



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: September 17, 2021
MOAHR Docket No.: 21-003963
Agency No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioner: [REDACTED]

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Landis Lain

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 September 15, 2021, from Lansing, Michigan. Petitioner [REDACTED] was self-represented at the hearing. The Department of Health and Human Services (Department or Respondent) was represented by Lianne Scupholm, Hearings Facilitator.

The Department's Exhibit A pages 1-21 were admitted as evidence.

ISSUE

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

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 is a Food Assistance Program benefit recipient.
2. Petitioner was receiving [REDACTED] per month in Food Assistance Program benefits.
3. On [REDACTED], 2021, Petitioner filed an application for Health Care Coverage assistance received by the Department.
4. On July 29, 2021, the Department denied eligibility because Petitioner had excess income and sent Petitioner a 1606 Health Care Coverage Determination Notice via Central Print.

5. Petitioner is eligible for [REDACTED] per month in FAP benefits because he is categorically eligible for FAP based upon his receipt of Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance (RSDI) income from the Social Security Administration.
6. Petitioner has been receiving that maximum amount of FAP benefits for a one-person household since September 2020 based upon eligibility to receive the pandemic supplement and will continue to receive the benefits until the Department pandemic supplement ends.
7. On August 9, 2021, the Department received a Request for Hearing from Petitioner, contesting the reduction of Food Assistance Program benefits.
8. On August 20, 2021, the Michigan Administrative Hearing System received the Hearing summary and attached documents.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The regulations governing the hearing and appeal process for applicants and recipients of public assistance in Michigan are found in the Michigan Administrative Code, MAC R 400.901-400.951. An opportunity for a hearing shall be granted to an applicant who requests a hearing because his or her claim for assistance has been denied. MAC R 400.903(1). Clients have the right to contest a department decision affecting eligibility or benefit levels whenever it is believed that the decision is incorrect. The department will provide an administrative hearing to review the decision and determine the appropriateness of that decision. BAM 600.

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 Michigan Administrative Hearing System (MAHS) may grant a hearing for any of the following:

- Denial of an application and/or supplemental payments.
- Reduction in the amount of program benefits or service.
- Suspension or termination of program benefits or service.
- Restrictions under which benefits, or services are provided.
- Delay of any action beyond standards of promptness.
- For FAP only, the current level of benefits or denial of expedited service. BAM 600 (April 1, 2017), pp 3-4.

The client or AHR has 90 calendar days from the date of the written notice of case action to request a hearing. The request must be received in the local office within the 90 days. BAM 600, page 6

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.

Pertinent FAP policy indicates:

Federal regulations at 7 CFR 271; 273 provides standards for the determination of Food Assistance Program budgeting. The Department follows the program reference manual, tables, charts, schedules, table 240-1.

Income means a benefit or payment received by an individual which is measured in money. It includes money an individual owns even if not paid directly such as income paid to a representative. Income remaining after applying the policy in the income related items is called countable. This is the amount used to determine eligibility and benefit levels. Count all income that is not specifically excluded. BEM 500, page 1

Gross income is the amount of income before any deductions such as taxes or garnishments. This may be more than the actual amount an individual receives. BEM 500, pages 4-5

Always calculate income on a calendar month basis to determine eligibility and benefit amounts. Use income from a month specified in this item for the benefit month being considered. Budget the entire amount of earned and unearned countable income. Every case is allowed the standard deduction shown in Reference Tables Manual (RFT) 255. Document income budgeting on either a manually-calculated or an automated FAP worksheet. (BEM 550, page 1)

Use only available, countable income to determine eligibility. The Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) 500 series defines countable income. BEM 505 defines available income and income change processing. This item describes income budgeting policy.

In the instant case, Petitioner receives [REDACTED] in RSDI monthly unearned income.

Petitioner was then given the standard deduction of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Medical Deduction for an Adjusted Gross income of [REDACTED]

Petitioner was given an excess shelter deduction of [REDACTED]

█████ in adjusted gross income - █████ in excess housing deduction = █████ in net income.

█████ in net income x .30 (net income) = █████

The maximum monthly FAP benefit for a one-person group = \$234.

█████ maximum benefit - █████ (30% of net income) = \$0 in monthly FAP benefit allotment.

Because Petitioner received RSDI income he is categorially eligible for FAP benefits of █████ per month. However, he will continue to receive the maximum amount of FAP benefits for a one-person household until the COVID-19 Pandemic supplement period ends.

A review of Petitioner's case reveals that the Department budgeted the correct amount of income received by the Petitioner at the time of determination. Petitioner's deductions and shelter allotment are governed by Food Assistance Program policy and cannot be changed by the Department or this Administrative Law Judge. If Petitioner provides the Department with information that Petitioner now receives less monthly earned income, the Department can reassess Petitioner's eligibility for increased Food Assistance Program benefits.

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 has established by the necessary competent, material and substantial evidence on the record that it was acting in accordance with Department policy when it determined that Petitioner was eligible for a █████ per month in Food Assistance Program benefits. However, he continues to receive the maximum amount of FAP for a one-person household due to receipt of the pandemic supplement and will continue to do so until notified of the end of the pandemic supplement period. The Department has established its case by a preponderance of the evidence.

DECISION AND ORDER

Accordingly, the Department's decision is **AFFIRMED**.

LL/ml



Landis Lain
Administrative Law Judge

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 Electronic Mail

MDHHS-Calhoun-Hearings
BSC3
M. Holden
D. Sweeney
MOAHR

Petitioner – Via First Class Mail

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] MI [REDACTED]