



RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
LANSING

SHELLY EDGERTON  
DIRECTOR

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] MI [REDACTED]

Date Mailed: October 24, 2018  
MAHS Docket No.: 18-006571  
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, a telephone hearing was held on October 2, 2018, from Lansing, Michigan. The Department was represented by Debra Echinaw, 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) 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 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 an application for assistance dated [REDACTED], 2015, Respondent acknowledged his duties and responsibilities including the duty to report changes of address and shelter cost changes that result from the move. Respondent did not have an apparent physical or mental impairment that would limit the understanding or ability to fulfill this requirement. Exhibit A, pp 12-22.

2. Respondent failed to report to the Department that he was incarcerated in the Kent County Jail on June 25, 2015, and was not released from custody until February 12, 2016. Exhibit A, pp 26-27.
3. Respondent received Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits as a group of one totaling \$1,358 from August 1, 2015, through February 28, 2016. Exhibit A, pp 57-60.
4. On June 22, 2018, the Department sent Respondent an Intentional Program Violation Repayment Agreement (DHS-4350) with notice of a \$1,358 overpayment, and a Request for Waiver of Disqualification Hearing (DHS-826). Exhibit A, pp 7-10.
5. The Department's OIG filed a hearing request on June 22, 2018, to establish an OI of benefits received by Respondent as a result of Respondent having allegedly committed an IPV. Exhibit A, p 3.
6. This was Respondent's first established IPV.
7. 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 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 more benefits than it is entitled to receive, the Department must attempt to recoup the overissuance. Department of Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM) 700 (January 1, 2018), p 1.

Clients must report changes in circumstance that potentially affect eligibility or benefit amount within 10 days of receiving the first payment reflecting the change. Changes that must be reported include changes of address and shelter cost changes that result from the move. Department of Human Services Bridges Assistance Manual (BAM) 105 (January 1, 2018), pp 1-20.

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 (January 1, 2018), p 12. 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 (January 1, 2018), 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.

A person is a resident of an institution when the institution provides the majority of his meals as part of its normal services. Residents of institutions are not eligible for FAP unless one of the following is true:

1. The facility is authorized by the Food and Consumer Service to accept FAP benefits.
2. The facility is an eligible group living facility; see BEM 615.
3. The facility is a medical hospital and there is a plan for the person's return home

Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) 212 (January 1, 2017), p 8.

Residents of an institution, with some exceptions, are not eligible to participate in the Food Assistance Program (FAP) as separate households or as a member of any household. 7 CFR 273(7)(vi).

On an application for assistance dated [REDACTED], 2015, Respondent acknowledged the duty to report changes to his circumstances affecting his eligibility for FAP benefits including changes in address and shelter cost changes that result from the move. 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 that he was incarcerated in the Kent County Jail from June 25, 2015, through February 12, 2016. A county jail is an institution where meals are served. Respondent, as a FAP group of one, was not eligible to receive any FAP benefits while living in a jail. If Respondent had reported his incarceration in a timely manner, then the Department would have redetermined his eligibility for FAP benefits by the first benefits period after July 27, 2018. Respondent received FAP benefits totaling \$1,358 from August 1, 2015, through February 28, 2016. Respondent was not eligible for any of the FAP benefits he received during that period. Therefore, Respondent received a \$1,358 overissuance of FAP 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 the reporting responsibilities, and
- The client has no apparent physical or mental impairment that limits the 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 273.16(e)(6).

The Department has the burden of establishing by clear and convincing evidence that 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.*

Respondent acknowledge his duties and responsibilities on an application for assistance dated [REDACTED], 2015. 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 his incarceration in the Kent County Jail and he was not eligible for the FAP benefits he received as a group of one from August 1, 2015, through February 28, 2016. As a result of Respondent's failure to report his incarceration, he received an overissuance of FAP benefits.

This Administrative Law Judge finds that the Department has presented clear and convincing evidence that Respondent intentionally failed to report his incarceration for the purposes of maintaining his 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.

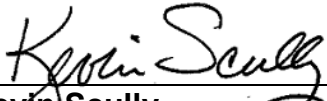
The Department has established an Intentional Program Violation (IPV).

**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 Respondent committed an IPV.
2. Respondent did receive an OI of Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits in the amount of \$1,358.
3. The Department is ORDERED to initiate recoupment procedures for the amount of \$1,358 in accordance with Department policy.
4. It is FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent be disqualified from the Food Assistance Program (FAP) for a period of 12 months.

KS/hb

  
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**Kevin Scully**  
Administrative Law Judge  
for Nick Lyon, Director  
Department of Health and Human Services

