

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

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

Reg. No.: 15-002186
Issue No.: 2003
Case No.: ██████████
Hearing Date: March 18, 2015
County: WAYNE-15 (GREYDALE)

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Robert J. Chavez

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 March 18, 2015, from Detroit, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included ██████████. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included ██████████, Eligibility Specialist.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly close Claimant's case for failing to complete a redetermination for Medical Assistance (MA)?

FINDINGS OF FACT

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

1. Claimant received MA benefits.
2. On January 1, 2015, the Department closed Claimant's case due to failure to complete a redetermination.
3. Claimant attempted to contact the Department several times to confirm that all paperwork had been received.
4. Claimant submitted redetermination paperwork on February 5, 2015; this paperwork was dated November 23, 2014.

5. On February 5, 2015, Claimant/Claimant's Authorized Hearing Representative (AHR) filed a hearing request, 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), and Department of Human Services Reference Tables Manual (RFT).

The Medical Assistance (MA) program is established by the Title XIX of the Social Security Act, 42 USC 1396-1396w-5, and is implemented by 42 CFR 400.200 to 1008.59. The Department of Human Services (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers the MA program pursuant to MCL 400.10 and MCL 400.105.

Additionally, failure to complete a redetermination can result in case closure. BAM 210.

Claimant testified that she had contacted the Department repeatedly to ensure that all paperwork had been received; the Department confirmed that Claimant had attempted to contact them.

Claimant further testified that all redetermination paperwork was turned in on November 27, 2015.

Testimony and other evidence must be weighed and considered according to its reasonableness. *Gardiner v Courtright*, 165 Mich 54, 62; 130 NW 322 (1911); *Dep't of Community Health v Risch*, 274 Mich App 365, 372; 733 NW2d 403 (2007). The weight and credibility of this evidence is generally for the fact-finder to determine. *Dep't of Community Health*, 274 Mich App at 372; *People v Terry*, 224 Mich App 447, 452; 569 NW2d 641 (1997). Moreover, it is for the fact-finder to gauge the demeanor and veracity of the witnesses who appear before him, as best he is able. See, e.g., *Caldwell v Fox*, 394 Mich 401, 407; 231 NW2d 46 (1975); *Zeeland Farm Services, Inc v JBL Enterprises, Inc*, 219 Mich App 190, 195; 555 NW2d 733 (1996).

Claimant testified credibly that she had contacted her caseworker; Claimant adequately and personally described the circumstances when contacting the case worker, the procedures, and other specific descriptors including the Department voice mail message. Furthermore, Claimant's submitted paperwork was dated November 23, 2014, and the Department confirmed that Claimant had attempted to contact them, but was never able to contact her caseworker. As such, the undersigned finds Claimant credible.

By not returning or inquiring as to the nature of Claimant's phone calls, the Department did not attempt to assist the Claimant; such assistance could have remedied the situation before case closure.

The local office must assist clients who ask for help in completing forms or gathering verifications. BAM 105, pg 14 (2014).

By failing to assist the Claimant when the Claimant called in to request assistance in preventing the negative case action, the Department was in error.

As such, the negative action, as a direct result of the Department's failure to assist the Claimant, was incorrect.

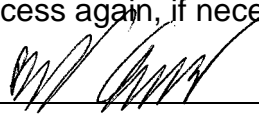
The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, if any, finds that the Department did not act in accordance with Department policy when it closed Claimant's MA case.

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. Reopen Claimant's MA case retroactive to the date of negative action; the Department may begin the redetermination process again, if necessary.



Robert J. Chavez
Administrative Law Judge
for Nick Lyon, Interim Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: **3/30/2015**

Date Mailed: **3/30/2015**

RJC / tm

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]