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**THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BEFORE
THE OFFICE OF EMPLOYEE APPEALS**

In the Matter of:)	
)	OEA Matter No. 1601-0024-17
MICHAEL HILL,)	
Employee)	
)	Date of Issuance: May 31, 2017
v.)	
)	Michelle R. Harris, Esq.
D.C. DEPARTMENT OF)	Administrative Judge
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH,)	
Agency)	

Michael Hill, Employee, *Pro Se*
Anndreeze H. Williams, Esq., Agency Representative

INITIAL DECISION

INTRODUCTION AND PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

On January 18, 2017, Michael Hill (“Employee”) filed a Petition for Appeal with the Office of Employee Appeals (“OEA” or “Office”) contesting the District of Columbia Department of Behavioral Health’s (“Agency” or “DBH”) decision to place him on enforced leave, effective December 7, 2016. On February 22, 2017, Agency filed its Motion to Dismiss and Answer to Employee’s Petition for Appeal. This matter was assigned to the undersigned Administrative Judge (“AJ”) on April 5, 2017. On April 13, 2017, I issued an Order directing Employee to address the jurisdictional issue raised by Agency in its Motion to Dismiss. Employee’s response was due on or before May 1, 2017. Employee failed to respond to that Order. Consequently, on May 9, 2017, I issued an Order for Statement of Good Cause to Employee. Employee was ordered to submit his brief, and a statement of good cause based on his failure to provide a response to the April 13, 2017 Order. Employee had until May 23, 2017, to respond. To date, Employee has not responded either Order. The record is now closed.

JURISDICTION

This Office has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 1-606.03 (2001).

ISSUE

Whether this appeal should be dismissed for failure to prosecute.

BURDEN OF PROOF

OEA Rule 628.1, 59 DCR 2129 (March 16, 2012) states:

The burden of proof with regard to material issues of fact shall be by a preponderance of the evidence. “Preponderance of the evidence” shall mean:

That degree of relevant evidence which a reasonable mind, considering the record as a whole, would accept as sufficient to find a contested fact more probably true than untrue.

OEA Rule 628.2 *id.* states:

The employee shall have the burden of proof as to issues of jurisdiction, including timeliness of filing. The agency shall have the burden of proof as to all other issues.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

OEA Rule 621.3 states in relevant part that the “Administrative Judge, in the exercise of sound discretion, may dismiss the action or rule for the appellant if a party fails to take reasonable steps to prosecute or defend an appeal. Failure of a party to prosecute or defend an appeal includes, but is not limited to, a failure to:

- (a) Appear at a scheduled proceeding after receiving notice
- (b) *Submit required documents after being provided with a deadline for such submission; or*
- (c) Inform this Office of a change of address which results in correspondence being returned.”¹ (*Emphasis Added*)

This Office has consistently held that failure to prosecute an appeal includes a failure to submit required documents after being provided with a deadline to comply with such orders.² In the instant matter, Employee was provided notice in both the April 13, 2017, and May 9, 2017 Orders that a failure to comply could result in sanctions, including dismissal. Employee did not respond to either Order. Additionally, all Orders were sent via postal mail service to the address provided by Employee in his Petition for Appeal. Employee’s response to each of these Orders was required to ensure an appropriate review and resolution of the matter.

Accordingly, I find that Employee has not exercised the diligence expected of an appellant pursuing an appeal before this Office. I further find that Employee’s failure to prosecute his appeal is a violation of OEA Rule 621. For these reasons, I have determined that this matter should be dismissed for Employee’s failure to prosecute.

¹ OEA Rule 621.3, 59 DCR 2129 (March 16, 2012).

² *Williams v. D.C. Public Schools*, OEA Matter 2401-0244-09 (December 13, 2010); *Brady v. Office of Public Education Facilities Modernization*, OEA Matter No. 2401-0219-09 (November 1, 2010).

ORDER

It is hereby **ORDERED** that the petition in this matter is **DISMISSED** for Employee's failure to prosecute.

FOR THE OFFICE:

MICHELLE R. HARRIS, Esq.
Administrative Judge