

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

██████████
██████████████████
██████████████████

Reg. No.: 2013-55346
Issue No.: 3019
Case No.: ██████████
Hearing Date: July 25, 2013
County: Wayne (35)

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Eric Feldman

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 25, 2013, from Detroit, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included Claimant. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included ██████████ ██████████ Family Independence Specialist.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly reduce Claimant's Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits effective July 1, 2013, ongoing?

FINDINGS OF FACT

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

1. Claimant was an ongoing recipient of FAP benefits. Exhibit 1.
2. On May 3, 2013, Claimant began working and the Department calculated a new FAP budget due to her employment income.
3. On June 14, 2013, the Department sent Claimant a Notice of Case Action notifying her that her FAP benefits were reduced to the amount of \$179 effective July 1, 2013, ongoing. Exhibit 1.
4. On June 24, 2013, Claimant filed a hearing request, disputing the Department's actions. Exhibit 1.

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 Mich Admin Code, R 400.3001 through R 400.3015.

Claimant was an ongoing recipient of FAP benefits. Exhibit 1. On May 3, 2013, Claimant began working and the Department calculated a new FAP budget due to her employment income. On June 14, 2013, the Department sent Claimant a Notice of Case Action notifying her that her FAP benefits were reduced to the amount of \$179 effective July 1, 2013, ongoing. Exhibit 1.

A group's financial eligibility and monthly benefit amount are determined using: actual income (income that was already received) or prospected income amounts (not received but expected). BEM 505 (October 2010), p. 1. Only countable income is included in the determination. BEM 505, p. 1. Each source of income is converted to a standard monthly amount, unless a full month's income will not be received. BEM 505, p. 1. The Department converts stable and fluctuating income that is received more often than monthly to a standard monthly amount. BEM 505, p. 6. The Department uses one of the following methods: (i) multiply weekly income by 4.3; (ii) multiply amounts received every two weeks by 2.15; or (iii) add amounts received twice a month. BEM 505, p. 6.

Moreover, the Department determines budgetable income using countable, available income for the benefit month being processed. BEM 505, p. 2. The Department uses actual gross income amounts received for past month benefits, converting to a standard monthly amount, when appropriate. BEM 505, p. 2. Except, the Department can use prospective income for past month determinations. BEM 505, p. 2. In prospecting income, the Department is required to use income from the past thirty days if it appears to accurately reflect what is expected to be received in the benefit month, discarding any pay if it is unusual and does not reflect the normal, expected pay amounts. BEM 505, p. 4.

At the hearing, it was not disputed that Claimant had a group size of three and all group members were non-Senior/Disabled/Veteran (SDV). The Department presented the July 2013 FAP budget to review for the hearing. See Exhibit 1. The Department calculated the FAP groups total earned income to be \$1,772. See Exhibit 1. The Department testified that it based this calculation by Claimant earning \$7.60/hr., working approximately 40 hours a week, and being paid weekly. Claimant agreed to these working statistics.

A review of Claimant's earnings does not result in a gross earned income of \$1,772. Using the conversion for weekly income as outlined in BEM 505; Claimant's standard monthly amount would be \$1,307.20 (\$304 weekly pay times 4.3). BEM 505, p. 6.

Based on the foregoing information and evidence, the Department improperly calculated Claimant's FAP Budget for the effective benefit period of July 1, 2013, ongoing. The Department will have to recalculate Claimant's FAP budget.

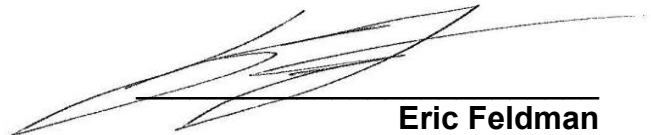
DECISION AND ORDER

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 did not act properly when it calculated Claimant's FAP budget effective July 1, 2013, ongoing.

Accordingly, the Department's ☐ AMP ☐ FIP ☒ FAP ☐ MA ☐ SDA decision is ☐ AFFIRMED ☒ REVERSED for the reasons stated on the record.

☒ THE DEPARTMENT IS ORDERED TO DO THE FOLLOWING WITHIN 10 DAYS OF THE DATE OF MAILING OF THIS DECISION AND ORDER:

1. Begin recalculating the FAP budget for July 1, 2013, ongoing, in accordance with Department policy;
2. Issue supplements to Claimant for any FAP benefits she was eligible to receive but did not from July 1, 2013, ongoing; and
3. Notify Claimant in writing of its FAP decision in accordance with Department policy.



Eric Feldman
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: July 30, 2013

Date Mailed: July 30, 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.

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

EJF/cl

cc:

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[REDACTED]
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