



RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

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

MIKE ZIMMER  
DIRECTOR

[REDACTED]

Date Mailed: March 31, 2016  
MAHS Docket No.: 15-017404  
Agency No.: [REDACTED]  
Petitioner: OIG  
Respondent: [REDACTED]

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Eric Feldman**

**HEARING DECISION FOR INTENTIONAL PROGRAM VIOLATION**

Upon the request for a hearing by the Department of Health and Human Services (Department), this matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9, and in accordance with Titles 7, 42 and 45 of the Code of Federal Regulation (CFR), particularly 7 CFR 273.16 and 45 CFR 235.110; and with Mich Admin Code, R 400.3130 and 400.3178. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on [REDACTED], from Detroit, Michigan. The Department was represented by [REDACTED], Regulation Agent of the Office of Inspector General (OIG).

Respondent did not appear at the hearing; and it was held in Respondent's absence pursuant to 7 CFR 273.16(e), Mich Admin Code R 400.3130(5), or Mich Admin Code R 400.3178(5).

**ISSUES**

1. Did Respondent receive an overissuance (OI) of Food Assistance Program (FAP) and Medical Assistance (MA) benefits that the Department is entitled to recoup?
2. Did the Department establish, by clear and convincing evidence, that Respondent committed an Intentional Program Violation (IPV)?
3. Should Respondent be disqualified from receiving benefits for FAP?

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

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

1. The Department's OIG filed a hearing request on [REDACTED], to establish an OI of benefits received by Respondent as a result of Respondent having allegedly committed an IPV.
2. The OIG has requested that Respondent be disqualified from receiving program benefits.
3. Respondent was a recipient of FAP and MA benefits issued by the Department.
4. Respondent was aware of the responsibility to report changes in residence.
5. Respondent did not have an apparent physical or mental impairment that would limit the understanding or ability to fulfill this requirement.
6. The Department's OIG indicates that the time period it is considering the FAP fraud period is [REDACTED] (FAP fraud period).
7. The Department's OIG indicates that the time period it is considering the MA OI period is [REDACTED] (MA OI period).
8. During the fraud period, Respondent was issued \$2,526.84 in FAP and MA benefits by the State of Michigan, and the Department alleges that Respondent was entitled to \$0.00 in such benefits during this time period.
9. The Department alleges that Respondent received an OI in FAP and MA benefits in the amount of \$2,526.84.
10. This was Respondent's first alleged IPV.
11. A notice of hearing was mailed to Respondent at the last known address and was not returned by the US Post Office as undeliverable.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

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

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 to .3015.

The Medical Assistance (MA) program is established by Title XIX of the Social Security Act, 42 USC 1396-1396w-5; 42 USC 1315; the Affordable Care Act of 2010, the collective term for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Pub. L. No. 111-148, as amended by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-152; and 42 CFR 430.10-.25. The Department (formerly known as the Department of Human Services) administers the MA program pursuant to 42 CFR 435, MCL 400.10 and MCL 400.105-.112k. .

Effective [REDACTED], the Department's OIG requests IPV hearings for the following cases:

- Willful overpayments of \$500.00 or more under the AHH program.
- FAP trafficking overissuances that are not forwarded to the prosecutor.
- Prosecution of welfare fraud or FAP trafficking is declined by the prosecutor for a reason other than lack of evidence, and
  - The total amount for the FIP, SDA, CDC, MA and FAP programs combined is \$500 or more, or
  - the total amount is less than \$500, and
    - the group has a previous IPV, or
    - the alleged IPV involves FAP trafficking, or
    - the alleged fraud involves concurrent receipt of assistance (see BEM 222), or
    - the alleged fraud is committed by a state/government employee.

BAM 720 (October 2014), pp. 12-13; ASM 165 (May 2013), pp. 1-7.

### **Intentional Program Violation**

Suspected IPV means an OI exists for which all three of the following conditions exist:

- The client intentionally failed to report information **or** intentionally gave incomplete or inaccurate information needed to make a correct benefit determination, and
- The client was clearly and correctly instructed regarding his or her reporting responsibilities, and

- The client has no apparent physical or mental impairment that limits his or her understanding or ability to fulfill reporting responsibilities.

BAM 700 (May 2014), p. 7; BAM 720, p. 1.

An IPV is also suspected for a client who is alleged to have trafficked FAP benefits. BAM 720, p. 1.

An IPV requires that the Department establish by clear and convincing evidence that the client has intentionally withheld or misrepresented information for the purpose of establishing, maintaining, increasing or preventing reduction of program benefits or eligibility. BAM 720, p. 1 (emphasis in original); see also 7 CFR 273(e)(6). Clear and convincing evidence is evidence sufficient to result in a clear and firm belief that the proposition is true. See M Civ JI 8.01.

In this case, the Department alleges that Respondent committed an IPV of her FAP benefits because she failed to notify the Department that she no longer resided in Michigan but continued to receive and use Michigan-issued FAP benefits while out-of-state. It should be noted that the Department indicated that Respondent was active on her husband's case in Arkansas from [REDACTED]. See Exhibit A, p. 1. However, the Department is not pursuing a ten-year disqualification in this case based on concurrent receipt of benefits. As such, the undersigned will only determine if Respondent is subject to a one-year disqualification based on her alleged out-of-state usage/residence.

To be eligible, a person must be a Michigan resident. BEM 220 ([REDACTED]), p. 1. For FAP cases, a person is considered a resident while living in Michigan for any purpose other than a vacation, even if there is no intent to remain in the state permanently or indefinitely. BEM 220, p. 1. Eligible persons may include persons who entered the state with a job commitment or to seek employment; and students (for FAP only, this includes students living at home during a school break). BEM 220, p. 1. For FAP cases, a person who is temporarily absent from the group is considered living with the group. BEM 212 ([REDACTED]), p. 3. However, a person's absence is not temporary if it has lasted more than thirty days. BEM 212, p. 3.

First, the Department presented Respondent's application history, to show that she acknowledged her responsibility to report changes as required. See Exhibit A, p. 11.

Second, the Department presented Respondent's FAP transaction history. See Exhibit A, pp. 12-15. The FAP transaction history showed that from [REDACTED], Respondent used FAP benefits issued by the State of Michigan out-of-state in Georgia and Arkansas (except two transactions in Michigan on [REDACTED]). See Exhibit A, pp. 12-15.

Third, the Department presented an out-of-state verification from Arkansas that showed that Respondent was on her husband's FAP case from [REDACTED]. See Exhibit A, p. 19.

Based on the foregoing information and evidence, the Department has failed to establish that Respondent committed an IPV of FAP benefits. There was no evidence to show that Respondent, during the alleged fraud period, represented that she was in Michigan. Furthermore, there was no evidence to establish that Respondent had moved out-of-state, such as a residential lease or employment. It is unknown if Respondent was caring for someone, attending school, or seeking work. Department policy does not prohibit out-of-state usage when the individual intends on coming back.

Moreover, the Department did not present any evidence to establish Respondent's intent during the alleged IPV usage other than FAP transactions history/out-of-state verification/LexisNexis report. However this failed to show by clear and convincing evidence that Respondent intentionally withheld information concerning an out-of-state move during the alleged fraud period.

In summary, in the absence of any clear and convincing evidence that Respondent intentionally withheld information concerning an out-of-state move for the purpose of maintaining Michigan FAP eligibility, the Department has failed to establish that Respondent committed an IPV of FAP benefits.

### **Disqualification**

A client who is found to have committed an IPV by a court or hearing decision is disqualified from receiving program benefits. BAM 720, p. 15; BEM 708 (April 2014), p. 1. Clients are disqualified for ten years for a FAP IPV involving concurrent receipt of benefits, and, for all other IPV cases involving FIP, FAP or SDA, for standard disqualification periods of one year for the first IPV, two years for the second IPV, and lifetime for the third IPV. BAM 720, p. 16. CDC clients who intentionally violate CDC program rules are disqualified for six months for the first occurrence, twelve months for the second occurrence, and lifetime for the third occurrence. BEM 708, p. 1. A disqualified recipient remains a member of an active group as long as he/she lives with them, and other eligible group members may continue to receive benefits. BAM 720, p. 16.

In this case, the Department has not satisfied its burden of showing that Respondent committed an IPV concerning FAP benefits. Therefore, Respondent is not subject to a disqualification under the FAP program. BAM 720, p. 16.

### **FAP Overissuance**

As stated previously, the Department failed to show that Respondent purposely failed to report a change in residency to continue receiving FAP benefits from Michigan. Thus,

no IPV was committed. However, the Department can still proceed with recoupment of the OI when there is client error.

A client/CDC provider error OI occurs when the client received more benefits than they were entitled to because the client/CDC provider gave incorrect or incomplete information to the department. BAM 715 (July 2014), p. 1.

Based on the FAP transaction history, it is persuasive evidence that Respondent was not a Michigan resident. See BEM 220, p. 1. The evidence shows that the most probable explanation is that Respondent lived outside of Michigan. Moreover, the FAP transaction history shows that Respondent was using benefits out-of-state for more than thirty days. See BEM 212, p. 3. This established that Respondent is not temporarily absent from her group and she was not eligible for FAP benefits. Therefore, a client error is present in this situation because Respondent failed to notify the Department of her change in residency. See BAM 715, p. 1.

Applying the OI begin date policy, it is found that the appropriate OI begin date is [REDACTED]. See BAM 715, pp. 4-5 and Exhibit A, pp. 4 and 13.

Additionally, when a client group receives more benefits than they are entitled to receive, the Department must attempt to recoup the OI. BAM 700, p. 1. The amount of the OI is the benefit amount the group or provider actually received minus the amount the group was eligible to receive. BAM 715, p. 6.

In establishing the OI amount, the Department presented a benefit summary inquiry showing that Respondent was issued FAP benefits by the State of Michigan from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] which totaled \$1,388. See Exhibit A, p. 16. Thus, the Department is entitled to recoup \$1,388 of FAP benefits it issued to Respondent from [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

### **MA Overissuance**

The Department initiates MA recoupment of an overissuance (OI) due to client error or intentional program violation (IPV), not when due to agency error. BAM 710 (July 2013), p. 1. When the Department receives the amount of MA payments, it determines the OI amount. BAM 710, p. 1. For an OI due to unreported income or a change affecting need allowances:

- If there would have been a deductible or larger deductible, the OI amount is the correct deductible (minus any amount already met) or the amount of MA payments, whichever is less.
- If there would have been a larger LTC, hospital or post-eligibility patient-pay amount, the OI amount is the difference between the correct and incorrect patient-pay amounts or the amount of MA payments, whichever is less.

BAM 710, p. 2. For an OI due to any other reason, the OI amount is the amount of MA payments. BAM 710, p. 2.

In this case, the Department also alleges that an OI was present for Respondent's MA benefits for the period of [REDACTED]. The Department alleges that she failed to notify the Department that she no longer resided in Michigan but her and her group members' MA benefits continued to pay their health premiums/capitations while they were out-of-state. However, the undersigned finds that the appropriate OI begin date is [REDACTED]. See BAM 710, p. 1 (For changes unreported by ongoing recipients, the OI period begins the first day of the month after the month in which the standard reporting period plus the negative action period would have ended).

Nonetheless, the evidence is persuasive that Respondent and her group members were not Michigan residents. As such, Respondent and her group members' were not eligible for MA benefits during the OI period of [REDACTED] and therefore, a MA OI amount is present. See Exhibit A, pp. 12-15; BEM 211 [REDACTED], pp. 2-3; and BEM 220 [REDACTED]), p. 2.

In establishing the OI amount, the Department presented a summary of the MA premiums/payments paid on Respondent's and her group members' behalf for [REDACTED] [REDACTED] which totaled \$765.65. See Exhibit A, pp. 17-18. Thus, the Department is entitled to recoup \$765.65 of MA benefits it issued to Respondent for April 2014 to July 2014. See BAM 710, p. 2.

In summary, the Department is entitled to recoup \$2,153.65 in FAP and MA benefits (\$1,388 for FAP OI period [REDACTED] plus \$765.65 for MA OI period of [REDACTED] [REDACTED]).

### **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, if any, concludes that:

1. The Department **has not** established by clear and convincing evidence that Respondent committed an IPV.
2. Respondent **did** receive an OI of FAP and MA program benefits in the amount of \$2,153.65.

The Department is **ORDERED** to reduce the OI to \$2,153.65 for the period [REDACTED] [REDACTED], and initiate recoupment/collection procedures in accordance with Department policy.

EF/hw



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**Eric Feldman**  
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 [REDACTED] 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]

**Petitioner**

[REDACTED]

**Respondent**

[REDACTED]