



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

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

ORLENE HAWKS
DIRECTOR

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██████████, MI ██████████

Date Mailed: April 19, 2023
MOAHR Docket No.: 23-001571
Agency No.: ██████████
Petitioner: ██████████

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 April 17, 2023, from Detroit, Michigan. Petitioner was present and was unrepresented. The Department of Health and Human Services (Department) was represented by Michael Heck, Family Independence Specialist and Corlette Brown, Hearing Facilitator.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly deny Petitioner's Family Independence Program (FIP) benefit application?

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 January 23, 2023, Petitioner submitted an application for FIP benefits.
2. On February 13, 2023, the Department sent Petitioner a Verification Checklist (VCL) requesting verification of Petitioner's children's school attendance (Exhibit A, pp. 6-7).
3. On March 2, 2023, the Department sent Petitioner a Notice of Case Action informing her that her FIP application was denied.
4. On March 3, 2023, Petitioner submitted the requested verifications.

5. On March 14, 2023, 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 Family Independence Program (FIP) was established pursuant to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-193, and 42 USC 601 to 679c. The Department (formerly known as the Department of Human Services) administers FIP pursuant to 45 CFR 233-260, MCL 400.10, the Social Welfare Act, MCL 400.1-.119b, and Mich Admin Code, R 400.3101-.3131.

In this case, Petitioner submitted an application for FIP benefits. On February 13, 2023, the Department sent Petitioner a VCL, requesting verification of Petitioner's children's school attendance. Proofs were due by March 23, 2023.

Verification is usually required at application/redetermination and for a reported change affecting eligibility or benefit level. BAM 130 (January 2021), p. 1. To request verification of information, the Department sends a verification checklist (VCL) which tells the client what verification is required, how to obtain it, and the due date. BAM 130, p. 3. For FIP cases, the Department allows the client 10 calendar days (or other time limit specified in policy) to provide the verification that is required. BAM 130, p. 7. Verifications are considered to be timely if received by the date they are due. BAM 130, p. 7. For electronically transmitted verifications (fax, email or Mi Bridges document upload), the date of the transmission is the receipt date. BAM 130, p. 7. Verifications that are submitted after the close of regular business hours through the drop box or by delivery of a Department representative are considered to be received the next business day. BAM 130, p. 7. The Department sends a negative action notice when: the client indicates a refusal to provide a verification OR the time period given has elapsed and the client has not made a reasonable effort to provide it. BAM 130, p. 7. For FIP cases, if the client contacts the Department prior to the due date requesting an extension or assistance in obtaining verifications, the Department may grant an extension to the VCL due date. BAM 130, p. 7.

The Department testified that as of March 2, 2023, Petitioner had not submitted verification of her children's school attendance. As a result, Petitioner's FIP application was denied. At the hearing, Petitioner testified that she had difficulty obtaining the school records. Petitioner stated that her children's school was closed for winter break, which was followed by a closure due to snow. Petitioner stated she contacted her worker several times to notify him of the issues she was facing.

Petitioner gave credible testimony that she made a reasonable effort to timely obtain the requested verifications. Additionally, Petitioner contacted her worker to inform him of the situation and the Department could have extended the VCL due date. Therefore, the Department did not act in accordance with Department policy when it denied Petitioner's FIP benefit application.

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 did not act in accordance with Department policy when it denied Petitioner's FIP application.

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

THE DEPARTMENT IS ORDERED TO BEGIN DOING THE FOLLOWING, IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEPARTMENT POLICY AND CONSISTENT WITH THIS HEARING DECISION, WITHIN 10 DAYS OF THE DATE OF MAILING OF THIS DECISION AND ORDER:

1. Reinstate and reprocess Petitioner's January 23, 2023 FIP application;
2. If Petitioner is eligible for FIP benefits, issue supplements she is entitled to receive; and
3. Notify Petitioner of its decision in writing.

EM/tm



Ellen McLemore
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 :

DHHS
Corlette Brown
Wayne-District 31 (Grandmont)
17455 Grand River
Detroit, MI 48227
**MDHHS-Wayne-31-Grandmont-
Hearings@Michigan.gov**

Interested Parties
B. Sanborn
BSC4

Via-First Class Mail :

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