

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

IN THE MATTER OF:



Reg. No.: 201426443
Issue No(s): 3002
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: March 6, 2014
County: Wayne (17)

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Robert J. Chavez

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 6, 2014, from Detroit, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included [REDACTED]. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included [REDACTED], Case Manager.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly deny Claimant's application close Claimant's case for:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Independence Program (FIP)? | <input type="checkbox"/> State Disability Assistance (SDA)? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Food Assistance Program (FAP)? | <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development and Care (CDC)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Assistance (MA)? | <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Support Services (DSS)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Medical Assistance (AMP)? | <input type="checkbox"/> State SSI Payments (SSP)? |

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 applied for received:
 FIP FAP MA AMP SDA CDC DSS SSP benefits.
2. On [REDACTED], the Department denied Claimant's application closed Claimant's case

due to failure to return requested verifications.

3. On [REDACTED], the Department sent Claimant/Claimant's Authorized Representative (AR) its decision.
4. On [REDACTED], Claimant/Claimant's Authorized Hearing Representative (AHR) filed a hearing request, protesting 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), and Department of Human Services Reference Tables Manual (RFT).

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 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 Medical Assistance (MA) program is established by the Title XIX of the Social Security Act, 42 USC 1396-1396w-5, and is implemented by 42 CFR 400.200 to 1008.59. The Department of Human Services (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers the MA program pursuant to MCL 400.10 and MCL 400.105.

The Adult Medical Program (AMP) is established by 42 USC 1315 and is administered by the Department pursuant to MCL 400.10.

The State Disability Assistance (SDA) program is established by the Social Welfare Act, MCL 400.1-.119b. The Department of Human Services (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers the SDA program pursuant to MCL 400.10 and Mich Admin Code, R 400.3151-.3180.

The Child Development and Care (CDC) program is established by Titles IVA, IVE and XX of the Social Security Act, 42 USC 601-619, 670-679c, and 1397-1397m-5; the Child Care and Development Block Grant of 1990, PL 101-508, 42 USC 9858 to 9858q; and the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, PL 104-193. The program is implemented by 45 CFR 98.1-99.33. The Department administers the program pursuant to MCL 400.10 and provides services to adults and children pursuant to MCL 400.14(1) and Mich Admin Code, R 400.5001-.5020.

Direct Support Services (DSS) is established by the Social Welfare Act, MCL 400.1-.119b. The program is administered by the Department pursuant to MCL 400.10 and 400.57a and Mich Admin Code R 400.3603.

The State SSI Payments (SSP) program is established by 20 CFR 416.2001-.2099 and the Social Security Act, 42 USC 1382e. The Department administers the program pursuant to MCL 400.10.

Claimant applied for expedited FAP benefits on [REDACTED]. Claimant supplied a phone number; the Department attempted to contact that phone number on [REDACTED] and discovered that the phone number in question was not in service.

On [REDACTED], the Department sent an interview request for the claimant. This interview was scheduled for [REDACTED] at 1030am, the very next business day. Given that this letter was sent on a Friday, with mail service typically occurring in the afternoon, it predictably did not arrive at the claimant's residence until [REDACTED], too late to allow claimant to attend the appointment.

Claimant subsequently visited the DHS office on [REDACTED] and submitted all requested verifications; however, her expedited FAP application had been denied on [REDACTED].

Leaving aside the fact that there was no possible way for the claimant to have attended the requested interview, given the time constraints involved, the Department did not even process claimant's expedited FAP application correctly; under policy found in BAM 117, there is no provision for denial of an expedited FAP request for failure to return verifications in less than 7 days.

First, BAM 117 states that the standards of promptness on an expedited FAP request is 7 days. BAM 117, pg. 2. The Department denied the case on [REDACTED], 6 days after the initial application.

Second, interviews, as requested in the current case, must be held the same day if the client applies in person. BAM 117, pg. 3. The Department failed to provide any satisfactory reason for failing to conduct the interview at the time of application as required by policy.

Third, even if we were to assume that the claimant was at fault for not attending the interview (and given the Department's failure to conduct the interview properly or give adequate notice of the interview, we are most certainly not making that assumption), no part of BAM 117 states that the FAP application may be denied for this reason.

If a claimant is determined to be at fault for failing to complete the expedited FAP process, policy states that the worker is to note this fact in BRIDGES, at which point the standards of promptness are extended to 29 days from the date of application. BAM 117, pg. 4.

Furthermore, if the Department's issue was the failure to return verifications, it is noted that BAM 117 states, quite specifically that "FAP benefits cannot be delayed beyond the expedited standard of promptness solely because these eligibility factors (other than identity) have not been verified." BAM 117, pg. 3.

If verification is not returned during the expedited processing period, BAM 117 directs the case worker to not issue benefits for subsequent months until the group provides the verification or completes a redetermination. BAM 117, pg. 5.

What this policy does not allow is a complete denial of an expedited application for failing to attend an interview or failing to return verifications.

As such, the Department was in error when it denied the application outright.

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, if any, finds that the Department

- acted in accordance with Department policy when it .
- did not act in accordance with Department policy when it denied claimant's expedited FAP request.
- failed to satisfy its burden of showing that it acted in accordance with Department policy when it .

DECISION AND ORDER

Accordingly, the Department's decision is

- AFFIRMED.
- REVERSED.
- AFFIRMED IN PART with respect to and REVERSED IN PART with respect to .

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. Reprocess claimant's expedited FAP application of January 21, 2014.



Robert J. Chavez
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: 3/14/2014

Date Mailed: 3/14/2014

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

RJC/hw

cc:

