



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
MICHIGAN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING SYSTEM
Christopher Seppanen
Executive Director

SHELLY EDGERTON
DIRECTOR

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Mailed: May 4, 2016
MAHS Docket No.: 16-004024
Agency No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioner: [REDACTED]

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Robert J. Chavez

HEARING DECISION

Following Petitioner'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; and Mich Admin Code, R 792.11002. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on April 27, 2016, from Detroit, Michigan. The Petitioner was represented by herself. The Department of Health and Human Services (Department) was represented by [REDACTED] Eligibility Specialist.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly calculate Petitioner's Food Assistance Program (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. Petitioner was an FAP recipient.
2. On February 10, 2016, Petitioner was mailed a request for verification of employment and earned income.
3. Petitioner returned the requested verification and a new FAP budget was run on March 16, 2016 using the prior 30 days of Petitioner's income.
4. Petitioner's income is not consistent and fluctuates by more than 50%.

5. On April 1, 2016, Petitioner's FAP allotment was reduced to [REDACTED] based on Petitioner's previous 30 days of income.
6. On March 23, 2016, Petitioner requested a hearing.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Department policies are contained in the Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM), Department of Health and Human Services Reference Tables Manual (RFT), and Department of Health and Human Services Emergency Relief Manual (ERM).

The Food Assistance Program (FAP) [formerly known as the Food Stamp program] is established by the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, 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 Department of Human Services) administers FAP pursuant to MCL 400.10, the Social Welfare Act, MCL 400.1-.119b, and Mich Admin Code, R 400.3001-.3011.

Fluctuating income is defined as income that is received on a regular basis, but varies from paycheck to paycheck. BEM 550, pg. 2 (2016).

The Department must use income from the past 60 or 90 days for fluctuating or irregular income, if the past 30 days is not a good indicator of future income, and the fluctuations of income during the past 60 or 90 days appear to accurately reflect the income that is expected to be received in the benefit month. BEM 550, pg. 6 (2016).

In the current case, the Department used Petitioner's past 30 days of income. However, Petitioner's income appears to vary by more than 50% per pay period; the 30 days of income used by the Department appears far higher than Petitioner's typical pays. As Petitioner's income fluctuates and as the previous 30 days were far higher than normal, the Department violated policy when it used only the previous 30 days of income and not 60 or 90 days of income.

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 calculated Petitioner's FAP allotment.


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. Recalculate Petitioner's FAP budget retroactive to the date of negative action, using the previous 90 days of income.

RC/tm



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

NOTICE OF APPEAL: A party may appeal this Order in circuit court within 30 days of the receipt date. A copy of the circuit court appeal must be filed with the Michigan Administrative Hearing System (MAHS).

A party may request a rehearing or reconsideration of this Order if the request is received by MAHS within 30 days of the date the Order was issued. The party requesting a rehearing or reconsideration must provide the specific reasons for the request. MAHS will not review any response to a request for rehearing/reconsideration.

A written request may be mailed or faxed to MAHS. If submitted by fax, the written request must be faxed to (517) 335-6088; 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

DHHS

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]