



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: July 14, 2017  
MAHS Docket No.: [REDACTED] 17-005032  
Agency No.: [REDACTED]  
Petitioner: [REDACTED]  
Respondent: [REDACTED]

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Jacquelyn A. McClinton**

**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 FAP 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 FAP benefits for ten years?

**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 FAP benefits.
3. Respondent was a recipient of FAP benefits issued by the Department.
4. Respondent was aware of the responsibility to report changes in residency to the Department within 10 days.
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 [REDACTED] (fraud period).
7. During the fraud period, Respondent was issued [REDACTED] in FAP 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 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.

Effective October 1, 2014, 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 (January 2016), pp.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 (January 2016), 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 received Michigan-issued FAP benefits at the same time she was issued FAP benefits in Georgia. Under Department policy, a person **cannot** receive FAP in more than one state for any month. BEM 222 (March 2013), p. 2. In support of its contention that Respondent committed an IPV, the Department presented an application submitted by Respondent on [REDACTED] in which she acknowledged that she received the Information Booklet advising of "Things You Must Do" (which explained reporting change circumstances, including residency).

The Department presented correspondence from the State of Ohio which revealed that Respondent received FAP benefits in Georgia from on [REDACTED]. The Department further presented a benefit issuance summary relating to Respondent's Michigan issued FAP benefits which indicated that Respondent received Michigan issued FAP benefits [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED] Michigan application specifically asked if Respondent had received SNAP benefits. Respondent indicated that she received FAP benefits from Georgia in 2007. This information prompted Respondent's assigned Michigan worker to contact the State of Georgia to confirm Respondent's statements.

There was no evidence presented to show that Respondent used the Georgia benefits or if she was even aware that she actually received the benefits. Given that the Georgia benefits had not yet been issued at the time of the [REDACTED] application, Respondent's statement that she had not "received" prior FAP benefits from another state could have been true. As such, it is found that the Department has not established that Respondent intentionally misled the Department for the purpose of maintaining FAP program 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 (October 2015), p. 15. 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.

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 failed to establish that Respondent committed an IPV. Further, under Department policy, Respondent could only receive the requested ten-year disqualification if the Department established that Respondent provide fraudulent statements regarding her identity or residency. BAM 720, p. 16. There was no evidence provided to demonstrate that Respondent provided false statements regarding her identity or residency. Accordingly, Respondent is not subject to a disqualification under the FAP program.

### **Overissuance**

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. At the hearing, the Department established that the State of Michigan issued a total of ██████ in FAP benefits to Respondent during the fraud period. The Department alleges that Respondent was eligible for ██████ in FAP benefits during this period.

The Department presented evidence from the State of Georgia which revealed that Respondent received FAP benefits on ██████ as well as the benefits issuance summary which revealed that Respondent received Michigan FAP benefits issued on ██████. As previously stated, the Department failed to established that Respondent was aware that the benefits had been issued or if she used the benefits issued from Georgia. In Michigan, if benefits remain unused for one year, the Department can recoup. It is unclear if the same recourse is available in Georgia if, in fact, Respondent never used the benefits issued. As such, the evidence provided at the hearing failed to demonstrate that Respondent simultaneously received benefits from Michigan and Georgia from ██████. Therefore, the Department has established it is not entitled to recoup the ██████ in FAP benefits it issued to Respondent during the fraud period.

### **DECISION AND ORDER**

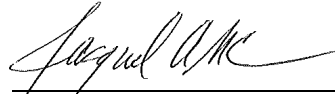
The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, if any, concludes that:

1. The Department has not established by clear and convincing evidence that Respondent committed an IPV.
2. Respondent did not receive an OI of program benefits in the amount of ██████ in FAP benefits from ██████

The Department is ORDERED to delete the OI and cease any recoupment action.

It is FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent is not disqualified from FAP benefits for the period of [REDACTED]

JM/tlf



---

**Jacquelyn A. McClinton**  
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

**Via Email:**

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Respondent – Via First-Class Mail:**

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]