

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No.: 2014-35307
Issue No(s): 3008
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: May 27, 2014
County: Kent

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Michael S. Newell

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 May 27, 2014, from Lansing, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included Claimant and [REDACTED]. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included [REDACTED], Hearing Facilitator; [REDACTED], Specialist; and [REDACTED], Hearings Facilitator.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly calculate the FAP allotment?

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 or around April 2, 2014, Claimant notified the Department they were no longer liable for housing or utilities.
2. On April 17, 2014, the Department issued a Notice of Case Action decreasing Claimant's FAP benefits from \$ [REDACTED] to \$ [REDACTED] effective May 1, 2014
3. On April 21, 2014, Claimant requested a hearing. .

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 271.1 to 285.5. The Department (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers FAP pursuant to MCL 400.10 and Mich Admin Code, R 400.3001 to .3015.

Additionally, the Department's computer system known as "Bridges" uses certain expenses to determine net income for FAP eligibility and benefit levels. BEM 554. For groups with no senior/disabled/disabled veteran (SDV) member, Bridges uses the following: (1) dependent care expense; (2) excess shelter up to the maximum in RFT 255; (3) court ordered child support and arrearages paid to non-household members. BEM 554. For groups with one or more SDV member, Bridges uses the following; see BEM 550: (1) dependent care expense; (2) excess shelter (3) court ordered child support and arrearages paid to non-household members; and (4) medical expenses for the SDV member(s) that exceed \$35. BEM 554.

The Department shall complete either a manually-calculated or Bridges budget to document expenses every time an expense change is reported. BEM 554. The Department must verify the responsibility to pay and the amount of certain expenses. BEM 554. The Department must document verification in the case record. BEM 554. The Department shall not budget expenses that require verification until the verification is provided. BEM 554. The Department must determine eligibility and the benefit level without an expense requiring verification if it cannot be verified. BEM 554. The Department treats subsequently provided verification from an eligible FAP group as a change. A supplement for lost benefits is issued only if the expense could not be verified within 30 days of the application and the local office was at fault. BEM 554. Expenses are used from the same calendar month as the month for which the Department is determining benefits. BEM 554. Expenses remain unchanged until the FAP group reports a change. BEM 554. The Department determines the amount of monthly income from biweekly checks by averaging any biweekly check and multiplying the average biweekly check amount by 2.15. RFT 505. The Department determines the amount of monthly income from weekly checks by averaging the weekly checks and multiplying the average by 4.3.

Claimants total gross income during the relevant period was \$ [REDACTED]. The Department properly determined Claimant's adjusted gross income to be \$ [REDACTED]. Claimant's Standard Deduction of \$ [REDACTED] is appropriate. RFT 255.

The Excess Shelter deduction of \$ [REDACTED] is proper. Claimant has no housing expense and pays no utilities, so the shelter expenses do not exceed half of the adjusted gross income. See BEM 554, (See BEM 554, pp 16-20, BEM 556.

RFT 260 provides that a FAP group of three with a net income of \$ [REDACTED] would be eligible to \$ [REDACTED] per month in FAP benefits if otherwise eligible. The Department did not err in determining Claimant's monthly FAP benefits.

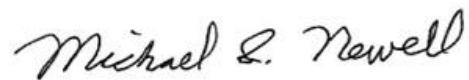
Notably, the FAP group also decreased from 4 to 3. It is undisputed that a former group member was 18 or over, enrolled in college full time, and working less than 20 hours per week. This individual is thus excluded from the FAP group per BEM 245.

Claimant's representative argued that housing expenses should be included. It is undisputed that Claimant had no housing expenses at any times relevant to the hearing. If this changes, the Department should be notified to address such changes.

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.

DECISION AND ORDER

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



Michael S. Newell
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: June 5, 2014

Date Mailed: June 5, 2014

NOTICE OF APPEAL: The claimant may appeal the Decision and Order to Circuit Court within 30 days of the receipt of the Decision and Order or, if a timely Request for Rehearing or Reconsideration was made, within 30 days of the receipt date of the Decision and Order of Reconsideration or Rehearing Decision.

Michigan Administrative Hearing System (MAHS) may order a rehearing or reconsideration on either its own motion or at the request of a party within 30 days of the mailing date of this Decision and Order. MAHS will not order a rehearing or reconsideration on the Department's motion where the final decision cannot be implemented within 90 days of the filing of the original request (60 days for FAP cases).

A Request for Rehearing or Reconsideration may be granted 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 Department, AHR or the claimant 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 the hearing decision is mailed.

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

MSN/las

cc:

