



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

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

ORLENE HAWKS
DIRECTOR

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

Date Mailed: November 1, 2019
MOAHR Docket No.: 19-010688
Agency No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioner: [REDACTED]

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Kevin Scully

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. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on October 31, 2019, from Lansing, Michigan. Petitioner represented himself. The Department was represented by Alyssa Akins.

ISSUE

Did the Department of Health and Human Services (Department) properly deny Petitioner's application for Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits under the Michigan Combined Application Project (MiCAP)?

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 [REDACTED] the Department received Petitioner's application for Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits under the Michigan Combined Application Project (MiCAP). Exhibit A, pp 7-8.
2. Petitioner reported to the Department on [REDACTED], that he lives with his spouse, and has been convicted of more than one felony offense involving controlled substance where each offense occurred after August 22, 1996. Exhibit A, p 7.
3. On [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] the Department notified Petitioner that his application for Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits had been denied. Exhibit A, pp 9-13.

4. On [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] the Department requested a hearing to establish Petitioner's responsibility for an Intentional Program Violation (IPV). Exhibit A, pp 23-24.
5. On October 17, 2017, a hearing was held, and Petitioner was found responsible for an Intentional Program Violation (IPV) for intentionally failing to report his history of drug-related felony convictions. Exhibit A, pp 25-31.
6. On November 9, 2017, the Department had notified Petitioner that he would be disqualified from the Food Assistance Program (FAP) from December 1, 2017, through November 30, 2018, due to an established Intentional Program Violation (IPV). Exhibit A, pp 15-17.
7. On [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] the Department received Petitioner's request for a hearing protesting the denial of Food Assistance Program benefits. Exhibit A, pp 3-4.

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 targeted MiCAP population is SSI individuals that are age 18 or older, receive SSI income and no other type of income, meet the Social Security Administrations (SSA) definition of independent living (Living arrangement code A), reside in Michigan, and purchase and prepare food separately. Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) 618 (October 1, 2019), p 1.

On [REDACTED], 2019, Petitioner applied for FAP/MiCAP benefits. Petitioner failed to establish that he meets the criteria for MiCAP benefits.

Petitioner also reported to the Department that he has been convicted of more than one felony involving controlled substances where each offense occurred after August 22, 1996. Petitioner had been found responsible for intentionally failing to report his history of felonies involving controlled substances in 2017.

An individual convicted (under Federal or State law) of any offense which is classified as a felony by the law of the jurisdiction involved and which has as an element the possession, use, or distribution of a controlled substance (as defined in section 102(6) of the Controlled Substance Act, 21 U.S.C.802(6)) shall not be considered an eligible household member unless the State legislature of the State where the individual is domiciled has enacted legislation exempting individuals domiciled in the State from the above exclusion. 7 CFR 273.11(m).

Subject to federal approval, an individual is not entitled to the exemption in this section if the individual was convicted of 2 or more separate felony acts that included the possession, use, or distribution of a controlled substance and both acts occurred after August 22, 1996. 2019 PA 139 § 619 (Appropriations Act).

An individual convicted of a felony for the use, possession, or distribution of controlled substances two or more times in separate periods will be permanently disqualified if both convictions were for conduct which occurred after August 22, 1996. Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) 203 (May 1, 2018), p 4.

Therefore, even if Petitioner was eligible for MiCAP benefits, he is permanently disqualified from receiving FAP benefits due to his history of felony convictions involving controlled substances.

Petitioner questioned the validity of the rule disqualifying him from receiving FAP benefits.

The duty to report drug-related felonies went into effect on October 1, 2011, and is consistent with federal regulations establishing the eligibility criteria for state administered food assistance under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008. The state legislature prohibits the Department from exempting individuals with two or more separate felony acts involving controlled substances in the Department's budget annually.

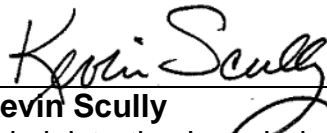
Petitioner's grievance centers on dissatisfaction with the Department's current policy. Petitioner's request is not within the scope of authority delegated to this Administrative Law Judge. Administrative Law Judges have no authority to make decisions on constitutional grounds, overrule statutes, overrule promulgated regulations, or make exceptions to the department policy set out in the program manuals. Furthermore, administrative adjudication is an exercise of executive power rather than judicial power, and restricts the granting of equitable remedies. *Michigan Mutual Liability Co. v Baker*, 295 Mich 237; 294 NW 168 (1940).

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 acted in accordance with Department policy when it denied Petitioner's denied Petitioner's request for Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits under the Michigan Combined Application Project (MiCAP).

DECISION AND ORDER

Accordingly, the Department's decision is AFFIRMED.

KS/hb



Kevin Scully
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

Nicolette Vanhavel
235 S Grand Ave Ste 1207
Lansing, MI 48933

DHS MI-CAP SSPC, via electronic mail

Petitioner

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