



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]
[REDACTED]

Date Mailed: April 19, 2017
MAHS Docket No.: 16-013217
Agency No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioner: [REDACTED]

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Michael J. Bennane

AMENDED 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 [REDACTED] [REDACTED], from [REDACTED] Michigan. The Petitioner was represented by [REDACTED]. The Department of Health and Human Services (Department) was represented by [REDACTED], Hearings Facilitator, and [REDACTED] from the Office of Child Support (OCS).

At the conclusion of the hearing, a Hearing Decision was issued by Administrative Law Judge Michael J. Bennane and mailed on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED], which is hereby **AMENDED** to correct the Conclusions of Law, paragraph 5.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly deny the Petitioner's State Emergency Relief (SER) application?

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 Petitioner applied for SER for relocation service.
2. On [REDACTED], the Department sent the Petitioner a Verification Checklist (VCL) requesting various proofs.

3. On [REDACTED], the Department sent the Petitioner an SER Decision Notice informing her that the Department had denied her SER request for noncooperation with OCS.
4. On [REDACTED], the Petitioner requested a hearing to protest the denial of her SER application.

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 State Emergency Relief (SER) program is established by the Social Welfare Act, MCL 400.1-.119b. The SER program is administered by the Department (formerly known as the Department of Human Services) pursuant to MCL 400.10 and Mich Admin Code, R 400.7001-.7049.

In this case, the Petitioner's application for relocation SER was denied because the Petitioner was found to be not cooperative with child support requirements (OCS).

The OCS participated in the hearing, and the Petitioner was sworn in and asked whether she had any further information about the father of her child that she had not heretofore shared with OCS. The Petitioner responded in the negative.

In *Black v Dept of Social Services*, 195 Mich App 27 (1992), the Court of Appeals addressed the issue of burden of proof in a non-cooperation finding. Specifically, the court in *Black* ruled that to support a finding of non-cooperation, the agency has the burden of proof to establish that the mother (1) failed to provide the requested verification and that (2) the mother knew the requested information. The *Black* court also emphasized the fact that the mother testified under oath that she had no further information and the agency failed to offer any evidence that the mother knew more than she was disclosing. *Black* at 32-34.

In the instant case, the Petitioner responded, under oath, as the mother did in *Black*. Here, the Petitioner responded that she had no further information about her child's father other than what she already provided to OCS.

The undersigned ALJ finds that the Petitioner cooperated with OCS to the best of her ability, and the noncooperation status with OCS is removed.

DECISION AND ORDER

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 failed to accept the Petitioner's statement that she had no further information about the father of her child.

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. Reinstate the Petitioner's Family Independence Program (FIP) benefits back to [REDACTED], and supplement for any missed benefits.
2. Reregister and process the Petitioner's SER application back to the date of application.

MJB/jaf



Michael J. Bennane
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
PO Box 30639
Lansing Michigan 48909-8139

DHHS

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Department Representative

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Petitioner

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Via email

[illegible]