

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED] Reg. No. 2014-29371
[REDACTED] Issue No. 1008
[REDACTED] Case No. [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: March 20, 2014
County: Wayne (76)

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Susan C. Burke

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 March 20, 2014, from Detroit, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included Claimant. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included [REDACTED], FIS and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] FIM

ISSUE

Whether the Department properly closed Claimant's case for benefits under the Family Independence Program (FIP) based on Claimant's failure to participate in employment-related activities without good cause.

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 FIP and was required to participate in employment-related activities.
2. On January 22, 2014, the Department issued a PATH Appointment Notice for Claimant to attend on January 29, 2013.
3. Claimant was unable to attend the PATH appointment due to a medical appointment, and Claimant attempted to phone the Department worker to notify her prior to January 29, 2014.

4. Claimant attempted to notify by phone her Department worker of her change of address on or about February 3, 2014.
5. Claimant's worker did not return Claimant's phone calls.
6. On February 10, 2014, the Department issued a Notice of Case Action, closing Claimant's case, effective March 1, 2014, and a Notice of Noncompliance, notifying Claimant of a triage meeting on February 18, 2014.
7. Claimant did not attend the February 18, 2014 triage meeting because she did not reside at the address the Department used in the triage notice and therefore did not receive the notice.
8. On February 25, 2014, Claimant filed a hearing request disputing the Department's action.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Department policies are found in the Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), the Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) and the Reference Tables Manual (RFT).

The Family Independence Program (FIP) was established pursuant to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Public Law 104-193, 42 USC 601, *et seq.* The Department (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers FIP pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and 1999 AC, Rule 400.3101 through Rule 400.3131. FIP replaced the Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) program effective October 1, 1996.

The Department requires Work Eligible Individuals (WEI) seeking FIP to participate in employment and self-sufficiency-related activities. BEM 233A. Failing, without good cause, to participate in employment or self-sufficiency-related activities results in the WEI being penalized. *Id.* Good cause is a valid reason for noncompliance that is based on factors that are beyond the control of the noncompliant person. *Id.*

PATH participants will not be terminated from a program without the Department first scheduling a triage meeting with the client to jointly discuss noncompliance and good cause. *Id.* Good cause must be based on the best information available at the triage and must be considered even if the client does not attend the triage. *Id.*

In the present case, Claimant testified credibly, and without contradiction from the Department, that she did not receive the Notice of Noncompliance prior to the triage

meeting date and therefore did not attend the triage meeting. At the triage meeting, the Department determined no good cause.

At the hearing, Claimant presented medical documentation which evidenced good cause for her not attending the PATH appointment of January 29, 2014. It is therefore concluded that Claimant had good cause to not participate in work-related activities.

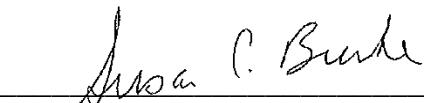
The Administrative Law Judge, based on the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, if any, finds that the Department failed to satisfy its burden of showing that it acted in accordance with Department policy when it closed Claimant's FIP case.

DECISION AND ORDER

Accordingly, the Department's 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. Remove the sanction from Claimant's case.
2. Initiate reinstatement of Claimant's FIP, effective March 1, 2014, if Claimant is otherwise eligible for FIP.
3. Issue FIP supplements for any payment Claimant was entitled to receive, in accordance with Department policy.



Susan C. Burke
Administrative Law Judge
For Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: March 21, 2014

Date Mailed: March 21, 2014

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

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]