

REMEMBER YOUR RIGHTS!



If you think the welfare department made a mistake with your benefits or made a decision you don't agree with,

YOU CAN APPEAL!

What kind of decisions should you appeal?

- Your benefits are cut because you didn't meet your work hours but you had a good reason.
- You keep trying to reschedule a missed appointment at the welfare office but can't, or the welfare office failed to call you for your scheduled telephone interview and they cut you off anyway.
- The welfare office cut off your medical card.
- You're forced to start a training program without enough time to find good childcare (you should be given 10 days).
- The welfare office says you aren't eligible for benefits (if this happens, get a denial notice in writing).
- Any other decision you disagree with.

REMEMBER TO APPEAL RIGHT AWAY!

If you are getting benefits and appeal within 10 days of the date of the notice, your benefits will keep coming while you wait for a hearing.

- *If paperwork or "verification" is the problem (you turned it in, but it was lost, or you need more time to get it) appealing will give you extra time to get it in. Often, these problems can be resolved and you should not have to reapply for benefits! You can always withdraw your appeal later.*

If you miss the 10-day deadline you can still appeal, but you won't get benefits until your appeal is decided. You have 30 days to appeal. In this case, you might want to reapply as well as appeal.

(See more instructions on the back)

Appealing Welfare Notices is Easy!

Here's How:

Fill out the “appeal and fair hearing” form on the welfare notice and follow the directions below.

How to complete a Welfare Notice Appeal Form

Fair Hearing Form

1. Name: _____ Case Number: 25/ _____

Phone number: _____ Address: _____

2. Tell us which program you want to appeal:

SNAP (Food Stamps) Cash Assistance

Medical Assistance

3. Choose the way you want your hearing:

By telephone, at the phone number you write on this form

By telephone, at the CAO.

Face-to-face, with CAO staff and a judge in the hearing room.

Face-to-face, with you and the people you bring in the hearing room with a judge and CAO staff on the phone.

Directions for filling out the appeal form:

- 1) Your name, the case number, telephone and address in section 1 should be filled in automatically
- 2) Select the all the benefits you wish to appeal in section 2
- 3) Make sure to check off the “Face-to-face, with CAO staff and a judge in the hearing room.”
- 4) If you need an interpreter, check box 4 and write in the language you speak.
- 5) If you are hearing impaired or have another disability indicate in the space provided.
- 6) In the space provided, please state why you are requesting a hearing.
- 7) Make sure you sign your name on line 7
- 8) Date the form.
- 9) You **do not** need to have a Representative to sign the form and appeal. If not, leave 9 through 11 blank.

Make a copy of your appeal request/letter for your records.

Hand deliver the appeal request/letter to your welfare office and be sure to get a receipt. If you cannot get to your welfare office, send your appeal by certified mail “return receipt requested,” and make sure you keep your receipts!

Even if you don't get a notice, you can appeal.
Simply write your appeal on a blank piece of paper, but be certain to include your name, SSN and statement about what you are appealing.

If you live in **Cameron, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, McKean, Mercer, Potter, Venango, or Warren counties** and need help with your appeal, contact Northwestern Legal Services at (814) 452-6957 (800) 665-6957 toll-free Or Apply Online at WWW.NWLS.ORG

DON'T WAIT TO APPEAL!!

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