

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

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Reg. No.: 14-003439
Issue No.: 3005, 2006
Case No.: ██████████
Hearing Date: July 21, 2014
County: WAYNE- 31

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 July 21, 2014 from Detroit, Michigan. The Department was represented by ██████████, 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 29, 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 address and 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 fraud period is January 1, 2012 through February 28, 2013 (fraud period).
7. During the fraud period, 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 in such benefits during this time period.
8. The Department alleges that Respondent received an OI in FIP FAP SDA CDC MA benefits in the amount of \$ [REDACTED].
9. During the fraud period, January 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013, the Respondent received and Medical Assistance and the Department paid premiums for this Medical Assistance in the amount of [REDACTED]. The Department alleges that the Respondent received and OI in MA benefits in the amount of [REDACTED] as the Claimant was not eligible to receive such benefits and was eligible to receive \$0 in such benefits during this time period.
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 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.

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 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 Respondent began using his Michigan issued FAP benefits exclusively out of state in Illinois beginning November 19, 2011. Exhibit 1 pp. 27. Thereafter, on the February 22, 2012 Redetermination, the Respondent did not report that he was no longer residing in Michigan or that his address had changed. Approximately one year later in February 2013, while continuing to receive Michigan Food Assistance benefits, Respondent completed another redetermination at which time he again did not report his change in residence or address and continued his use of FAP benefits ongoing in Illinois. Based upon the evidence presented at the hearing, the Department did establish that the Respondent had committed an IPV by clear and convincing evidence because at no time after he began using his benefits exclusively out of state in Illinois did he report his change in residence and continued to advise the Department that he continued to live in Michigan. Exhibit 1 pp, 14 and 21.

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 established that Respondent committed a FAP IPV. Therefore, Respondent is subject to a one-year disqualification from the FAP program.

Overissuance

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 client actually received minus the amount the client was eligible to receive. BAM 720, p. 8; BAM 715 (May 2014), p. 6; BAM 705 (May 2014), p. 6.

Clients are not eligible for FAP benefits if they do not reside in Michigan. BEM 220, p. 1. At the hearing, the Department presented a FAP transaction history that established that Respondent used Michigan-issued FAP benefits out of state exclusively in Illinois from November 19, 2011 through February 2013. In the absence of any contrary evidence, this evidence established that Respondent did not reside in Michigan and was not eligible for FAP benefits issued by the Department.

In this case, the Department presented FAP Benefit Issuance Summaries for the period in question which is January 1, 2012 through February 28, 2013. The Claimant received █████ in FAP benefits for each of the months in question and, therefore, the Department did establish that it was entitled to an overissuance of FAP benefits in the amount of \$ █████.

The Department also seeks an overissuance of Medical Assistance premiums paid by the Department during the period January 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. For MA purposes, an individual is a Michigan resident if living in Michigan, except for a temporary absence, and intends to remain in Michigan permanently or indefinitely. BEM 220, pp. 2-3. The Department presented evidence of the premiums it paid monthly for the period in question to establish the \$ █████ in overissuance of benefits. Exhibit 1 pp.26. Based upon this evidence, the Department established that the Respondent was no longer entitled to receive Medical Assistance as based upon the fact that the Claimant did not use any FAP benefits in Michigan ongoing from November 2011. The Respondent's absence is not temporary or indefinite but was ongoing. Therefore, the Department has established an OI of Medical Assistance and is entitled to an overissuance of MA benefits in the amount of █████.

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 █████ from the following program(s) FIP FAP SDA CDC MA.

The Department is ORDERED to initiate recoupment procedures for the amount of █████ in accordance with Department policy.

