

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

████████████████████
████████████████████
████████████████████

Reg. No.: 14-014786
Issue No.: 1010
Case No.: ██████████8
Hearing Date: February 9, 2015
County: Wayne Pathways to Potential

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Michael J. Bennane

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 January 9, 2015, from Detroit, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included Claimant. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included ██████████
██████████

ISSUE

Did the Department properly deny/close Claimant's application for Family Independence Program (FIP) 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 April 1, 2014, Claimant applied for FIP.
2. The Medical Review Team (MRT) found Claimant work ready with limitations.
3. On October 22, 2014, Claimant requested a hearing to protest the closure of her FIP 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 Family Independence Program (FIP) was established pursuant to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-193, and 42 USC 601 to 679c. The Department (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers FIP pursuant to 45 CFR 233-260, MCL 400.10, the Social Welfare Act, MCL 400.1-.119b, and Mich Admin Code, R 400.3101 to .3131.

At the hearing, the Department argued that Claimant had exceeded the federal time-limit for FIP benefits.

The Department failed to provide documentation that Claimant had exceeded the federal time-limit.

The denial/closure of Claimant's FIP case is based on a Federal limitation as to the amount of months an individual Claimant may receive FIP/cash benefits. The omission of the actual months used to calculate Claimant exceeding this limit did not allow Claimant the opportunity to challenge the months used to reach the Federal limitation.

The production of evidence to support the Department's position is clearly required under BAM 600 as well as general case law [see, for example, *Kar v Hogan*, 399 Mich 529; 251 NW2d 77 (1976)]. In *McKinstry v Valley Obstetrics-Gynecology Clinic, PC*, 428 Mich 167; 405 NW2d 88 (1987), the Michigan Supreme Court addressed the issue of burden of proof, stating in part:

The term "burden of proof" encompasses two separate meanings. [citation omitted.] One of these meanings is the burden of persuasion or the risk of nonpersuasion. The other is the risk of going forward or the risk of nonproduction.

The burden of producing evidence on an issue means the liability to an adverse ruling (generally a finding or a directed verdict) if evidence on the issue has not been produced. It is usually on the party who has pleaded the existence of the fact, but..., the burden may shift to the adversary when the pleader has discharged [its] initial duty. The burden of producing evidence is a critical mechanism[.]

The burden of persuasion becomes a crucial factor only if the parties have sustained their burdens of producing evidence and only when all of the evidence has been introduced.

McKinstry, 428 Mich at 93-94, quoting *McCormick*, Evidence (3d ed), Sec. 336, p. 946.

In other words, the burden of producing evidence (i.e., of going forward) involves a party's duty to introduce enough evidence to allow the trier of fact to render a reasonable and informed decision.

In addition, the Department failed to present documentation of its having sent a notice of case action to Claimant in accordance with Departmental policy.

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 .
- ☐ did not act in accordance with Department policy when it .
- ☒ failed to satisfy its burden of showing that it acted in accordance with Department policy when it failed to both document its having sent a notice of case action to Claimant, as demanded by Departmental policy, and provide documentation of the months used to determine that Claimant had reached the Federal limit .

DECISION AND ORDER

Accordingly, the Department's decision is

- ☐ **AFFIRMED.**
- ☒ **REVERSED.**
- ☐ AFFIRMED IN PART with respect to and REVERSED IN PART with respect to .

- ☒ 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. Reregister and process Claimant's May 1, 2014, FIP application and supplement for any missed benefits if appropriate.



Michael J. Bennane
Administrative Law Judge
for Nick Lyon, Interim Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: **2/23/2015**

Date Mailed: **2/23/2015**

MJB / pf

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: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]