



**Date Mailed:** August 26, 2025  
**Docket No.:** 25-025880  
**Case No.:** [REDACTED]  
**Petitioner:** [REDACTED]

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MI [REDACTED]

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এটি একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ আইনি ডকুমেন্ট। দয়া করে কেউ দস্তাবেজ অনুবাদ করুন।

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### **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 August 18, 2025. Petitioner appeared and represented herself. The Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) was represented by Stephanie Laster, Employment and Training Coordinator. Michelle Evans, Career Coach, from Michigan Works! (MiWorks) appeared and testified as a witness.

### **ISSUE**

Did MDHHS properly close Petitioner's Family Independence Program (FIP) case due to non-compliance with Partnership. Accountability. Training. Hope (PATH) without good cause?

### **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 approved for FIP and enrolled in PATH activities.
2. On May 23, 2025, a Noncompliance Warning Notice was issued by MiWorks, informing Petitioner that she became noncompliant with PATH due to no participation with PATH since May 2, 2025, and failing to attend two mandatory job fair meetings on May 22, 2025 and May 23, 2025. Petitioner was advised that in order to avoid triage and a potential FIP case closure, she must attend a reengagement appointment on May 29, 2025 (Exhibit A, p. 15).
3. On May 29, 2025, Petitioner failed to attend the PATH reengagement appointment (Exhibit A, p. 16).
4. On May 30, 2025, MiWorks issued a Triage Meeting Notice to Petitioner, informing her that she was assigned to triage due to no participation since May 2, 2025, and not attending mandatory meetings (Exhibit A, p. 17).

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5. On June 17, 2025, MDHHS issued a Notice of Case Action to Petitioner, informing her that her FIP case was closed due to noncompliance with PATH, without good cause (Exhibit A, pp. 18-23).
  6. On June 17, 2025, MDHHS issued a Notice of Noncompliance to Petitioner, informing her that she must attend a triage meeting on June 25, 2025, due to failure to participate in required FIP activities (Exhibit A, pp. 24-26).
  7. On June 25, 2025, a triage meeting was held to evaluate whether good cause existed for noncompliance with PATH. Petitioner failed to attend the meeting. MDHHS determined that the household had no good cause for noncompliance.
  8. On July 10, 2025, MDHHS received Petitioner's timely submitted hearing request to dispute the closure of her FIP case (Exhibit A, p. 3).

### **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 disputes the closure of her FIP case.

MDHHS requires clients to participate in employment and self-sufficiency-related activities and to accept employment when offered. The focus is to assist clients in removing barriers so they can participate in activities which lead to self-sufficiency. However, there are consequences for a client who refuses to participate without good cause. The goal of the FIP penalty policy is to obtain client compliance with appropriate work and/or self-sufficiency related assignments and to ensure that barriers to such compliance have been identified and removed. The goal is to bring the client into compliance. BEM 233A (October 2022), p. 1. As a condition of FIP eligibility, all Work Eligible Individuals (WEI) must engage in employment and/or self-sufficiency related activities, such as participating in the PATH program.

Work participation program participants will not be terminated from a work participation program without first scheduling a triage meeting with the client to jointly discuss noncompliance and good cause. BEM 233A, p. 9-12. A triage must be conducted, and good cause must be considered even if the client does not attend, with particular attention to possible disabilities and unmet needs for accommodation. BEM 233A,

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pp. 9-12. Clients must comply with triage requirements and provide good cause verification within the negative action period. BEM 233A, pp. 12-13. Good cause is determined using the best information available during the triage and prior to the negative action date. If the client does not provide a good cause reason for the noncompliance, MDHHS will determine good cause based on the best information available. BEM 233A, pp. 10-13. Good cause is a valid reason for noncompliance with employment and/or self-sufficiency related activities that is based on factors that are beyond the control of the noncompliant person. Claims of good cause must be verified and documented. A WEI who fails, without good cause, to participate in employment or self-sufficiency-related activities or refuses suitable employment, must be penalized. The penalty for noncompliance without good cause is FIP case closure. For the individual's first occurrence of noncompliance, MDHHS closes the FIP EDG for not less than three calendar months. BEM 233A, p. 8.

Here, MDHHS properly scheduled a triage meeting to determine whether good cause existed for Petitioner's noncompliance with work-related activity. MDHHS determined that Petitioner had no good cause for failure to participate. Petitioner testified that she does not have her phone and provides the phone number of her daughter in order to communicate. Petitioner testified that she was not aware that there were job fairs that she was required to attend as the information went to her e-mail address's SPAM folder. Petitioner testified that during this time she was suffering from a miscarriage and domestic violence relationship. Petitioner conceded that she did not inform MDHHS that she was experiencing these issues as they were intimate and personal. Petitioner argued at length that she made attempts to participate in the triage meeting and due to circumstances beyond her control she was unable to attend. However, MDHHS presented evidence showing the efforts made to contact Petitioner and reschedule the triage meeting. Petitioner did not provide updated contact information to MDHHS as required. Petitioner did not contact MDHHS for assistance in removing barrierS to participation. Petitioner was unable to provide corroborating evidence to her testimony that she attempted to reschedule the triage meeting with MDHHS. Since Petitioner did not have good cause for attending the triage meeting to present reasons for noncompliance, MDHHS acted in accordance with policy when closing Petitioner's FIP case for noncompliance.

### **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 closed Petitioner's FIP case.

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



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**DANIELLE NUCCIO**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE**

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**APPEAL RIGHTS:** Petitioner may appeal this Hearing Decision to the circuit court. Rules for appeals to the circuit court can be found in the Michigan Court Rules (MCR), including MCR 7.101 to MCR 7.123, available at the Michigan Courts website at [courts.michigan.gov](https://courts.michigan.gov). The Michigan Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules (MOAHR) cannot provide legal advice, but assistance may be available through the State Bar of Michigan at <https://lrs.michbar.org> or Michigan Legal Help at <https://michiganlegalhelp.org>. A copy of the circuit court appeal should be sent to MOAHR. A circuit court appeal may result in a reversal of the Hearing Decision.

Either party who disagrees with this Hearing Decision may also send a written request for a rehearing and/or reconsideration to MOAHR within 30 days of the mailing date of this Hearing Decision. The request should include Petitioner's name, the docket number from page 1 of this Hearing Decision, an explanation of the specific reasons for the request, and any documents supporting the request. The request should be sent to MOAHR

- by email to [MOAHR-BSD-Support@michigan.gov](mailto:MOAHR-BSD-Support@michigan.gov), **OR**
- by fax at (517) 763-0155, **OR**
- by mail addressed to  
Michigan Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules  
Rehearing/Reconsideration Request  
P.O. Box 30639  
Lansing Michigan 48909-8139

Documents sent via email are not secure and can be faxed or mailed to avoid any potential risks. Requests MOAHR receives more than 30 days from the mailing date of this Hearing Decision may be considered untimely and dismissed.



**Via Electronic Mail:**

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