

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

**IN THE MATTER OF:**



Reg. No.: 2013-1008  
Issue No.: 3052  
Case No.: [REDACTED]  
Hearing Date: November 28, 2012  
County: Wayne (17)

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE:** Jan Leventer

**HEARING DECISION FOR INTENTIONAL PROGRAM VIOLATION**

This matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9 and MCL 400.37 upon the Department of Human Services' (Department) request for a hearing. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on November 28, 2012, from Detroit, Michigan, before Administrative Law Judge Michael Bennane. The Department was represented by Derrick Gentry, Regulation Agent, Office of the Inspector General (OIG).

On March 18, 2013, the case was reassigned to Administrative Law Judge Jan Leventer to prepare a decision and order.

Participants on behalf of Respondent included: Respondent and his wife, Sawsan Abdul-Hak.

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 400.3187(5).

**ISSUES**

1. Did Respondent receive an overissuance (OI) of

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Independence Program (FIP) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Food Assistance Program (FAP) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State Disability Assistance (SDA) | <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development and Care (CDC)         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 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)       Food Assistance Program (FAP)  
 State Disability Assistance (SDA)       Child Development and Care (CDC)?

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

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

1. The Department's OIG filed a hearing request on October 29, 2012 to establish an OI of benefits received by Respondent as a result of Respondent having 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  FIP  FAP  SDA  CDC  MA benefits during the period of January, 2009, through August, 2009.
4. Respondent  was  was not aware of the responsibility to report assets and income truthfully and accurately to the Department.
5. Respondent had no apparent physical or mental impairment that would limit his understanding or ability to fulfill this requirement.
6. The Department's OIG indicates that the time period they are considering the fraud period is January-August, 2009.
7. During the alleged fraud period, Respondent was issued \$5,838 in  FIP  FAP  SDA  CDC  MA benefits from the State of Michigan.
8. Respondent was entitled to \$0.00 in  FIP  FAP  SDA  CDC  MA during this time period.
9. Respondent  did  did not receive an OI in the amount of \$5,838 under the  FIP  FAP  SDA  CDC  MA program.
10. The Department  has  has not established that Respondent committed an IPV.
11. This was Respondent's  first  second  third 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 Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), the Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM), and the Reference Tables Manual (RFT).

☒ 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 1999 AC, Rule 400.3001 through Rule 400.3015.

When a client group receives more benefits than they are entitled to receive, the Department must attempt to recoup the overissuance (OI). Department of Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 700 (2013).

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 has intentionally withheld or misrepresented information for the purpose of establishing, maintaining, increasing or preventing reduction of program benefits or eligibility. Department of Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 720 (2013).

The Department's OIG requests IPV hearings for cases when:

- benefit overissuances are not forwarded to the prosecutor,
- prosecution of welfare fraud is declined by the prosecutor for a reason other than lack of evidence, and
- the total overissuance amount is \$1000 or more, or
- the total overissuance amount is less than \$1000, and
  - the group has a previous intentional program violation, or
  - the alleged IPV involves FAP trafficking, or

- the alleged fraud involves concurrent receipt of assistance, or
- the alleged fraud is committed by a state/government employee.

A court or hearing decision that finds a client committed an IPV disqualifies that client from receiving certain program benefits. A disqualified recipient remains a member of an active group as long as he lives with them. Other eligible group members may continue to receive benefits. *Id.*

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. Refusal to repay will not cause denial of current or future MA if the client is otherwise eligible. Department of Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 710 (2009). 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 concurrent receipt of benefits. BAM 720.

Additionally, the Administrative Law Judge incorporates by reference the decision in Department of Human Services v. Sawsan Abdul-Hak, Reg. No. 2013-989, Case No. 102439116, in this decision. In the Abdul-Hak decision, the Department established by clear and convincing evidence that the Respondent, Sawsan Abdul-Hak, committed an intentional program violation of the FAP program, and a finding of IPV was made by the Administrative Law Judge. Department of Human Services v. Sawsan Abdul-Hak, Reg. No. 2013-989, Case No. 102439116.

In addition, the following findings of fact and conclusions of law are entered in this case. The Respondent Michael Berro is the husband of [REDACTED], the Respondent in the above-named decision. Respondent Berro was an adult member of Respondent [REDACTED] FAP family group during the alleged IPV period of January-August, 2009.

The Department's Bridges Administrative Manual 725, "Collection Actions," states that the Department has the authority to impose IPV liability and collect overissuances from any adult in the FAP group. Department of Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 725 (2012). Because Respondent Berro was an adult FAP group member, it is found and determined that the Department has the authority to initiate proceedings against him as well.

In conclusion, based on all of the evidence in this case and the decision in the Abdul-Hak case referenced herein, it is found and determined that the Department has established by clear and convincing evidence that Respondent Berro committed IPV. The Department's request for a finding of IPV is granted in this 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, 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 \$5,838 from the following program(s)  FIP  FAP  SDA  CDC  MA.

The Department is ORDERED to initiate recoupment procedures for the amount of \$5,838 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.



**Jan Leventer**  
Administrative Law Judge  
for Maura Corrigan, Director  
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: March 25, 2013

Date Mailed: March 26, 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.

JL/tm

cc:

