

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No.: 2014-30549
Issue No(s): 1010
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: May 20, 2014
County: Washtenaw

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Vicki L. Armstrong

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, an in-person hearing was held on May 20, 2014, at the Washtenaw County Department of Human Services (Department) office. Participants on behalf of Claimant included Attorney [REDACTED] of [REDACTED]. Claimant was not present. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included Assistant Attorney General [REDACTED] and Eligibility Specialist [REDACTED].

ISSUE

Did the Department properly determine that Claimant exceeded the 60-month federal lifetime limit on Family Independence Program (FIP) benefits and was not eligible for an exception?

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 received FIP benefits.
2. On December 18, 2013, the Department notified Claimant that the FIP case would close because Claimant had exceeded the 60-month federal lifetime limit on receipt of FIP assistance.
3. On February 12, 2014, Claimant/Claimant's Authorized Hearing Representative (AHR) filed a request for hearing, disputing the Department's action.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Clients have the right to contest a Department decision affecting eligibility for benefit levels whenever it is believed that the decision is incorrect. The Department Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 600 (February 1, 2013). The Department will provide an administrative hearing to review the decision and determine the appropriateness of that decision. BAM 600. The regulations governing the hearing and appeal process for applicants and recipients of public assistance in Michigan are found in the Michigan Administrative Code (Mich Admin Code), R 400.901-400.951. An opportunity for a hearing shall be granted to an applicant who requests a hearing because the claim for assistance is denied. Mich Admin Code, R 400.903(1).

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. 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).

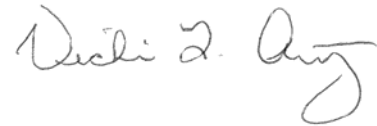
The FIP benefit program is not an entitlement. BEM 234, p. 1. Under the federal FIP time limit, individuals are not eligible for continued FIP benefits once they receive a cumulative total of 60 months of FIP benefits unless they are eligible for an exception to the federal time limit. An exception exists 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 this case, as of July, 2013, Claimant was no longer MRT deferred, and therefore no longer eligible for the exception to the mandatory 60 month federal lifetime limit. Claimant's representative attempted to introduce evidence arguing against the MRT denial of July, 2013. However, the issue before this Administrative Law Judge is limited to the Notice of Case Action dated December 18, 2013, which is the closure of FIP benefits based on a change in law and policy. Claimant's representative offered no evidence that Claimant had not received the cumulative total of 60 months of FIP benefits and did not dispute that Claimant had reached the cumulative total of 60 months. Claimant's representative's sole argument was the MRT had erred in denying Claimant's MRT deferral status. That issue is not before this Administrative Law Judge.

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 denied Claimant's FIP eligibility for exceeding the federal time limit on receipt of FIP benefits.

DECISION AND ORDER

Accordingly, the Department's FIP eligibility decision is **AFFIRMED**.



Vicki L. Armstrong
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: June 10, 2014

Date Mailed: June 10, 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.

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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

VLA/las

cc:

