

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No.: 14-002862
Issue No.: 2006; 3005
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: July 30, 2014
County: OAKLAND-DISTRICT (3)

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Eric Feldman

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 July 30, 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 the Department establish, by clear and convincing evidence, that Respondent committed an Intentional Program Violation (IPV)?
3. Should Respondent be disqualified from receiving benefits for
 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 May 21, 2014, to establish an OI of benefits received by Respondent as a result of Respondent having allegedly committed an IPV.
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 residence.
5. Respondent had did not have an 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 FAP fraud period is June 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013 (fraud period).
7. The Department's OIG indicates that the time period it is considering the MA OI period is June 1, 2013, to December 31, 2013 (MA OI period).
8. During the fraud period, Respondent was issued \$3,375.26 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. The Department alleges that Respondent received an OI in FIP FAP SDA CDC MA benefits in the amount of \$3,375.26.
10. This was Respondent's first second third alleged IPV.
11. 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.

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 273. The Department (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers FAP pursuant to MCL 400.10; the Social Welfare Act, MCL 400.1-.119b; and Mich Admin Code, R 400.3001 to .3015.

☒ The Medical Assistance (MA) program is established by Title XIX of the Social Security Act, 42 USC 1396-1396w-5; 42 USC 1315; the Affordable Care Act of 2010, the collective term for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Pub. L. No. 111-148, as amended by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-152; and 42 CFR 430.10-.25. The Department (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers the MA program pursuant to 42 CFR 435, MCL 400.10 and MCL 400.105-.112k. .

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 (May 2014), pp. 12-13.

As a preliminary matter, the Department's OIG report indicated that the alleged FAP OI amount was \$2,144 for the time period of June 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013. However, a review of the FAP benefit summary inquiry indicated that the Respondent

was only issued \$1,344 for the time period of June 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013. See Exhibit 1, p. 43. Thus, the alleged FAP OI amount is \$1,344.

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 (May 2014), p. 7; 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 benefits because he failed to notify the Department that he no longer resided in Michigan but continued to receive and use Michigan-issued FAP benefits while out-of-state.

To be eligible, a person must be a Michigan resident. BEM 220 (March 2013), p. 1.

For FAP cases, a person is considered a resident while living in Michigan for any purpose other than a vacation, even if there is no intent to remain in the state permanently or indefinitely. BEM 220, p. 1. Eligible persons may include persons who entered the state with a job commitment or to seek employment; and students (for FAP only, this includes students living at home during a school break). BEM 220, p. 1.

For FAP cases, a person who is temporarily absent from the group is considered living with the group. BEM 212 (November 2012), p. 2. However, a person's absence is not temporary if it has lasted more than thirty days. BEM 212, p. 2.

The Department's OIG indicates that the time period it is considering the fraud period is June 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013. At the hearing, the Department presented evidence to show why it believed the Respondent was aware of his responsibility to report changes in residence and that he intentionally withheld information concerning an out-of-state move for the purpose of maintaining Michigan FAP eligibility.

First, the Department presented Respondent's online FAP/MA application dated June 6, 2013, to show that he misrepresented his circumstances of eligibility. See Exhibit 1, pp. 8-40. In the application, Respondent reported a Michigan address and that he is a Michigan resident. See Exhibit 1, pp. 10-12.

Second, the Department presented Respondent's FAP transaction history. See Exhibit 1, pp. 44-46. The FAP transaction history showed that from July 20, 2013 to December 12, 2013, Respondent used FAP benefits issued by the State of Michigan out-of-state in Florida. See Exhibit 1, pp. 44-46. It should be noted that from October 29, 2013 to November 2, 2013, the FAP transaction history did not list some of the locations of where the FAP transactions occurred. See Exhibit 1, p. 45. Then, the FAP transaction history showed that from December 15, 2013 to January 23, 2014, Respondent used FAP benefits issued by the State of Michigan in Michigan. See Exhibit 1, pp. 45-46.

Based on the foregoing information and evidence, the Department has failed to establish that Respondent committed an IPV of FAP benefits.

The Department presented Respondent's online FAP/MA application dated June 6, 2013, to show that he misrepresented his circumstances of eligibility. See Exhibit 1, pp. 8-40. In the application, Respondent reported a Michigan address and that he was a Michigan resident. See Exhibit 1, pp. 10-12. The Department failed to present evidence to contradict Respondent's assertion that he was a Michigan resident. The Department presented Respondent's FAP transaction history. The FAP transaction history did not show any out-of-state usage from the time of application until July 20, 2013. See Exhibit 1, pp. 45-45. Thus, the evidence is insufficient to suggest that Respondent was not a Michigan resident at the time of application and that he intentionally withheld information concerning an out-of-state move for the purpose of maintaining Michigan FAP eligibility.

Moreover, the FAP transaction history failed to show that Respondent intentionally withheld information concerning an out-of-state move during the alleged fraud period. Thus, in the absence of any clear and convincing evidence that Respondent intentionally withheld information concerning an out-of-state move for the purpose of maintaining Michigan FAP eligibility, the Department has failed to establish that Respondent committed an IPV of FAP benefits.

Disqualification

A court or hearing decision that finds a client committed IPV disqualifies that client from receiving program benefits. BAM 720, pp. 15-16. 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. 16.

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. 16. 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 failed to satisfy its burden of showing that Respondent committed an IPV concerning FAP benefits. Therefore, Respondent is not subject to a disqualification under the FAP program.

FAP Overissuance

As stated previously, the Department failed to show that Respondent purposely failed to report a change in residency to continue receiving FAP benefits from Michigan. Thus, no IPV was committed. However, the Department can still proceed with recoupment of the OI when there is client error.

A client/CDC provider error OI occurs when the client received more benefits than they were entitled to because the client/CDC provider gave incorrect or incomplete information to the department. BAM 715 (July 2014), p. 1.

Based on the FAP transaction history, it is persuasive evidence that Respondent was not a Michigan resident. See BEM 220, p. 1. The evidence shows that the most probable explanation is that Respondent lived outside of Michigan. Moreover, the FAP transaction history shows that Respondent was using benefits out-of-state for more than thirty days. See BEM 212, p. 2. This established that Respondent is not temporarily absent from his group and he was was not eligible for FAP benefits. Therefore, a client error is present in this situation because Respondent failed to notify the Department of his change in residency. See BAM 715, p. 1.

Applying the OI begin date policy and in consideration of the out-of-state use that began on July 20, 2013, the Department determined that the OI period began on June 1, 2013. See Exhibit 1, pp. 2 and 44. It is found that the Department applied the inappropriate OI begin date and the begin date is September 1, 2013. See BAM 715, pp. 4-5.

Also, the overissuance period ends the month (or pay period for CDC) before the benefit is corrected. BAM 715, p. 6. The Department determined that the OI period

ended on December 31, 2013. See Exhibit 1, p. 2. However, the FAP transaction history showed that from December 15, 2013, to January 23, 2014, Respondent used FAP benefits issued by the State of Michigan in Michigan. See Exhibit 1, pp. 45-46. Thus, the proper OI period end date is November 30, 2013 because the evidence suggest that Respondent is back in Michigan in December 2013. See BAM 715, p. 6. In summary, the proper FAP OI period is September 1, 2013 to November 30, 2013.

Additionally, 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 the OI is the benefit amount the group or provider actually received minus the amount the group was eligible to receive. BAM 715, p. 6.

In establishing the OI amount, the Department presented a benefit summary inquiry showing that Respondent was issued FAP benefits by the State of Michigan from September 2013 to November 2013, which totaled \$589. See Exhibit 1, p. 43. Thus, the Department is entitled to recoup \$589 of FAP benefits it issued to Respondent from September 1, 2013 to November 30, 2013.

MA Overissuance

The Department initiates MA recoupment of an overissuance (OI) due to client error or intentional program violation (IPV), not when due to agency error. BAM 710 (July 2013), p. 1. When the Department receives the amount of MA payments, it determines the OI amount. BAM 710, p. 1. For an OI due to unreported income or a change affecting need allowances:

- If there would have been a deductible or larger deductible, the OI amount is the correct deductible (minus any amount already met) or the amount of MA payments, whichever is less.
- If there would have been a larger LTC, hospital or post-eligibility patient-pay amount, the OI amount is the difference between the correct and incorrect patient-pay amounts or the amount of MA payments, whichever is less.

BAM 710, p. 2. For an OI due to any other reason, the OI amount is the amount of MA payments. BAM 710, p. 2.

In this case, the Department also alleges that an OI was present for his MA benefits. The Department alleges that he failed to notify the Department that he no longer resided in Michigan but his MA benefits continued to pay his health premiums while he was out-of-state. The Department's OIG indicates that the time period it is considering the OI period is June 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013.

For MA cases (non-institutionalized persons), an individual is a Michigan resident if either of the following apply:

- The individual lives in Michigan, except for a temporary absence, and intends to remain in Michigan permanently or indefinitely.
- The individual or a member of the MA fiscal group has entered the state of Michigan for employment purposes, and has a job commitment, or is seeking employment.

BEM 220, pp. 1-2.

For Group 2 FIP-Related MA, Healthy Kids and SSI-Related MA, a person's absence is temporary if for the month being tested:

- His location is known; **and**
- There is a definite plan for him to return home; **and**
- He lived with the group before the absence (**Note:** newborns and unborns are considered to have lived with their mothers); **and**
- The absence did not last, or is not expected to last, the entire month being tested unless the absence is for education, training, or active duty in the uniformed services of the U.S.

BEM 211 (November 2012), pp. 2-3.

As stated previously, a FAP client error is present in this situation because Respondent failed to notify the Department of his change in residency and an OI amount was established. See BAM 715, p. 1. The evidence is persuasive that Respondent was not a Michigan resident. The evidence shows that the most probable explanation is that Respondent lived outside of Michigan. See Exhibit 1 and BEM 220, pp. 1-2. Moreover, the FAP transaction history shows that Respondent is not temporarily absent from his group and he was was not eligible for MA benefits. See BEM 211, pp. 2-3. Therefore, an MA client error is present in this situation because Respondent failed to notify the Department of his change in residency. See BAM 710, p. 1.

Again, as stated in the FAP OI analysis, the proper OI period is September 1, 2013 to November 30, 2013. See BAM 710, p. 1.

In establishing the OI amount, BAM 710 states that for an OI due to any other reason, the OI amount is the amount of MA payments. See BAM 710, p. 2. The Department presented a summary of the MA premiums paid on Respondent's behalf from September 2013 to November 2013, which totaled \$796.98. See Exhibit 1, pp. 41-42. Thus, the Department is entitled to recoup \$796.98 of MA benefits it issued to

Respondent from September 1, 2013 to November 30, 2013. In sum, the Department is entitled to recoup \$1,385.98 in FAP and MA benefits (\$589 for FAP OI plus \$796.98 for MA OI).

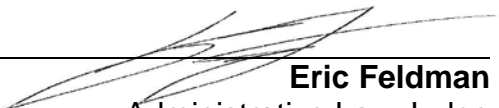
DECISION AND ORDER

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. The Department has has not established by clear and convincing evidence that Respondent committed an IPV.
2. Respondent did did not receive an OI of program benefits in the amount of \$1,385.98 from the following program(s) FIP FAP SDA CDC MA.

The Department is ORDERED to

- reduce the OI to \$1,385.98 for the period September 1, 2013 to November 30, 2013, and initiate recoupment procedures in accordance with Department policy.


Eric Feldman
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: **7/31/2014**

Date Mailed: **7/31/2014**

EJF/cl

NOTICE: The law provides that within 30 days of receipt of the above Hearing Decision, the Respondent may appeal it to the circuit court for the county in which he/she lives or the circuit court in Ingham County.

cc:

