

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

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████████████████████

Reg. No.: 2014-11765
Issue No(s): 1010
Case No.: ██████████
Hearing Date: January 23, 2014
County: Wayne (15)

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Zainab Baydoun

HEARING DECISION

Following Claimant's request for a hearing, this matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9 and 400.37; 7 CFR 273.15 to 273.18; 42 CFR 431.200 to 431.250; 45 CFR 99.1 to 99.33; and 45 CFR 205.10. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on January 23, 2014, from Detroit, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included Claimant and her Authorized Hearing Representative, ██████████, Mental Health Advocate. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included ██████ ██████, Family Independence Specialist.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly process Claimant's Family Independence Program (FIP) benefits?

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 a previous recipient of FIP benefits.
2. On or around March 2013, Claimant's FIP benefits were terminated.
3. On October 11, 2013, Claimant submitted an application for FIP benefits.
4. On or around October 15, 2013, the Department sent Claimant a Notice of Case Action informing her that her application had been denied because she had exceeded the 60 month federal lifetime limit on receipt of FIP assistance.

5. On November 4, 2013, Claimant submitted a hearing request disputing the Department's actions.

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), Department of Human Services Reference Tables Manual (RFT), and Department of Human Services Emergency Relief Manual (ERM).

The Family Independence Program (FIP) was established pursuant to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, PL 104-193, and 42 USC 601 to 679c. The Department (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers FIP pursuant to MCL 400.10 and 400.57a and Mich Admin Code, R 400.3101 to .3131.

The FIP benefit program is not an entitlement. BEM 234 (July 2013), p. 1. Under the federal FIP time limit, individuals are not eligible for continued FIP benefits once they receive a cumulative total of 60 months of FIP benefits unless they are eligible for an exception to the federal time limit. An exception exists for individuals who were, as of January 9, 2013, (1) approved/active for FIP benefits **and** (2) exempt from participation in the Partnership. Accountability.Training.Hope. (PATH) program for domestic violence, establishing incapacity, incapacitated more than 90 days, age 65 or older, or caring for a spouse or child with disabilities. BEM 234, p. 2; MCL 400.57a(4). The exception continues as long as the individual remains eligible for any of the foregoing employment deferral reasons. BEM 234, p. 2. The federal limit count begins October 1996. BEM 234, p. 1.

In the present case, Claimant was previously receiving FIP benefits that were terminated on or around March 2013. The Department testified that Claimant's FIP benefits were terminated on the basis that she had exceeded the 60 month federal lifetime limit for receipt of FIP benefits. Although the Department testified that it sent Claimant a Notice of Case Action informing her of the case closure, this Notice was not presented at the hearing, therefore, the reason for the closure was not established.

Claimant submitted an application for FIP benefits on October 11, 2013. At the hearing, the Department did not present the Notice of Case Action denying Claimant's application, however, Claimant testified that she received a Notice of Case Action on or around October 15, 2013, informing her that the application had been denied on the basis that as of September 1, 2011, Claimant exceeded the 60 month federal lifetime limit on receipt of FIP assistance.

The Department testified that Claimant had received 75 countable months of FIP assistance, however, the Department failed to present any supporting documentation to

establish that Claimant had reached the federal time limit and did not provide a Federal TANF Time Limit Summary or a state time limit counter for review. The Department also failed to present any testimony or other evidence regarding whether any of the months that were counted were considered exemption months.

The Administrative Law Judge, based on the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, if any, finds that the Department failed to satisfy its burden of showing that it acted in accordance with Department policy when it denied Claimant's FIP benefits.

DECISION AND ORDER

Accordingly, the Department's decision is REVERSED.

THE DEPARTMENT IS ORDERED TO BEGIN DOING THE FOLLOWING, IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEPARTMENT POLICY AND CONSISTENT WITH THIS HEARING DECISION, WITHIN 10 DAYS OF THE DATE OF MAILING OF THIS DECISION AND ORDER:

1. Register and process Claimant's October 11, 2013, application for FIP benefits;
2. Issue supplements to Claimant for any FIP benefits she was entitled to receive but did not from the application date, ongoing; and
3. Notify Claimant of its decision in writing.



Zainab Baydoun
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: February 13, 2014

Date Mailed: February 13, 2014

NOTICE OF APPEAL: 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 or Reconsideration was made, within 30 days of the receipt date of the Decision and Order of Reconsideration or Rehearing Decision.

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).

A Request for Rehearing or Reconsideration may be granted when one of the following exists:

- Newly discovered evidence that existed at the time of the original hearing that could affect the outcome of the original hearing decision;
- Misapplication of manual policy or law in the hearing decision which led to a wrong conclusion;
- Typographical, mathematical or other obvious error in the hearing decision that affects the rights of the client;
- Failure of the ALJ to address in the hearing decision relevant issues raised in the hearing request.

The Department, AHR or the claimant must specify all reasons for the request. MAHS will not review any response to a request for rehearing/reconsideration. A request must be *received* in MAHS within 30 days of the date the hearing decision is mailed.

The written request must be faxed to (517) 335-6088 and be labeled as follows:

Attention: MAHS Rehearing/Reconsideration Request

If submitted by mail, the written request must be addressed as follows:

Michigan Administrative Hearings
Reconsideration/Rehearing Request
P.O. Box 30639
Lansing, Michigan 48909-07322

SCB/tm

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