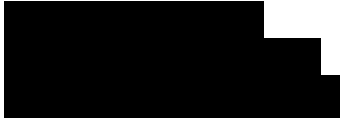




RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
MICHIGAN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING SYSTEM

SHELLY EDGERTON
DIRECTOR



Date Mailed: September 22, 2017
MAHS Docket No.: 17-004359
Agency No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioner: OIG
Respondent: [REDACTED]

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Kevin Scully

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 with Mich Admin Code, R 400.3130 and R 400.3178. After due notice, telephone hearing was held on August 23, 2017, from Lansing, Michigan. The Department was represented by [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Regulation Agent of the Office of Inspector General (OIG). Respondent represented himself.

ISSUES

1. Did the 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 the Respondent committed an Intentional Program Violation (IPV)?
3. Should the Respondent be disqualified from the Food Assistance Program (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. On a Redetermination (DHS-1010) form received by the Department on October 3, 2014, Respondent acknowledged his duties and responsibilities including the duty to report any change of residency to the Department in a timely manner. Exhibit A, pp 12-17.

2. Respondent did not have an apparent physical or mental impairment that would limit the understanding or ability to fulfill this requirement.
3. Respondent reported to the Department on a Mid-Certification Contact Notice (DHS-2240-A) sent to him at his Detroit, Michigan, mailing address and returned to the Department on November 3, 2014, that his circumstances had not changed. Exhibit A, pp 18-20.
4. Respondent starting using Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits in Georgia on December 19, 2014, and used them exclusively in Georgia through November 21, 2015. Exhibit A, pp 23-26.
5. Respondent received Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits totaling \$ [REDACTED] from January 1, 2015, through October 31, 2015. Exhibit A, pp 32-33.
6. Respondent received Medical Assistance (MA) benefits with a value of \$ [REDACTED] from January 1, 2015, through November 30, 2015.
7. On March 16, 2017, the Department sent the Respondent an Intentional Program Violation Repayment Agreement (DHS-4350) with notice of a \$ [REDACTED] overpayment, and a Request for Waiver of Disqualification Hearing (DHS-826). Exhibit A, pp 6-9.
8. The Department's OIG filed a hearing request on March 16, 2017, to establish an OI of benefits received by Respondent as a result of Respondent having allegedly committed an IPV. Exhibit A, p 3.
9. This was Respondent's first established IPV.
10. A notice of hearing was mailed to Respondent at the last known address and was not returned by the United States Postal Service as undeliverable.

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 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.

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.

The Department's OIG requests IPV hearings for the following cases:

- FAP trafficking OIs 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 OI amount for the FIP, SDA, CDC, MA and FAP programs is \$500 or more, or
 - the total OI 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.

Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 720 (January 1, 2016), pp 12-13.

Overissuance

When a client group receives benefits than they are entitled to receive, the Department must attempt to recoup the overissuance. Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 700 (October 1, 2016), p 1.

To be eligible for FAP and MA benefits, a person must be a Michigan resident. A person is considered a resident under the FAP 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. Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) 220 (January 1, 2016), p 1.

Clients must report changes in circumstance that potentially affect eligibility or benefit amount. Changes must be reported within 10 days of receiving the first payment reflecting the change. Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 105 (April 1, 2016), p 11. The Department will act on a change reported by means other than a tape match within 15 workdays after becoming aware of the change, except that the Department will act on a change other than a tape match within 10 days of becoming aware of the change. Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 220 (April 1, 2016), p 7. A pending negative action occurs when a negative action requires timely notice based on the eligibility rules in this item. Timely notice means that the action taken by the department is effective at least 12 calendar days following the date of the department's action. BAM 220, p 12.

On a Redetermination (DHS-1010) form received by the Department on October 3, 2014, the Respondent acknowledged his duties and responsibilities including the duty to report any change of residency to the Department. Respondent did not have an apparent physical or mental impairment that would limit the understanding or ability to fulfill his duties and responsibilities.

On November 3, 2014, Respondent reported to the Department that his circumstances had not changed. Respondent received FAP totaling \$ [REDACTED] from January 1, 2015, through October 31, 2015. Respondent received MA benefits with a value of \$ [REDACTED] from January 1, 2015, through November 30, 2015.

The Respondent began using FAP benefits in Georgia on December 19, 2014, and used them exclusively in Georgia through November 21, 2015. The exclusive use of benefits in another state is evidence of a lack of intent to remain a Michigan resident

Respondent testified that he was in Georgia temporarily after his mother's funeral and reported his absence from Michigan to his caseworker. Respondent failed to present any evidence that he informed his caseworker about his absence from Michigan. Respondent failed to present any evidence that he continued to have any connection to Michigan after December 19, 2014.

The record evidence supports a finding that Respondent was no longer living in Michigan as of December 19, 2014, as shown by the exclusive use of his FAP benefits in Georgia for an extended period of time. Respondent had a duty to report that he was no longer living in Michigan and no longer had any intent to remain in Michigan by December 29, 2014. If Respondent had reported that he was no longer living in Michigan, the Department would have acted on this information within 10 days. Upon discovering that Respondent no longer had any intent to remain a Michigan resident, his benefits would have been closed, such a closure would have been pending for 12 days, and this change in circumstances would have affected the first benefit period after January 20, 2015.

Therefore, the record evidence fails to establish that Respondent was not eligible for the FAP and MA benefits he received in January of 2016.

Respondent received FAP benefits totaling \$ [REDACTED] from February 1, 2015, through October 31, 2015. Respondent received MA benefits with a value of \$ [REDACTED] from February 1, 2015, through October 31, 2015. Since Respondent had no intent to remain a Michigan resident and was not living in Michigan during this period, he was not eligible for any of the benefits he received. Therefore, Respondent received a \$ [REDACTED] overissuance of benefits.

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, 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).

The Department has the burden of establishing by clear and convincing evidence that the Respondent committed an Intentional Program Violation (IPV). The clear and convincing evidence standard, which is the most demanding standard applied in civil cases, is established where there is evidence so clear, direct and weighty and convincing that a conclusion can be drawn without hesitancy of the truth of the precise facts in issue. *Smith v Anonymous Joint Enterprise*, 487 Mich 102; 793 NW2d 533 (2010), reh den 488 Mich 860; 793 NW2d 559 (2010).

Clear and convincing proof is that which produces in the mind of the trier of fact a firm belief or conviction as to the truth of the precise facts in issue. Evidence may be uncontroverted and yet not be clear and convincing. Conversely, evidence may be clear and convincing even if contradicted. *Id.*

On a Redetermination (DHS-1010) form received by the Department on October 3, 2014, Respondent acknowledged his duties and responsibilities including the duty to report any change of residency to the Department in a timely manner. Respondent did

not have an apparent physical or mental impairment that would limit the understanding or ability to fulfill this requirement. Respondent failed to report becoming a Georgia resident on December 19, 2014, which was established by his exclusive use of FAP benefits in Georgia from December 19, 2014, through November 21, 2015, and lack of evidence of an intent to remain a Michigan resident. As a result, Respondent received an overissuance of FAP benefits totaling \$ [REDACTED] and an overissuance of MA benefits totaling \$ [REDACTED].

This Administrative Law Judge finds that the Department has presented clear and convincing evidence that the Respondent intentionally failed to report a change of residency to the Department for the purposes of becoming eligible for and maintaining eligibility for FAP benefits that he would not have been eligible for otherwise.

Disqualification

A court or hearing decision that finds a client committed IPV disqualifies that client from receiving program benefits. BAM 720, p. 15-16. A disqualified recipient remains a member of an active group as long as he lives with them, and other eligible group members may continue to receive benefits. BAM 720, p. 16.

Clients who commit an IPV are disqualified for a standard disqualification period except when a court orders a different period, or except when the OI relates to MA. BAM 720, p. 13. Refusal to repay will not cause denial of current or future MA if the client is otherwise eligible. BAM 710 (July 1, 2013), p. 2. Clients are disqualified for periods of one year for the first IPV, two years for the second IPV, lifetime disqualification for the third IPV, and ten years for a FAP concurrent receipt of benefits. BAM 720, p. 16.

The record evidence indicates that this is Respondent's first established IPV violation.

The Department has established an Intentional Program Violation (IPV).


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 established by clear and convincing evidence that the Respondent committed an IPV.
2. The Respondent did receive an OI of Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits in the amount of \$ [REDACTED].
3. The Respondent did receive an OI of Medical Assistance (MA) benefits in the amount of \$ [REDACTED].
4. The Department is **ORDERED TO REDUCE** the OI to \$ [REDACTED] for the period of February 1, 2015, through October 31, 2015, and initiate recoupment procedures in accordance with Department policy.

5. It is FURTHER ORDERED that the Respondent be disqualified from the Food Assistance Program (FAP) for a period of 12 months.

KS/nr



Kevin Scully
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]