



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

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

SHELLY EDGERTON
DIRECTOR

[REDACTED]

Date Mailed: October 27, 2016
MAHS Docket No.: 16-003139
Agency No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioner: OIG
Respondent: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Darryl Johnson

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 October 25, 2016, from Lansing, Michigan. The Department was represented by [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Regulation Agent of the Office of Inspector General (OIG). The Respondent appeared on her own behalf.

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 March 9, 2016, 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 her address and her state of 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 fraud period is May 1, 2015, through September 30, 2015, for FAP, and May 1, 2015, through June 30, 2015, for MA (fraud period).
7. During the fraud period, Respondent was issued \$ [REDACTED] in FAP benefits and \$ [REDACTED] in MA benefits by the State of Michigan, and the Department alleges that Respondent was entitled to \$ [REDACTED] in such benefits during this time period.
8. The Department alleges that Respondent received an OI in FAP and MA benefits in the amount of \$ [REDACTED].
9. This was Respondent's first alleged IPV.
10. 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 January 1, 2016, 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 (1/1/16), p. 12-13.

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 (1/1/16), p. 6; 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, Respondent was an on-going FAP and MA recipient, based upon her application dated January 16, 2014 (Exhibit 1 Page 11). In March of 2015, Respondent left Michigan to care for a family member. On March 30, 2015, she began using her FAP in [REDACTED] (Page 47), and from that point on she used her FAP in either [REDACTED] or [REDACTED], through February 24, 2016. She testified that she now has a [REDACTED] driver's license, and has a car registered in [REDACTED], but she is registered to vote in Michigan. She has only been back to Michigan three times since March of 2015. She also testified that she told her case worker that she was leaving Michigan to care for a family member, and that her intent has always been to return.

BEM 220 (1/1/16) p. 1 says a person must be a Michigan resident to receive FIP, RCA, SDA, CDC, MA, or FAP. For FAP, "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." For MA, "A Michigan resident is an individual who is living in Michigan except for a temporary absence. Residency continues for an individual who is temporarily absent from Michigan or intends to return to Michigan when the purpose of the absence has been accomplished." BEM 220, p. 2.

As explained above, the Department must prove that Respondent intentionally violated the program rules. In this case, Respondent was persuasive in her testimony that she told her case worker that she was leaving Michigan to care for a family member. She understood that she needed to tell the Department if she were leaving the State. Because she reported her change, that obviates the "intent" factor. That does not provide the ultimate resolution of this matter.

The State of [REDACTED]'s Department of Motor Vehicles notes the criteria for obtaining a [REDACTED] driver's license on its website. See [http://www.dmv.org/\[REDACTED\]/apply-license.php](http://www.dmv.org/[REDACTED]/apply-license.php). On that web page it details the documentation needed to get a license, and included is the requirement to provide two documents to prove the applicant's [REDACTED] residency. Once she applied for a [REDACTED] license, she was telling [REDACTED] that she was a [REDACTED] resident. She cannot remain a Michigan resident at that point.

Because the evidence does not support a finding that she intentionally violated the program rules, the evidence must be assessed to determine whether she received an OI due to either client error or agency error. As stated in BAM 700 (1/1/16) p 1, "When

a client group receives more benefits than it is entitled to receive, MDHHS must attempt to recoup the overissuance.” That is true regardless of whether the error was a “client error” or an “agency error.” The policy contains the imperative “must attempt to recoup the overissuance.” There is no discretion on the part of the Department or the Administrative Law Judge.

To receive FAP, the person must be a Michigan resident, and living in Michigan. To receive MA, they must be living in Michigan, except for a temporary absence. An example of a “temporary absence” given in BEM 220, p. 2, is: “Individuals who spend the winter months in a warmer climate and return to their home in the spring. They remain MI residents during the winter months.” Respondent has been gone from Michigan for more than a year and a half now, with only three brief trips back to Michigan during that time. Her absence has not been temporary. Therefore, she has not been eligible to receive FAP or MA since she left Michigan.

Disqualification

A client who is found to have committed a FAP IPV by a court or hearing decision is disqualified from receiving program benefits. BAM 720, p. 15; BEM 708 (4/1/14), 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 proved an IPV, and therefore there is no disqualification.

Overissuance

When a client group receives more benefits than entitled to receive, the Department must attempt to recoup the OI. BAM 700, p. 1.

In this case, Respondent received \$ [REDACTED] in FAP (Page 58) and \$ [REDACTED] in MA (Pages 56-57) during the OI period. The total OI in the two programs is \$ [REDACTED] and that must be recouped by the Department.

DECISION AND ORDER

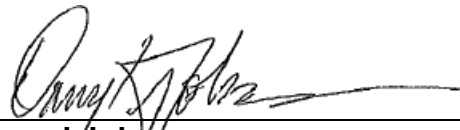
The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, if any, concludes that:

1. The Department not established by clear and convincing evidence that Respondent committed an IPV.
2. Respondent received an OI of program benefits in the amount of \$ [REDACTED] from the FAP and MA programs.

The Department is ORDERED to initiate recoupment/collection procedures for the amount of \$ [REDACTED] in accordance with Department policy.

No disqualification period is ordered.

DJ/mc



Darryl Johnson

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]

Petitioner

[REDACTED]

Respondent

[REDACTED]