



GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
MICHIGAN OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS AND RULES

ORLENE HAWKS  
DIRECTOR

[REDACTED]  
MI [REDACTED]

Date Mailed: August 8, 2019  
MOAHR Docket No.: 19-004867  
Agency No.: [REDACTED]  
Petitioner: OIG  
Respondent: [REDACTED]

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE:** Vicki L. Armstrong

### **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, 42 CFR 431.230(b), 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 August 6, 2019, from Lansing, Michigan.

The Department was represented by Maria Williams, Lead Agent of the Office of Inspector General (OIG). Ms. Williams testified on behalf of the Department. The Department submitted 64 exhibits which were admitted into evidence.

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). The record was closed at the conclusion of the hearing.

### **ISSUES**

1. Did Respondent receive an overissuance 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 receiving FAP benefits for 12 months?

### **FINDINGS OF FACT**

The Administrative Law Judge, based on competent, material, and substantial evidence on the whole record, finds as material fact:

1. The Department's OIG filed a hearing request on May 1, 2019, to establish an overissuance of benefits received by Respondent as a result of Respondent having failed to report her earned income and, as such, allegedly committed an IPV. [Dept. Exh. 1].
2. The OIG has requested that Respondent be disqualified for 12 months from receiving program benefits. [Dept. Exh. 1, 4].
3. Respondent was a recipient of FAP benefits issued by the Department. [Dept. Exh. 134-136].
4. On [REDACTED] 2014, Respondent submitted an Assistance Application for FAP and Health Care Coverage. Respondent reported no income. [Dept. Exh. 13-30].
5. On [REDACTED] 2015, Respondent submitted a Redetermination indicating that her husband was receiving \$ [REDACTED] in unemployment income. [Dept. Exh. 61-66].
6. On [REDACTED] 2017, Respondent applied for FAP and Health Care Coverage. Respondent indicated that her husband was employed by [REDACTED] and had been, since July 31, 2016. [Dept. Exh. 83].
7. On March 2, 2018, the Department mailed [REDACTED] an Earnings Request for Recoupment requesting earning information for the period of January 2014 through December 2015. [Dept. Exh. 101].
8. On March 6, 2018, the Department received verification of income from [REDACTED] indicating Respondent was employed from July 30, 2012 through September 26, 2015. [Dept. Exh. 102-103].
9. An Unemployment Compensation Benefit check was completed by the Department on Respondent for the period of February 2014 through June 2017. The results showed that Respondent received \$ [REDACTED] in unemployment benefits from December 6, 2014 through April 18, 2015. [Dept. Exh. 104-107].
10. On March 2, 2018, the Department mailed Net Shaped Solutions Technologies an Earnings Request for Recoupment requesting earning information for the period of January 2017 through June 2017. [Dept. Exh. 108].
11. On March 5, 2018, the Department received verification of income from [REDACTED] indicating Respondent was employed from January 3, 2017 through July 17, 2017. [Dept. Exh. 109-130].
12. On March 2, 2018, the Department mailed [REDACTED] an Earnings Request for Recoupment requesting earning information for the period of January 2017 through June 2017. [Dept. Exh. 131].

13. On March 2, 2018, the Department received verification of income from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] indicating Respondent was employed from July 20, 2016 through November 27, 2017. [Dept. Exh. 132-133].
14. Respondent was aware of the responsibility to report changes in her husband's employment to the Department. [Dept. Exh. 13-30, 61-66, 71-98]
15. Respondent had no apparent physical or mental impairment that would limit the understanding or ability to fulfill this requirement. [Dept. Exh. 77].
16. Respondent did not appear and give evidence at the scheduled hearing to rebut the evidence presented by the Department in the Hearing Summary and admitted exhibits.
17. The Department's OIG indicates that the time periods it is considering the fraud periods are July 1, 2015 through October 31, 2015; January 1, 2017 through June 30, 2017; and July 1, 2014 through October 31, 2014 (fraud periods).
18. During the fraud period, Respondent was issued a total of \$2,745.00 in FAP benefits by the State of Michigan, and the Department alleges that Respondent was entitled to \$19.00 in such benefits during this time period.
19. The Department alleges that Respondent received an overissuance in FAP benefits in the amount of \$2,726.00.
20. This was Respondent's first alleged IPV.
21. 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, 2017, the Department's Office of Inspector General requests Intentional Program Violation hearings for the following cases:

1. FAP trafficking overissuances that are not forwarded to the prosecutor.
2. Prosecution of welfare fraud or Food Assistance Program trafficking is declined by the prosecutor for a reason other than lack of evidence, and
  - The total amount for the Family Independence Program (FIP), State Disability Assistance (SDA), Child Development and Care (CDC), Medicaid (MA) and Food Assistance Program (FAP) programs combined is \$500 or more, or
  - the total amount is less than \$500, and
    - the group has a previous Intentional Program Violation, or
    - the alleged Intentional Program Violation involves Food Assistance Program 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, pp 12-13 (10/1/2017).

**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. 7 CFR 271.2; BAM 720, p 1 (emphasis in original).

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). 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 record evidence clearly shows that Respondent's husband was employed at [REDACTED] from July 30, 2012 through September 26, 2015. Her husband received unemployment compensation from December 6, 2014 through April 18, 2015. He worked at [REDACTED] from January 3, 2017 through July 17, 2017. And he was employed through [REDACTED] from July 20, 2016 through November 27, 2017. The Department established by clear and convincing evidence that Respondent intentionally withheld the information that her husband was employed and receiving unemployment compensation for the purpose of maintaining Food Assistance Program benefits. Therefore, the Department has established an Intentional Program Violation.

### **Disqualification**

A client who is found to have committed an Intentional Program Violation by a court or hearing decision is disqualified from receiving program benefits. 7 CFR 273.16(b)(1); 7 CFR 273.16(b)(5); 7 CFR 273.16(b)(11); BAM 720, p 16. Clients are disqualified for ten years for a Food Assistance Program Intentional Program Violation involving concurrent receipt of benefits, and, for all other Intentional Program Violation cases involving Family Independence Program, Food Assistance Program or State Disability Assistance, for standard disqualification periods of one year for the first Intentional Program Violation, two years for the second Intentional Program Violation, and lifetime for the third Intentional Program Violation or conviction of two felonies for the use, possession, or distribution of controlled substances in separate periods if both offenses occurred after August 22, 1996. 21 USC 862a; 7 CFR 273.1(b)(7)(vii); 7 CFR 273.11(m); 7 CFR 273.11(c)(1); BEM 203, p 2; BAM 720, p 16. A disqualified member may continue as the grantee only if there is no other eligible adult in the group. BAM 720, p 17 (emphasis in original).

Here, the Department has requested a 12-month disqualification. Because this is Respondent's first IPV, Respondent is disqualified from receiving FAP benefits for 12 months.

### **Overissuance**

When a client group receives more benefits than entitled to receive, the Department must attempt to recoup the overissuance. BAM 700, p 1 (1/1/2018).

In the above captioned matter, the Department has established that Respondent fraudulently withheld her husbands earned and unearned income from the Department. Based on the failure of Respondent to report the income, she received \$2,745.00 in FAP benefits when she was only entitled to \$19.00, resulting in a \$2,726.00 overissuance which the Department is entitled to recoup.

**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 overissuance of FAP benefits in the amount of \$2,726.00.

The Department is ORDERED to initiate recoupment/collection procedures for the amount of \$2,726.00 in accordance with Department policy.

It is FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent be disqualified from FAP benefits for a period of 12 months.

VLA/nr

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Vicki L. Armstrong  
Administrative Law Judge  
for Robert Gordon, 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 Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules (MOAHR).

A party may request a rehearing or reconsideration of this Order if the request is received by MOAHR 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. MOAHR will not review any response to a request for rehearing/reconsideration.

A written request may be mailed or faxed to MOAHR. If submitted by fax, the written request must be faxed to (517) 763-0155; Attention: MOAHR Rehearing/Reconsideration Request.

If submitted by mail, the written request must be addressed as follows:

Michigan Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules  
Reconsideration/Rehearing Request  
P.O. Box 30639  
Lansing, Michigan 48909-8139

**DHHS**

Linda Gooden  
25620 W. 8 Mile Rd  
Southfield, MI  
48033

Oakland 3 County DHHS- via electronic  
mail

MDHHS- Recoupment- via electronic mail

L. Bengel- via electronic mail

**Petitioner**

OIG  
PO Box 30062  
Lansing, MI  
48909-7562

**Respondent**

[REDACTED]  
MI