



Date Mailed: January 6, 2026
Docket No.: 25-038180
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioner: [REDACTED]

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

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Case No.: [REDACTED]

Petitioner: [REDACTED]

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 by telephone on December 15, 2025. Petitioner appeared and represented herself. The Department of Health and Human Services (Department) was represented by Latora Giles, Assistance Payments Supervisor.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly deny Petitioner's application for Family Independence Program (FIP) cash assistance for failure to attend Partnership. Accountability. Training. Hope. (PATH) orientation?

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, the Department received an application for assistance from Petitioner for FIP benefits, State Emergency Relief (SER) assistance for electricity, and other assistance. Petitioner reported that she was enrolled in college or vocational school and self-employed. Petitioner reported that her self-employment was from odd jobs and she: a) earned \$[REDACTED] per month and b) had \$1,200 per month in expenses. (Exhibit A, pp. 10 – 18).
1. On September 22, 2025, the Department sent Petitioner a notice that she was scheduled for PATH orientation on October 1, 2025 at 9:30 a.m.; and a notice that she was required to complete the Family Automated Screening Tool (FAST) within 30 days and the Family Self Sufficiency Plan (FSSP) within 90 days. (Exhibit A, pp. 28 – 31).
2. On September 26, 2025, the Department interviewed Petitioner. Petitioner reported that she was enrolled in an on-line training course with [REDACTED] (School) to become a real estate agent, and self-employed and earned an average of \$[REDACTED] per month. (Exhibit A, pp. 23 – 26).

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3. On September 30, 2025, the Department sent Petitioner a State Emergency Relief Decision Notice (SERDN) that approved her for SER assistance of \$[REDACTED] upon receipt of proof that a co-payment of \$723.14 had been paid. (Exhibit A, pp. 35 – 37).
 4. Petitioner did not attend the scheduled PATH orientation.
 5. On October 17, 2025, the Department sent Petitioner a Notice of Case Action (NOCA) that denied Petitioner FIP benefits for failure to attend PATH orientation. (Exhibit A, pp. 40 – 43).
 6. On October 23, 2025, the Department received two requests for hearing from Petitioner disputing a) the amount of her approved SER assistance, and b) the denial of her application for FIP benefits. (Exhibit A, pp. 4 – 9).

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 requested a hearing to dispute the Department's determination regarding her application for SER assistance and denial of her application for FIP benefits. The Department approved Petitioner for SER assistance in the amount of \$[REDACTED]; and denied Petitioner FIP benefits due to Petitioner's failure to participate in PATH program requirements.

As a preliminary matter, upon commencement of the hearing, Petitioner testified that her dispute as to SER assistance was resolved and requested to withdraw that portion of her request for hearing. The Department had no objection. Therefore, Petitioner's request for hearing as to SER was dismissed and the hearing proceeded to address her dispute as to FIP only.

The FIP program is a cash assistance program designed to help individuals and families become self-sufficient. BEM 209 (January 2022), p. 1. Cash assistance is available to eligibility determination groups (EDG) who meet all of the non-financial and financial requirements for FIP. BEM 209, pp. 1 – 2. Pursuant to federal and state laws, as a condition of FIP eligibility, clients must engage in and comply with all PATH

25-038180

assignments when assigned; and clients who fail to participate fully in assigned activities while the application is pending will be denied FIP benefits. BEM 229 (April 2025), pp. 1, 6 – 7; BEM 230A (October 2022), p. 1; BEM 233A (October 2022), p. 1. Completion of the 10-day PATH application eligibility period (AEP) part of PATH orientation requires PATH participants to complete all of the following in order for their FIP application to be approved:

- Begin the AEP by the last date to attend as indicated on the DHS-4785, PATH Appointment Notice,
- Complete PATH AEP requirements, and
- Continue to participate in PATH after completion of the 10-day AEP.

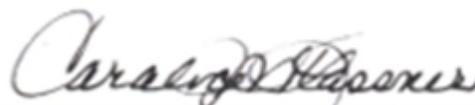
BEM 229, p. 1. Policy requires that the Department deny the FIP application if an applicant does not complete all three components of the AEP. BEM 229, p. 1.

Here, there was no dispute that Petitioner did not attend her PATH orientation. Petitioner testified that she did not believe she was required to attend because she reported to the Department that she attended school and was self-employed. However, there was no evidence that Petitioner requested, met the requirements for, or was granted a temporary deferral, which may only be granted in limited circumstances. BEM 230A, pp. 8 – 9, 23 – 25. Thus, Petitioner was required to attend the PATH orientation. Therefore, because Petitioner failed to attend the PATH orientation as required, the Department properly denied her application for FIP benefits.

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 denied Petitioner FIP benefits due to her failure to attend PATH orientation.

Accordingly, Petitioner's request for hearing as to **SER** is **DISMISSED**, and the Department's decision as to **FIP** is **AFFIRMED**.



CARALYCE M. LASSNER
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE

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.



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