

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No.: 14-014675
Issue No.: 3002
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: November 24, 2014
County: WAYNE-DISTRICT 19

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Susan C. Burke

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 November 24, 2014, from Detroit, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included Claimant's Authorized Hearing Representative and son, [REDACTED]. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included [REDACTED], Eligibility Specialist.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly close Claimant's Food Assistance Program (FAP) case due to failing to verify bank account information?

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 issued a Verification Checklist (VCL) on [REDACTED], instructing Claimant to, "submit all 3 bank accounts by the requested due date. . ."
2. Claimant returned information on one account by the requested due date.
3. Respondent's son contacted the Department prior to the due date, stating that his mother had only one account, and asked the Department to call, clarifying its request.
4. The Department did not return Claimant's son's call.
5. The Department closed Claimant's FAP case, effective [REDACTED], due to bank information not being returned.

6. Claimant requested a hearing on [REDACTED], protesting 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 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 is required to use the VCL to “tell the client what verification is required, how to obtain it, and the due date.” BAM 130 (7/2014), p. 3

“Clients must cooperate with the local office in determining initial and ongoing eligibility.” BAM 105 (4/2014), p. 6

In the present case, the Department issued a VCL requesting information from Claimant by September 12, 2014. The Department simply inserted in the VCL the words, “Please submit all 3 bank accounts by the requested due date to continue the eligibility process.” Claimant’s son testified credibly that he submitted information to the Department on the one account of which his mother was aware, in a timely manner. In addition, Claimant’s son testified credibly that he phoned the Department prior to the due date as instructed on the VCL, requesting that the Department call him for clarification of what was meant by “3 bank accounts.” The Department did not return his call to clarify the request. The Department representative at the hearing conceded that she was out of the country until after the due date of the VCL and therefore did not return Claimant’s son’s call in a timely manner.

Based on the above discussion, it is not concluded that Claimant failed to verify requested information or failed to cooperate, as Claimant submitted verification to the best of her understanding.

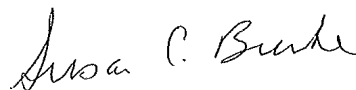
The Administrative Law Judge, based on the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, if any, finds that the Department did not act in accordance with Department policy when it closed Claimant’s FAP case.

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. Reinstate Claimant's FAP case, effective [REDACTED]
2. Issue FAP supplements, in accordance with Department policy.



Susan C. Burke
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: **12/1/2014**

Date Mailed: **12/1/2014**

SCB / hw

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 48909-8139

CC:

