



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]

Date Mailed: July 1, 2020
MOAHR Docket No.: 20-002859
Agency No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioner: [REDACTED]

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Ellen McLemore

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; 42 CFR 438.400 to 438.424; 45 CFR 99.1 to 99.33; and 45 CFR 205.10; and Mich Admin Code, R 792.11002. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on June 15, 2020, from Detroit, Michigan. Petitioner was present and represented herself. The Department of Health and Human Services (Department) was represented by Korinne Posey, Eligibility Specialist.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly determine Petitioner's Food Assistance Program (FAP) eligibility?

FINDINGS OF FACT

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

1. Petitioner was an ongoing FAP recipient.
2. Petitioner's household consisted of herself and her minor child.
3. Petitioner was a fulltime college student.
4. On December 7, 2019, the Department sent Petitioner a Notice of Case Action informing her that she was eligible for FAP benefits based on a group size of one effective January 1, 2020, ongoing (Exhibit A, pp. 8-12).
5. On [REDACTED], 2020, Petitioner submitted a request for hearing disputing the Department's actions.

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.

In this case, Petitioner submitted a request for hearing disputing the Department's decision to reduce her FAP benefit amount on [REDACTED], 2020. The Department sent Petitioner notice of its decision on December 7, 2019. A request for a hearing must be submitted within 90 days from the date of the written notice of case action. BAM 600 (April 2017), p. 6. Petitioner's request for hearing was not timely. However, an exception applies to FAP cases and a request for a hearing disputing the current level of benefits may be made any time within the benefit period. BAM 600, p. 7. "Current" is interpreted to refer to the client's eligibility as of the hearing request month. Based on Petitioner's hearing request submission from March 19, 2020, Petitioner may dispute March 2019 FAP eligibility ongoing.

Petitioner was an ongoing FAP recipient with a group size of two, which consisted of herself and her minor child. Petitioner was a fulltime college student. On [REDACTED], 2020, Petitioner's child turned [REDACTED] years old. The Department determined that Petitioner was no longer an eligible individual under the student status policy. As a result, the Department determined Petitioner's FAP benefits based on a group size of one.

A person is in student status if she is: age 18 through 49 and enrolled half-time or more in a: vocational, trade, business, or technical school that normally requires a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate, or a regular curriculum at a college or university that offers degree programs regardless of whether a diploma is required. BEM 245 (January 2020), p. 3-4. In order for a person in student status to be eligible, they must meet one of the following criteria: (i) receiving FIP; (ii) enrolled in an institution of higher education as a result of participation in a Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), a program under the Trade Readjustment Act or another state or local government employment and training program; (iii) physically or mentally unfit for employment; (iv) employed for at least an average of 20 hours per week and paid for such employment; (v) self-employed for at least an average of 20 hours per week and earning an average weekly income at least equivalent to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 20 hours; (vi) participating in a state or federally-funded work study program during the regular school year; (vii) providing more than half of the physical care of a group member under

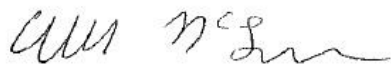
the age of six; (viii) providing more than half of the physical care of a group member age six through eleven and the local office has determined adequate child care is not available to enable the person to attend class and work at least 20 hours per week or participate in a state or federally-financed work study program during the school year; or (ix) a single parent enrolled full-time in an institution of higher education who cares for a dependent under age 12. BEM 245, p. 5. For the care of a child under age six, consider the student to be providing physical care as long as he or she claims primary responsibility for such care, even though another adult may be in the FAP group. BEM 245, p. 5.

At the hearing, Petitioner stated she was unable to work and attend school, as her daughter has severe mental and physical disabilities. Petitioner confirmed her child turned █ on █, 2020. Unfortunately, caring for a child with disabilities is not one of the criteria set forth by policy for an individual to be eligible for FAP benefits if they are a fulltime student. Therefore, the Department acted in accordance with policy when it determined that Petitioner's FAP benefits based on a group size of one. Thus, the Department acted in accordance with policy when it determined Petitioner's FAP eligibility.

DECISION AND ORDER

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 determined Petitioner's FAP eligibility. Accordingly, the Department's decision is **AFFIRMED**.

EM/cg



Ellen McLemore
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

Via Email:

MDHHS-Kalamazoo-Hearings
M. Holden
D. Sweeney
BSC3- Hearing Decisions
MOAHR

Petitioner – Via First-Class Mail:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]