


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


IN THE MATTER OF:



Reg. No.: 2014-34973
Issue No(s): 5001
Case No.: 
Hearing Date: June 12, 2014
County: Macomb (20)

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Zainab Baydoun

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 June 12, 2014, from Detroit, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included Claimant. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included  Case Manager.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly process Claimant's application for State Emergency Relief (SER) assistance?

FINDINGS OF FACT

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

1. On March 31, 2014, Claimant submitted an application for SER assistance with electricity and heat services.
2. On April 2, 2014, the Department sent Claimant a SER Decision Notice informing him that his application had been denied. (Exhibit 1)
3. On April 11, 2014, Claimant submitted a hearing request disputing 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), Department of Human Services Reference Tables Manual (RFT), and Department of Human Services Emergency Relief Manual (ERM).

The State Emergency Relief (SER) program is established by the Social Welfare Act, MCL 400.1-.119b. The SER program is administered by the Department (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) pursuant to MCL 400.10 and Mich Admin Code, R 400.7001 through R 400.7049.

Additionally, eligible households may receive SER assistance with household heat and electricity costs under the energy services program. ERM 301 (October 2013), p.1. The Department can award payments toward heat and electricity costs up to the fiscal year cap if it will resolve the emergency. ERM 301, p.10

In this case, on March 31, 2014, Claimant submitted an application for SER assistance with heat and electricity services. On April 2, 2014, the Department sent Claimant a SER Decision Notice informing him that his request had been denied on the basis that he did not have an emergency and that his income/asset copayment is equal to or greater than the amount needed to resolve the emergency. (Exhibit 1).

At the hearing, the Department acknowledged that there were certain errors in the processing of Claimant's SER application. The Department testified that the denial was not in accordance with Department policy, as Claimant's account was in shut off status and therefore, an emergency did exist. The Department testified that Claimant did have a shut off notice when he submitted his SER application. (Exhibit 2). The Department further stated that there was no information in Claimant's file to support the determination that the income/asset copayment was equal to or greater than the amount needed to resolve the emergency.


The Administrative Law Judge, based on the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, if any, finds that the Department failed to satisfy its burden of showing that it acted in accordance with Department policy when it denied Claimant's SER application.

DECISION AND ORDER

Accordingly, the Department's decision is REVERSED.

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. Register and process Claimant's March 31, 2014, SER application for assistance with heat and electricity services to determine his eligibility for SER as of the application date;
2. Provide Claimant with the SER benefits that he was determined eligible to receive, if any, and
3. Issue a new SER Decision Notice informing Claimant of the Department's decision with respect to the application.



Zainab Baydoun
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: July 3, 2014

Date Mailed: July 3, 2014

NOTICE OF APPEAL: A party may appeal this Hearing Decision in the circuit court in the county in which he/she resides or has its principal place of business in the State, or the circuit court in Ingham County, within 30 days of the receipt date.

A party may request a rehearing or reconsideration of this Hearing Decision from the Michigan Administrative Hearing System (MAHS) within 30 days of the mailing date of this Hearing Decision, or MAHS may order a rehearing or reconsideration on its own motion.

MAHS may grant a party's Request for Rehearing or Reconsideration 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 party requesting a rehearing or reconsideration 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 this Hearing Decision is mailed.

A written request may be faxed or mailed to MAHS. If submitted by fax, 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:

2014-34973/ZB

Michigan Administrative Hearings
Reconsideration/Rehearing Request
P.O. Box 30639
Lansing, Michigan 48909-07322

ZB/tlf

cc:

