

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

**IN THE MATTER OF:**



Reg. No.: 15-012815  
Issue No.: 1008, 3000  
Case No.: [REDACTED]  
Hearing Date: August 26, 2015  
County: WASHTENAW (DISTRICT 20)

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE:** Gary Heisler

**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 August 26, 2015, from Lansing, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included herself and her friend [REDACTED]. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included Family Independence Manager (FIM) [REDACTED] and PATH Specialist [REDACTED]. During the hearing it was determined that Claimant's Food Assistance Program was not sanctioned so that portion of the case file is dismissed.

**ISSUES**

Did the Department properly sanction Claimant's Family Independence Program (FIP) for noncompliance with the Partnership, Accountability, Training, Hope (PATH) program?

**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 was an ongoing recipient of Family Independence Program (FIP) benefits.
- (2) On May 4, 2015 Claimant was sent a Partnership, Accountability, Training, Hope (PATH) Appointment Notice (DHS-4785) which directed her to attend beginning May 11, 2015. Claimant was also sent a FAST Mandatory Notice (DHS-1536) which stated she was required to complete a Family Automated Screening Tool (FAST) within 30 days and a Family Self-Sufficiency Plan (FSSP) within 90 days.
- (3) On May 11, 2015, Claimant did not attend PATH.

- (4) On May 14, 2015, an incomplete Medical Needs PATH (DHS-54-E) form was submitted to the Department.
- (5) On July 2, 2015, Claimant had not attended PATH or completed a FAST. She was sent a Notice of Non-Compliance (DHS-2444) which scheduled a triage meeting for July 9, 2015. Claimant was also sent a Notice of Case Action (DHS-1605) stating that the Family Independence Program (FIP) would be sanctioned.
- (6) On July 9, 2015, Claimant did not participated in the scheduled triage meeting. The Department determined there was no good cause for Claimant's failure to participate in employment and/or self-sufficiency related activities.
- (7) On July 13, 2015, Claimant submitted a request for hearing.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

The Family Independence Program (FIP) was established pursuant to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Public Law 104-193, 42 USC 601, *et seq.* The Department (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers FIP pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and 1997 AACRS R 400.3101-3131. FIP replaced the Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) program effective October 1, 1996.

The Department's policies are available on the internet through the Department's website. Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) 233A Failure To Meet Employment and/or Self-Sufficiency Related Requirements: FIP, provides guidance for administration of the Partnership, Accountability, Training, Hope (PATH) program. The policy identifies participation requirements, actions that are noncompliant, the consequences of noncompliance, and the definition of good cause for noncompliance.

**Noncompliance** of applicants, recipients, or member adds means doing **any** of the following **without** good cause:

Failure to complete a FAST or FSSP results in closure due to failure to provide requested verification. Clients can reapply at any time.

- Failing or refusing to:
  - Appear and participate with Partnership, Accountability, Training, Hope (PATH) or other employment service provider.
  - Complete a Family Automated Screening Tool (FAST), as assigned as the first step in the FSSP process.
  - Develop a Family Self-Sufficiency Plan (FSSP).
  - Comply with activities assigned on the FSSP.
  - Provide legitimate documentation of work participation.
  - Appear for a scheduled appointment or meeting related to

- assigned activities.
- Participate in employment and/or self-sufficiency-related activities.
  - Participate in required activity.
  - Accept a job referral.
  - Complete a job application.
  - Appear for a job interview (see the exception below).
- Stating orally or in writing a definite intent not to comply with program requirements.
  - Threatening, physically abusing or otherwise behaving disruptively toward anyone conducting or participating in an employment and/or self-sufficiency-related activity.
  - Refusing employment support services if the refusal prevents participation in an employment and/or self-sufficiency-related activity.

Good cause is a valid reason for noncompliance with employment and/or self-sufficiency related activities that are based on factors that are beyond the control of the noncompliant person. A claim of good cause must be verified and documented for member adds and recipients.

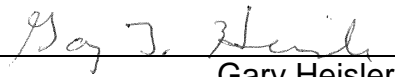
The Department alleged that Claimant was noncompliant because she did not attend PATH as assigned and did not complete a FAST. Claimant does not dispute that she did not attend PATH as assigned and did not complete a FAST. Claimant testified that she dropped the Medical Needs PATH (DHS-54-E) at her Doctor's office on May 8, 2015 and thought the form would be sent in and be accepted so she did attend PATH as assigned or complete a FAST.

The criteria for good cause, cited above, require that the reason for non-compliance be based on factors beyond the control of the noncompliant person. The circumstances here do not meet that criterion. Evidence presented at the hearing is not sufficient to establish that Claimant had good cause in accordance with Department policy.

**DECISION AND ORDER**

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, finds that the Department properly sanctioned Claimant's Family Independence Program (FIP) for noncompliance with the Partnership, Accountability, Training, Hope (PATH) program.

It is ORDERED that the actions of the Department of Human Services, in this matter, are UPHeld.



Gary Heisler  
Administrative Law Judge  
for Nick Lyon, Director  
Department of Health and Human Services

Date Signed: **8/28/2015**

Date Mailed: **8/28/2015**

GFH / 

**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 copy of the claim or application for appeal must be filed with the Michigan Administrative Hearing System (MAHS).

A party may request a rehearing or reconsideration of this Hearing Decision from 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:

