

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
OFFICE OF LEGAL COUNSEL, REGULATIONS, AND ADMINISTRATIVE
HEARINGS
55 FARMINGTON AVENUE
HARTFORD, CT 06105-3725

██████████, 2022
SIGNATURE CONFIRMATION

CASE # ██████████
CLIENT # ██████████
REQUEST # ██████████

NOTICE OF DECISION

PARTY

██████████
██████████
██████████

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

On ██████████ 2021, the Department of Social Services (the “Department”) issued a Notice of Action (“NOA”) to ██████████ ██████████ (the “Appellant”) regarding the discontinuance of his Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (“SNAP”) benefits ██████████ 2022.

On ██████████ 2022, the Appellant requested an administrative hearing to appeal the SNAP discontinuance.

On ██████████ 2022, the Office of Legal Counsel, Regulations, and Administrative Hearings (“OLCRAH”) issued a notice scheduling the administrative Hearing for ██████████ 2022.

On ██████████, 2022, in accordance with sections 17b-60, 17-61 and 4-176e to 4-189 inclusive of the Connecticut General Statutes, OLCRAH held an Administrative Hearing. The hearing was held in-person with New Haven regional office. The following individuals participated in the hearing:

██████████, Appellant
Ferris Clare, Department’s Representative
Joseph Alexander, Administrative Hearing Officer

STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

The issue to be decided is whether the Department correctly discontinued the Appellant's SNAP effective [REDACTED] 2022.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The Appellant's household consist of one person; Himself. (Appellant Testimony)
2. The Appellant is [REDACTED] years old and has been deemed disabled through the Social Security Administrations. (Appellant Testimony, Dept. Ex. 1: NOA)
3. The Appellant's income consists of a monthly Social Security Disability ("SSDI") payment totaling \$2,056.10. (Hearing Record, Appellant Testimony)
4. The Appellant's monthly shelter expense obligations include the following: (Appellant Testimony, Dept. Ex. 1: NOA)
 - Utilities (amounts vary)
 - \$191.00 Homeowner's insurance
 - \$400.00 Property Tax
5. The Appellant is responsible for paying his heating and cooling expenses separately from other household expenses. (Appellant Testimony)
6. The Appellant has no childcare/support obligations. (Appellant Testimony)
7. The Appellant has no out-of-pocket medical expense obligations. (Appellant Testimony)
8. On [REDACTED] 2021, the Department issued a NOA notifying the Appellant his SNAP would be discontinued effective [REDACTED] 2022, for the following reasons: (Dept. Ex. 1: NOA)
 - The monthly net income of your household is more than the limit for this program
 - Does not meet program requirements
9. The issuance of this decision is timely under Connecticut General Statutes 17b-61(a), which requires that a decision be issued within [REDACTED] days of the request for an Administrative Hearing. The hearing request was received on [REDACTED], 2022, therefore, this decision is due no later than [REDACTED] 2022.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Section 17b-2 of the Connecticut General Statutes authorizes the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services to administer the SNAP program in accordance with federal law.
2. Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (“CFR”) Sec. 273.9(a) provides, in relevant part, as follows:

Participation in the Program shall be limited to those households whose incomes are determined to be a substantial limiting factor in permitting them to obtain a more nutritious diet. Household’s which contain an elderly or disabled member shall meet the net income eligibility standards for the Food Stamp Program. Household’s which do not contain an elderly or disabled member shall meet both the net income eligibility standards and the gross income eligibility standards for the Food Stamp Program. Households which are categorically eligible are defined in §273.2(j)(2) or §273.2(j)(4) do not have to meet either the gross or net income eligibility standards. The net and gross income eligibility standards shall be based on the Federal income poverty levels established as provided in §673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)).

3. 7 CFR § 271.2 states that Elderly or disabled member means a member of a household who: (1) Is 60 years of age or older; (2) Receives supplemental security income benefits under title XVI of the Social Security Act or disability or blindness payments under titles I, II, X, XIV, or XVI of the Social Security Act;

The Appellant is considered elderly and disabled. Therefore, he is not subject to the SNAP gross income eligibility standards.

4. 7 CFR § 273.2(j) provides for categorical eligibility. There are 2 different types of categorical eligibility: regular categorical eligibility (“RCE”) and expanded categorical eligibility (“ECE”).
5. 7 CFR § 273.2(j)(1)-(5) provides for RCE and specifies Eligibility Determination Groups (“EDG”) are RCE when each EDG member is authorized to receive at least one of the following programs:
 - AABD (Aid to the Aged Blind Disabled)
 - SAGA (State Administered General Assistance)
 - SSI (Supplemental Security Income)
 - TFA (Temporary Family Assistance)

“Authorized to receive” means an individual has been determined eligible for benefits and has been notified, even if the benefits have been:

- authorized but not accessed,
- authorized but not received,
- recouped,
- suspended, or
- not paid because they are less than the minimum amount.

The Department correctly determined the Appellant does not meet the RCE requirements.

6. 7 CFR § 273.2(j)(2)(ii)(A)-(B) and (iii) provides for ECE and specifies EDGs not RCE, whose gross income is below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level (“FPL”), are ECE because all household members are authorized to receive TFA-funded referral services.

The Department correctly determined the Appellant does not meet the ECE requirements.

The Department correctly determined that because the Appellant meets neither the RCE or ECE requirements, he is subject to the net income limit (130% FPL) for this program.

7. “For purposes of determining the household’s eligibility and level of benefits the State agency shall take into account the income already received by the household during the certification period and any anticipated income the household and the State agency are reasonably certain will be received during the remainder of the certification period....” 7 CFR §273.10(c)(1)(i).
8. “Income received during the past 30 days shall be used as an indicator of the income that is and will be available to the household during the certification period....” 7 CFR §273.10(c)(1)(ii).
9. 7 CFR § 273.9(b)(2)(ii) and (b)(5)(i) & (c)(8) provides for Social Security Benefits and instructs the Department to count as unearned income. In addition, the Department counts the gross amount even if Social Security tax or Medicare premium is withheld.
10. The income limits and standards used in the SNAP are adjusted each year on the first day of October. The current figures used for the SNAP are effective from [REDACTED] 2021, through [REDACTED], 2022 (Program Limits Chart Region A, B, C)
11. In the benefit determination, the Appellant’s household’s income and deductions must be calculated pursuant to 7 CFR §273.9.

12. The standard deduction for a household size of one to six persons is equal to 8.31% of the monthly net income standard for each household size established under §273.9(a)(2) rounded up to the nearest whole dollar. 7 CFR §273.9(d)(1).

The Appellant qualifies for the standard deduction for a household consisting of one to three persons which is \$177.00.

13. CFR §273.9(d)(6)(ii) provides for the excess shelter deduction. Monthly shelter expenses in excess of 50% of the household’s income after all other deductions in paragraphs (d)(1) to (d)(5) of 7 CFR §273.9 have been allowed, are allowed as an excess shelter deduction.
14. 7 CFR §273.9(d)(6)(ii)(A)(E)) discusses shelter costs and provides that only certain expenses are allowable as shelter expense. These expenses include rent, mortgage, property taxes, insurance on the structure, condo, and association fees and the actual costs of utilities.

The Department correctly included the Appellant’s monthly \$191.00 homeowner’s insurance and \$400.00 property tax expenses in the SNAP benefit calculation.

15. 7 CFR §273.9(d)(6)(iii)(A) and (E) provides for a standard utility allowance which may, at State option, be used in place of the actual cost of utilities in determining a household’s excess shelter deduction and which may be made available both the household’s that incur actual utility expenses and to those that receive assistance under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act (“LIHEAA”).

The Department allows a Standard Utility Allowance (“SUA”), currently \$783.00, in place of the actual cost of utilities for qualifying households. The Department correctly included the SUA in the SNAP benefit calculation.

16. Net income and SNAP benefit levels are calculated pursuant to 7 CFR §273.10(e)(1)(i)(A)-(I). The calculations are as follows:

Total Wages	\$0.00
Total Unearned Income	\$2,056.10
Gross Monthly Income	\$2,056.10
-20% Earned Income Deduction	\$0.00
-Standard Deduction	\$177.00
Total Adjusted Gross Monthly Income	\$1,879.10
Total x .5 (50% Adjusted Gross Income)	\$939.55
Shelter Costs	
Property Tax/Homeowner’s Insurance	\$591.00

Standard Utility Allowance (SUA)	\$783.00
Total Shelter Costs	\$1,374.00
-50% Adjusted Gross Income	\$939.55
Excess Shelter Costs	\$434.45
Total Shelter Deduction (not capped)	\$434.45
Adjusted Gross Monthly Income	\$1,879.10
-Total Shelter Deduction	\$434.45
Total Net Monthly Income	\$1,444.65
Total Net Monthly Income x .30	\$434.00 (rounded to nearest whole dollar)
Thrifty Food Plan (household of one)	\$250.00
-30% Net Monthly Income	\$434.00
SNAP Allotment for Household	\$0.00

17. 7 CFR 273.9(a)(2)(i) provides for the net income limit and specifies the EDGs net income cannot be greater than the net income limit for the EDGs eligibility, benefit level, or benefit period changes, whichever occurs first.

The net income limit for a household of one (130% of the FPL) is equal to \$1,396.00 (see Conclusion of Law #10). The Appellant’s net income of \$1,444.65 exceeds 130% of the FPL for a household of one.

18. “Except as provided in paragraphs (a)(1), (e)(2)(iii) and (e)(2)(vi) of this section, the household’s monthly allotment shall be equal to the maximum SNAP allotment for a household’s size reduced by 30% of the household’s net monthly income as calculated in paragraph (e)(1) of this section....” 7 CFR §273.10(e)(2)(ii)(A).

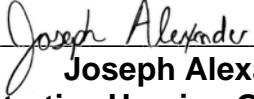
30% of the Appellant’s household’s net monthly income is \$433.39. This figure is rounded up to \$434.00 pursuant to §273.10(e)(2)(ii)(A)(1).

The maximum SNAP allotment (known as the “Thrifty Food Plan”) for a household of one is \$250.00.

30% of the Appellant’s net monthly income of \$434.00 exceeds the maximum SNAP allotment for a household of one (\$250.00). The Department correctly discontinued the Appellant’s SNAP effective [REDACTED] 2022.

DECISION

The Appellant's appeal is **DENIED**.



Joseph Alexander
Administrative Hearing Officer

CC: Rachel Anderson, Operations Manager, DSS, New Haven Regional Office
Mathew Kalarickal, Operations Manager, DSS, New Haven Regional Office
Lisa Wells, Operations Manager, DSS, New Haven Regional Office
Jaqueline Taft, Administrative Hearing Liaison, DSS, New Haven Regional Office

RIGHT TO REQUEST RECONSIDERATION

The appellant has the right to file a written reconsideration request within **15** days of the mailing date of the decision on the grounds there was an error of fact or law, new evidence

has been discovered or other good cause exists. If the request for reconsideration is granted, the appellant will be notified within **25** days of the request date. No response within **25** days means that the request for reconsideration has been denied. The right to request a reconsideration is based on § 4-181a (a) of the Connecticut General Statutes. Reconsideration requests should include specific grounds for the request: for example, indicate what error of fact or law, what new evidence, or what other good cause exists. Reconsideration requests should be sent to: Department of Social Services, Director, Office of Administrative Hearings and Appeals, 55 Farmington Avenue Hartford, CT 06105.

RIGHT TO APPEAL

The appellant has the right to appeal this decision to Superior Court within **45** days of the mailing of this decision, or **45** days after the agency denies a petition for reconsideration of this decision, provided that the petition for reconsideration was filed timely with the Department. The right to appeal is based on § 4-183 of the Connecticut General Statutes. To appeal, a petition must be filed at Superior Court. A copy of the petition must be served upon the Office of the Attorney General, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106 or the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services, 55 Farmington Avenue Hartford, CT 06105. A copy of the petition must also be served on all parties to the hearing.

The **45**-day appeal period may be extended in certain instances if there is good cause. The extension request must be filed with the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services in writing no later than **90** days from the mailing of the decision. Good cause circumstances are evaluated by the Commissioner or the Commissioner's designee in accordance with § 17b-61 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The Agency's decision to grant an extension is final and is not subject to review or appeal.

The appeal should be filed with the clerk of the Superior Court in the Judicial District of New Britain or the Judicial District in which the appellant resides.