

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No.: 14-010952
Issue No.: 3006
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: February 10, 2015
County: Genesee-District 2

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Kevin Scully

HEARING DECISION

Following Respondent'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, telephone hearing was held on February 10, 2015, from Lansing, Michigan. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included [REDACTED], Recoupment Specialist.

Participants on behalf of Respondent included [REDACTED].

ISSUE

Did the Department properly determine that the Respondent received an overissuance of Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits?

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 November 5, 2013, the Respondent applied for Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits as a group of six.
2. On March 1, 2014, the Respondent reported that four people had left the household.
3. The Respondent was a Food Assistance Program (FAP) recipient from May 1, 2014, through May 31, 2014.
4. Due to Department error, the change reported by the Respondent on March 1, 2014, was not processed in accordance with the standard of promptness.
5. The Respondent was issued Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits totaling \$ [REDACTED] for May of 2014, but if the Department had process the changes to her benefit group the Respondent would have only received \$ [REDACTED]

6. On August 15, 2014, the Department sent the Respondent a Notice of Overissuance (DHS-4358-A).
7. On August 28, 2014, the Department received the Respondent's request for a hearing protesting the recoupment of Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits.

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 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.

When a client group receives more benefits than it is entitled to receive, the Department must attempt to recoup the overissuance. An agency error is caused by incorrect action (including delayed or no action) by Department staff or department processes. A client error occurs when the client received more benefits than they were entitled to because the client gave incorrect or incomplete information to the department. Client and agency errors are not pursued if the estimated amount is less than \$ [REDACTED] per program. Department of Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 700 (May 1, 2014), pp 1-9.

Overissuance balances on inactive cases must be repaid by lump-sum or monthly cash payments unless collection is suspended. Department of Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 725 (July 1, 2014), p 8.

Repayment of an overissuance is the responsibility of:

- Anyone who was an eligible, disqualified, or other adult in the program group at the time the overissuance occurred.
- A FAP-authorized representative if they had any part in creating the FAP overissuance.

Bridges will collect from all adults who were a member of the case. Administrative recoupment may be deducted on more than one case for a single overissuance. BAM 725, p1.

On November 5, 2013, the Respondent applied for Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits as a group of six. The Respondent reported a change to her household on March 1, 2014, with her group size reducing to two. Due to Department error, this change was not processed within the standard of promptness. As a result, the Respondent received Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits totaling \$ [REDACTED] when she

would have been eligible for \$ [REDACTED] if her change had been processed in a timely manner.

The Respondent testified that her caseworker admitted to mishandling the case. The Respondent testified that she gave a portion of her benefits to another person because their benefits were deficient and that this would be a way of making up for the Department's mistakes.


The Respondent was the benefit grantee on the Food Assistance Program (FAP) case and she was an adult eligible member of the benefit group. Giving away Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits is not an action condoned by any Department policy. The Respondent is responsible for any overissuances of benefits as an eligible member of the benefit group even where the overissuance is caused by the Department.

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 acted in accordance with Department policy when it determined that the Respondent received a \$ [REDACTED] overissuance of Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits.

DECISION AND ORDER

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

The Department is ORDERED to initiate collection procedures for a \$ [REDACTED] overissuance in accordance with Department policy.



Kevin Scully
Administrative Law Judge
for Nick Lyon, Acting DHS Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: **2/24/2015**

Date Mailed: **2/24/2015**

KS/las

NOTICE OF APPEAL: A party may appeal this Hearing Decision in the circuit court in the county in which he/she resides, 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:

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

cc:

