 and Mich Admin Code, R 400.3001 to .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 [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.

BAM 720 (July 1, 2013), p. 10.

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 1, 2013), p. 6; 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); see also 7 CFR 273(e)(6). 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.

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 (July 1, 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.

Overissuance

When a client group receives more benefits than they are entitled to receive, the Department must attempt to recoup the OI. BAM 700 (July 2013), p. 1.

In this case, the Respondent acknowledged her responsibility to report any change of residency to the Department on her application for assistance dated September 9, 2011. The Respondent also acknowledged the prohibition of receiving food assistance from another state while participating in the Food Assistance Program (FAP).

The Respondent began using her Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits exclusively outside Michigan on December 29, 2011. Respondent continued to receive Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits until August 31, 2012. The Respondent applied for and received food assistance issued by Florida as of December 20, 2011. The Department's investigation into the Respondent's benefits determined that she no longer had an intent to remain a Michigan and was receiving concurrent food assistance benefits as of December 2011.

The Department has established by clear and convincing evidence that the Respondent failed to report her change of residency to the Department for the purposes of receiving Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits that she was not entitled to, and the

Department has established an Intentional Program Violation (IPV). The Department has established by clear and convincing evidence that the Respondent received food assistance concurrently from two states and that the ten-year disqualification period applies.

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 of FAP FIP MA by clear and convincing evidence.
- 2. Respondent did did not receive an OI of program benefits in the amount of [REDACTED] from the following program(s) FAP FIP MA.

The Department is ORDERED to

- delete the OI and cease any recoupment action.
- initiate recoupment procedures for the amount of [REDACTED] in accordance with Department policy.
- reduce the OI to \$ _____ for the period _____, and initiate recoupment procedures in accordance with Department policy.

It is FURTHER ORDERED that

- Respondent be personally disqualified from participation in the FAP program for 10 years.
- Respondent be disqualified from FIP for
 - 12 months. 24 months. lifetime.

/s/ _____
Kevin Scully
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: 11/22/2013

Date Mailed: 11/22/2013

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.

KS/sw

cc:

