



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: April 11, 2023
MOAHR Docket No.: 23-001272
Agency No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioner: [REDACTED]

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Linda Jordan

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 hearing was held on April 3, 2023 via teleconference. Petitioner appeared and represented herself. Eileen Kott, Family Independence Manager, and Denise Newsome, Eligibility Specialist, appeared on behalf of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS or Department).

ISSUE

Did MDHHS properly terminate Petitioner's Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits?

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 recipient of FAP benefits.
2. On November 9, 2022, MDHHS sent Petitioner an Employment Verification Form, which stated that it needed to verify employment for [REDACTED] (Son) (Exhibit A, p. 6). The form indicated that it was due to MDHHS by November 21, 2022 (Exhibit A, p. 6).
3. On February 6, 2023, MDHHS sent Petitioner a Notice of Case Action indicating that her FAP case was closed, effective December 1, 2022 ongoing, for failure to return verification of earned income for Son (Exhibit A, pp. 16-17).
4. On February 21, 2023, Petitioner filed a Request for Hearing to dispute the termination of her FAP 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. MDHHS 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, MDHHS terminated Petitioner's FAP benefits and closed her case due to a failure to return the requested verification of employment income.

MDHHS must obtain verification when it is required by policy or information is unclear or incomplete. BAM 130 (January 2022), p. 1. Verification is usually required at application/redetermination and when a reported change affects eligibility or benefit level. *Id.* To obtain verification, MDHHS must tell the client what verification is required, how to obtain it and the due date. *Id.*, p. 3. The client must obtain the requested verification, but the local office must assist the client if they need and request help. *Id.*, p. 3. If neither the client nor the local office can obtain verification despite a reasonable effort, MDHHS must use the best available information. *Id.* If no information is available, MDHHS must use its best judgement. *Id.* MDHHS allows the client ten calendar days to provide the requested verification. *Id.*, p. 7. Verifications are considered timely if received by the date that they are due. *Id.* MDHHS sends a negative action notice when the client indicates a refusal to provide the requested verification, or the time period given on the VCL has lapsed and the client has not made a reasonable effort to provide it. *Id.* Before making a final determination regarding eligibility, MDHHS must give clients a reasonable opportunity to resolve any discrepancies between their statements and information from another source. *Id.*, p. 9.

Here, MDHHS testified that it needed to verify Son's employment income and it did not receive the Employment Verification Form by the deadline. Petitioner testified that she dropped off the paperwork at a local MDHHS office, but she could not provide details regarding when she dropped it off. Additionally, she testified that she attempted to contact her worker but it is unclear from the record when she tried to call or if she called the correct number. MDHHS stated that its number had recently changed but if Petitioner had attempted to contact the old number, a recording would have given her the correct number to call. MDHHS denied receiving any contact from Petitioner. Based on the evidence presented, MDHHS has satisfied its burden of showing that it did not receive the requested verification by the deadline. Although Petitioner provided testimony to rebut MDHHS' contention, Petitioner's testimony lacked clarity and detail.

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 MDHHS acted in accordance with Department policy when it terminated Petitioner's FAP benefits and closed her case.

DECISION AND ORDER

Accordingly, MDHHS' decision is **AFFIRMED**.

LJ/tm


Linda Jordan
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

Dora Allen
Wayne-Gratiot/Seven-DHHS
4733 Conner Suite G 7 Lappin
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**MDHHS-Wayne-76-
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Interested Parties

M. Holden
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BSC4

Via-First Class Mail :

Petitioner

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