



Date Mailed: November 14, 2025
Docket No.: 25-027470
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioner: [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] MI [REDACTED]

This is an important legal document. Please have someone translate the document.

هذه وثيقة قانونية مهمة. يرجى أن يكون هناك شخص ما يترجم المستند.

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

Este es un documento legal importante. Por favor, que alguien traduzca el documento.

这是一份重要的法律文件。请让别人翻译文件。

Ky është një dokument ligjor i rëndësishëm. Ju lutem, kini dikë ta përktheni dokumentin.

Date Mailed: November 14, 2025

Docket No.: 25-027470

Case No.: [REDACTED]

Petitioner: [REDACTED]

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Christian Gardocki

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 via Microsoft Teams on November 6, 2025. Petitioner appeared and was unrepresented. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) was represented by Remy Williams, specialist.

ISSUE

The issue is whether MDHHS properly denied Petitioner's Family Independence Program (FIP) 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 [REDACTED] 2025, Petitioner applied for FIP benefits and reported a household including four children aged between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] years.
1. On April 14, 2025, MDHHS mailed Petitioner a Verification Checklist (VCL) requesting proof of school attendance by April 24, 2025, for Petitioner's four children.
2. On April 25, 2025, MDHHS sent Petitioner notice that Petitioner's application was denied due to failing to timely return school attendance verifications.
3. As of April 25, 2025, Petitioner had not returned school attendance verifications to MDHHS.
4. On July 18, 2025, Petitioner requested a hearing to dispute the denial of FIP benefits.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The 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. MDHHS administers FIP pursuant to 45 CFR 233to 45 CFR 261; MCL 400.10; the Social Welfare Act, MCL 400.1 *et seq.*; and Mich Admin Code, R 400.3101 to R 400.3131. FIP policies are contained in the Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM), and Reference Tables Manual (RFT).

Petitioner requested a hearing to dispute a denial of FIP benefits. Exhibit A, pp. 4-6. Petitioner applied for cash benefits on [REDACTED] 2025.¹ Exhibit A, pp. 8-16. A Notice of Case Action dated April 25, 2025, stated that MDHHS denied Petitioner's application due to a failure to timely return school attendance verifications for Petitioner's four children. Exhibit A, pp. 28-31.

Dependent children are expected to attend school full-time, and graduate from high school or a high school equivalency program, to enhance their potential to obtain future employment leading to self-sufficiency. BEM 245 (July 2023) p. 1. A dependent child aged 6 through 15 must attend school full-time. *Id.* If a dependent child aged 6 through 15 is not attending school full-time, the entire FIP group is not eligible. *Id.* MDHHS is to verify school enrollment and attendance at application and redetermination beginning with a child aged 7. *Id.*, p. 11. Acceptable verification of school attendance includes the following: Verification of School Attendance form, telephone contact with the school, and/or documentation on school letterhead.

Petitioner's application reported co-residency with four children aged between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] years. Exhibit A, pp. 8-16. As a FIP applicant and parent to four children aged [REDACTED] years, Petitioner was required to verify school attendance for her four children.

For all programs, MDHHS is to tell the client what verification is required, how to obtain it, and the due date. BAM 130 (October 2023) p. 3. MDHHS is to use the DHS-3503, Verification Checklist (VCL), to request verification. *Id.* MDHHS is to allow the client 10 calendar days (or other time limit specified in policy) to provide the verification that is requested. *Id.*, p. 7. MDHHS is to send a negative action notice when:

- The client indicates refusal to provide a verification, or
- The time period given has elapsed and the client has not made a reasonable effort to provide it. *Id.*

MDHHS mailed Petitioner a Verification Checklist (VCL) on April 14, 2025, requesting proof of school enrollment for her children by April 24, 2025. Exhibit A, pp. 17-19. MDHHS also mailed Petitioner four Verification of School Enrollment forms with the VCL. Exhibit A, pp. 20-27. MDHHS testified it did not receive school attendance

¹ FIP is a cash assistance program specifically for caretakers of children (see BEM 210). MDHHS also has cash assistance programs for refugees and disabled individuals (see BEM 209). Because Petitioner did not allege a disability or refugee status, FIP is the only relevant program to the present case.

verifications from Petitioner before application denial. Thus, MDHHS contended it properly denied Petitioner's FIP application due to Petitioner's failure to verify required information.

Petitioner testified she returned requested verifications on April 17, 2025, utilizing the MDHHS office drop box in the MDHHS office's lobby. When asked how Petitioner returned the documents so quickly after a request was mailed, Petitioner explained all of her children attended the same school and the school quickly accommodated her request to have the documents completed.

MDHHS responded that when it became aware of Petitioner's statement of submitting documents to MDHHS on April 17, 2025, it checked all scanned documents received from clients on that date. MDHHS further testified that occasionally documents are discovered this way, but Petitioner's documents were not.²

Generally, the burden of proof of a document submission falls on the party making the submission. Petitioner's testimony was reasonably credible, but it was also uncorroborated by supporting evidence.

The evidence established that Petitioner did not return to MDHHS school attendance verifications by April 25, 2025, the date of FIP application denial. Thus, MDHHS properly denied Petitioner's application dated [REDACTED] 2025

DECISION AND ORDER

The administrative law judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, finds that MDHHS properly denied Petitioner's application for FIP benefits dated [REDACTED] 2025. The actions taken by MDHHS are **AFFIRMED**.


CHRISTIAN GARDOCKI
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE

² MDHHS also testified it checked a log that clients must sign when documents are given to MDHHS staff at the MDHHS lobby window and that Petitioner's name was not on the log. The non-appearance is unsurprising as Petitioner used the drop box which does not require a signature.

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. 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://irs.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, **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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Via First Class Mail:

Petitioner

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