

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

IN THE MATTER OF:



Reg. No.: 2014-29077
Issue No.: 3005
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: June 9, 2014
County: Wayne DHS 76

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Lynn M. Ferris

HEARING DECISION FOR INTENTIONAL PROGRAM VIOLATION

Upon the request for a hearing by the Department of Human Services (Department), this matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9, and in accordance with Titles 7, 42 and 45 of the Code of Federal Regulation (CFR), particularly 7 CFR 273.16, and with Mich Admin Code, R 400.3130 and R 400.3178. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on June 9, 2014, from Detroit, Michigan. The Department was represented by [REDACTED], Regulation Agent of the Office of Inspector General (OIG).

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 400.3178(5).

ISSUES

1. Did Respondent receive an overissuance (OI) of
 Family Independence Program (FIP) State Disability Assistance (SDA)
 Food Assistance Program (FAP) Child Development and Care (CDC)
 Medical Assistance (MA)
benefits that the Department is entitled to recoup?
2. Did Respondent, by clear and convincing evidence, commit an Intentional Program Violation (IPV)?
3. Should Respondent be disqualified from receiving
 Family Independence Program (FIP)? State Disability Assistance (SDA)?
 Food Assistance Program (FAP)? Child Development and Care (CDC)?

FINDINGS OF FACT

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

1. The Department's OIG filed a hearing request on March 3, 2014, to establish an OI of benefits received by Respondent as a result of Respondent having allegedly committed an IPV by failing to report an out-of-state move and continuing to receive and use Michigan-issued benefits while out of state.
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 issued by the Department.
4. Respondent was was not aware of the responsibility to report changes in household circumstances, such as a change in residence.
5. Respondent had no apparent physical or mental impairment that would limit the understanding or ability to fulfill this requirement.
6. The Department's OIG indicates that the time period it is considering the fraud period is February 5, 2012 through August 13, 2013 (FAP).
7. The Department indicates that the time period it is considering the fraud period is March 1, 2012 through May 31, 2013 (Medical Assistance)
8. During the fraud period, the Department alleges that Respondent was issued [REDACTED]0 in FIP FAP SDA CDC MA benefits by the State of Michigan, and the Department alleges that Respondent was entitled to \$0.00 in such benefits during this time period.
9. During the fraud period, the Department alleges that Respondent was issued [REDACTED] in FIP FAP SDA CDC MA benefits by the State of Michigan, and the Department alleges that Respondent was entitled to \$0.00 in such benefits during this time period.
10. The Department alleges that Respondent received an OI in FIP FAP SDA CDC MA benefits in the amount of \$ [REDACTED]
11. The Department alleges that Respondent received an OI in Medical Assistance benefits in the amount of [REDACTED].

12. This was Respondent's first second third alleged IPV.
13. 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. No other mail sent to the Respondent was returned to the Department.

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). Prior to August 1, 2008, Department policies were contained in the Department of Human Services Program Administrative Manuals (PAM), Department of Human Services Program Eligibility Manual (PEM), and Department of Human Services Reference Schedules Manual (RFS).

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 Department's OIG requests IPV hearings for the following cases:

- FAP trafficking OIs that are not forwarded to the prosecutor,
- prosecution of welfare fraud or FAP trafficking is declined by the prosecutor for a reason other than lack of evidence, and
 - the total OI amount for the FIP, SDA, CDC, MA and FAP programs is \$1000 or more, or
 - the total OI amount is less than \$1000, **and**
 - the group has a previous IPV, or
 - the alleged IPV involves FAP trafficking, or
 - the alleged fraud involves concurrent receipt of assistance (see BEM 222), or
 - the alleged fraud is committed by a state/government employee.

BAM 720 (July 2013), p. 10.

Intentional Program Violation

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 reporting responsibilities.

BAM 700 (July 2013), p. 6; BAM 720, p. 1.

An IPV is also suspected for a client who is alleged to have trafficked FAP benefits. BAM 720, p. 1.

An IPV requires that the Department establish by 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. BAM 720, p. 1 (emphasis in original); see also 7 CFR 273(e)(6). Clear and convincing evidence is evidence sufficient to result in a clear and firm belief that the proposition is true. See M Civ JI 8.01.

In this case, the Department alleges that Respondent committed an IPV of his FAP and Medical Assistance (MA) benefits because he failed to notify the Department that he no longer resided in Michigan but continued to receive and use Michigan-issued FAP and MA benefits while out of state. To be eligible for FAP benefits issued by the Department, an individual must be a Michigan resident. BEM 220 (January 2012 and March 2013), p. 1. For FAP purposes, a person is considered a resident while living in Michigan for any purpose other than a vacation, even if he has no intent to remain in the State permanently or indefinitely. BEM 220, p. 1. A client who resides outside the State of Michigan for more than thirty days is not eligible for FAP benefits issued by the State of Michigan. BEM 212 (April 2012 and November 2012), pp. 2-3.

At the hearing, the Department established that from the time the Respondent completed an SER application on February 5, 2012 through August 13, 2013, the Respondent used his FAP benefits issued by the State of Michigan exclusively out of state, in California. While this evidence may be sufficient to establish that Respondent no longer resided in Michigan and was no longer eligible for FAP benefits, to establish an IPV, the Department must present clear and convincing evidence that Respondent **intentionally** withheld or misrepresented information for the purpose of maintaining benefits.

In support of its contention that Respondent committed an IPV, the Department presented an SER application Respondent submitted to the Department on February 5, 2012 and a Redetermination dated April 23, 2012, both application and redetermination

indicate that the Respondent is living in Michigan or that his address is unchanged based upon the redetermination and beginning February 2012 the Claimant was using his FAP benefits exclusively in California. The EBT usage report for February 2012 and March 2012 clearly demonstrates that during that period and prior to that period beginning February 2012, the Claimant used his FAP benefits exclusively in California. Given that the Respondent was advised of his responsibilities, the Department did establish that he intentionally withheld information concerning his out-of-state move and current address for the purpose of maintaining his Michigan FAP eligibility.

Based on the foregoing, the Department did present sufficient evidence to establish Respondent's intent to continue to receive benefits while no longer a resident of Michigan and that he misrepresented her residency to continue to receive Michigan benefits while no longer a resident of Michigan. The fraud period covers a total of 15 months during which the Respondent used his benefits out-of-state.

The Medical Assistance OI amount was not proved or established as discussed below in this Decision and thus the IPV of Medical Assistance sought by the Department is not addressed herein as in order to establish and IPV an overissuance of benefits must be shown. The Department did not sustain its burden of proof regarding its allegations that the Respondent committed an IPV of his MA benefits.

Disqualification

A court or hearing decision that finds a client committed IPV disqualifies that client from receiving program benefits. BAM 720, p. 12. A disqualified recipient remains a member of an active group as long as he lives with them, and other eligible group members may continue to receive benefits. BAM 720, p. 13.

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. BAM 720, p. 13. Refusal to repay will not cause denial of current or future MA if the client is otherwise eligible. BAM 710 (July 2013), p. 2. 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 FAP concurrent receipt of benefits. BAM 720, p. 16.

In this case, the Department has satisfied its burden of showing that Respondent committed an IPV concerning FAP benefits. Therefore, Respondent is subject to a disqualification under the FAP program. The Department did not sustain its burden of proof regarding an IPV of the MA benefits and thus no disqualification of benefits is granted for those benefits.

Overissuance

The Department has alleged an OI of FAP benefits resulting from Respondent's receipt of Michigan-issued benefits while no longer a state resident. When a client group receives more benefits than they are entitled to receive, the Department must attempt to recoup the OI. BAM 700, p. 1.

The amount of a FAP OI is the benefit amount the client actually received minus the amount the client was eligible to receive. BAM 720, p. 8; BAM 715 (July 2013), pp. 1, 6; BAM 705 (July 2013), p. 6. At the hearing, the Department established that the State of Michigan issued a total of ██████ in FAP benefits to Respondent from March 1, 2012 through May 31, 2013, during the fraud period. The Department alleges that Respondent was eligible for \$0 in FAP benefits during this period.

In support of its FAP case, the Department presented Respondent's FAP transaction history showing his use of FAP benefits issued by the State of Michigan exclusively out of state during the period at issue. As discussed above, Respondent was no longer eligible for FAP benefits after he resided outside Michigan for more than 30 days. See BEM 212, pp 2-3. Therefore, the Department has established it is entitled to recoup the ██████0 in FAP benefits it issued to Respondent between March 1, 2012 through May 31, 2013.

In support of its OI for MA benefits case the Department did not present any issuance summary or documentation which established that MA benefits were received or that the Respondent was eligible for MA benefits based upon an eligibiltiy summary. Additionally, no summary or proof of the actual cost to the Department for MA premiums paid was presented and the Departments testimony that the OI was based upon a cost of ██████ monthly with no documentary proof was not sufficient to establish an OI of MA benefits. Thus it is determined that the Department did not meet its burdent to establish an OI of Medical Assistance Benefits.

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, if any, concludes that:

1. Respondent did did not commit an IPV by clear and convincing evidence of FAP benefits.
2. Respondent did did not commit an IPV by clear and convincing evidence of Medical Assistance (MA) benefits.
3. Respondent did did not receive an OI of program benefits in the amount of ██████ from the following program(s) FIP FAP SDA CDC MA.
4. Respondent did did not receive an OI of program benefits in the amount of ██████ from the following program(s) FIP FAP SDA CDC MA.

The Department is ORDERED to

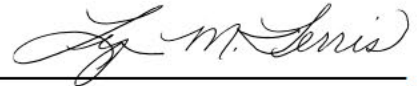
delete the OI and cease any recoupment action as regards the Medical Assistance.

initiate recoupment procedures for the amount of [REDACTED] in accordance with Department policy for the FAP OI.

It is FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent be disqualified from

FIP FAP SDA CDC for a period of

12 months. 24 months. lifetime.



Lynn M. Ferris
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: June 18, 2014

Date Mailed: June 19, 2014

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.

ZB/tm

cc:

[REDACTED]