

If you have any questions about this notice...

You should take time to review this notice for accuracy.

If you have questions about this notice or your benefits, you can call the Statewide Customer Service Center at **1-877-395-8930**.

In Philadelphia, call 1-215-560-7226.

The call is free. Call Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

If you do not agree with this decision...

Your Right to Appeal and to a Fair Hearing

What does right to appeal mean?

Your right to appeal means that you have the right to ask us to review our decision, if you think that we made a mistake. You can ask a judge to review the county assistance office's (CAO) decision at a fair hearing.

What is a fair hearing?

A fair hearing is a formal meeting where you, the CAO and a judge can talk about your appeal. The judge will follow the law and the department's policies in making a decision. You should be prepared for the meeting. If you want to present any evidence that supports your claim that the decision was not correct, bring that evidence with you.

How can you ask for a fair hearing?

- Call the CAO to ask for a fair hearing, and
- Mail the completed, attached Fair Hearing Form to the CAO or
- Take the completed, attached Fair Hearing Form to the CAO.

Note: You do not have to complete the Fair Hearing Form if the decision is for SNAP (Food Stamps), but it's easier for us to track your appeal if you do.

Do you need legal help?

You can ask for free legal help by visiting Legal Services at _____ or by calling _____.

If you want to file an appeal and ask for a Fair Hearing...

- 1. If you want to appeal our decision, fill out and sign the Fair Hearing form included in this packet.**
- 2. Choose the kind of fair hearing you want:**
 - **A telephone hearing** at a place you choose. Tell us which phone number to use, such as your own, or a friend or relative's phone number. If you choose this kind of hearing, make sure we can reach you at this phone number.
 - ▶ The judge will call you, your witnesses, anyone helping you, and the CAO.
 - **A telephone hearing** at the CAO. You will go to the CAO for your hearing.
 - ▶ The judge will call you there in the office, and call anyone helping you.
 - **A face-to-face hearing** with you and the people you bring in the hearing room with a judge and CAO staff on the phone.
 - ▶ You and anyone helping you will be in the hearing room with a judge. The CAO staff will be on the phone.
 - ▶ You must travel to the assigned Bureau of Hearings and Appeals office for a face-to-face hearing. The location will be assigned to you based on where you live.
 - **A face-to-face hearing** with you and the people you bring in the hearing room with you with a judge and the CAO staff in the hearing room.
 - ▶ The judge, you, CAO staff, witnesses and anyone helping you will be in the room.
 - ▶ You must travel to the assigned Bureau of Hearings and Appeals office for a face-to-face hearing. The location will be assigned to you based on where you live.

3. Mail the form to: or give this form to the CAO.

- a. **For Cash Assistance, Health Care, LIHEAP or SSP**, you must mail or give the form to the CAO **within 30 days** of the mailing date on your letter.
- b. **If you are applying for SNAP** and you do not agree with the decision, you must mail, call or give the form to the CAO within 90 days of the mailing date on your letter.
- c. **If you already get SNAP** and you do not agree with the decision, you must mail, call or give the form to the CAO within 90 days of the first day of the month that your benefits change.

Reminder: You may continue to receive your benefits while you wait for your fair hearing if:

1. This letter tells you that your benefits will stop or be reduced; **and**
 - This letter provides you a date to request an appeal and to continue your benefits while you wait for the Fair Hearing Decision; **and**
 - Your request for appeal is received or postmarked by that date and you do not waive continuation of benefits; **OR**
2. This letter tells you that your benefits will stop or be reduced; **and**
 - The reason for this change is because of information you provided on a semiannual reporting form; **and**
 - Your request for appeal is received or postmarked within 10 days of the mailing date on this letter and you do not waive continuation of benefits.

Get ready for a hearing...

Can you talk with us before the fair hearing?

Yes. You will get a letter from the CAO asking if you want to meet before the fair hearing takes place. A meeting before the hearing is called a pre-hearing conference. This meeting will not delay or replace your fair hearing. You can use this meeting to tell us if you have information that you think might change our decision. You can bring someone to speak for you if you want to.

Can you get a copy of any information we used to make our decision?

Yes. You can ask for a copy of all the documents that will be used at the hearing.

Who can come to the hearing?

You can bring anyone to the hearing, such as witnesses who might have information. You can speak for yourself or bring someone to speak for you who knows more about the rules of the program.

What if you speak another language, are deaf or have another disability?

You can ask for an interpreter to be at the fair hearing, or other assistance, on the attached Fair Hearing Form. This is a free service. You may bring a friend or relative to help you at the hearing, but the department will provide the official interpreter.

At the hearing...

What happens at a fair hearing?

You will have time to tell the judge your side of the case. Someone can speak for you (if you want), and your witnesses can speak. You may show documents to the judge.

When will you know what the judge decides?

The judge will send you the decision within 90 days (within 60 days for SNAP) of the day you asked for the hearing.

You may have to pay back some or all of the benefits you got while waiting for your hearing.

What happens if the judge decides the CAO is right?

If the judge decides that the CAO made the right decision, your benefits will change or stop.

- ▶ You may have to pay back some or all of the benefits you got while waiting for your hearing.

What if you do not agree with the judge's decision?

You can appeal again. The judge's decision letter will tell you how to appeal.

Fair Hearing Form

1. **Name:** _____ Case Number: _____
Phone number: _____ Address: _____

2. **Tell us which program you want to appeal:**

- Health Care Cash Assistance SNAP
 LIHEAP
 State Supplementary Payment (SSP) Other

3. **Do you want your SNAP benefits to continue at the same amount pending the hearing decision?** Yes No

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

Reminder: You must travel to the assigned Bureau of Hearings and Appeals office for a face-to-face hearing. The location will be assigned to you based on where you live.

5. **Do you need a free interpreter?** Yes No

If yes, what language? _____

6. **If you will need help at the appeal because of a hearing impairment or other disability, please tell us how we can help you. There is no cost to you for this service.**

7. **Tell us why you disagree with this decision:** _____

8. **Signature:** _____

9. **Date:** _____

If someone will be helping you with your appeal, please fill out the information for the representative below.

10. **Representative Name:** _____

11. **Representative Address:** _____

12. **Representative Telephone Number:** _____

The Bureau of Hearings and Appeals will send you a letter to tell you when and where your hearing will be.