



Mid Penn
LEGAL SERVICES

Public Benefits: How to Appeal

**Do you think the Welfare Office made a decision
about your benefits you don't agree with?
You Can Appeal!**

ABOUT US

MidPenn Legal Services is a non-profit, public interest law firm that provides high quality free civil legal services to low-income residents and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in 18 counties in Central Pennsylvania: Adams, Bedford, Berks, Blair, Centre, Clearfield, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, Mifflin, Schuylkill & York counties.

If you think the welfare office made a mistake or made a decision about your benefits you don't agree with, you can appeal.

What kind of decision can you appeal?

- Your benefits are stopped because you didn't submit required paperwork but you did deliver all requested documents.
- You keep trying to reschedule a missed appointment at the welfare office but can't and they cut you off anyway.
- The welfare office cut off your medical coverage.
- 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 or are no longer eligible for benefits (if this happens, get a denial notice in writing).
- Any other decision you disagree with.

Appeal Right Away!

You could lose your right to appeal and your right to receive benefits if you wait too long. If you appeal within 15 days of the date of the notice, your benefits will not change while the appeal is being decided.

If paperwork or "verification" is the problem, appealing will give you extra time to get it in. For example, if the welfare office lost a paper you gave them OR you need more time to get a paper, you may want to appeal. After you get the paper, you can always withdraw your appeal.

If you miss the 15 day deadline, you can still appeal, but you won't get benefits until your appeal is decided. You have 30 days to appeal or 90 days to appeal a food stamps decision. In this case, you might want to reapply as well as appeal.

Appealing Welfare Notice is Easy!

Your welfare notice includes a page that will look like this:

2. Tell us which program you want to appeal:
 Medical Assistance Cash Assistance
 SNAP/Food Stamps LIHEAP
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 you and the people you bring in the hearing room with a judge and CAO staff on the phone.
4. Do you need a free interpreter? Yes No
If yes, what language? _____
5. 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.

6. Tell us why you want to appeal: _____

7. Signature: _____
8. Date: _____

Helpful hints about filling out the appeal form:

2. Make certain you check the benefit(s) you believe has/have been wrongfully denied, stopped or reduced.
3. You have the right to have a face-to-face hearing or a telephone hearing over the phone.
4. If you need an interpreter, be sure to check this box and write what language on the line. The welfare office will provide a free interpreter.
5. If you need special help because of a disability, be sure to check this box.
6. All you need to write in this section is "I disagree with this decision."
7. & 8. Make sure you sign your name and the date on these lines.

Hand-deliver the appeal to your welfare office; in the lobby is a photo-copy machine. Make a copy of your appeal for your records and complete a receipt form to confirm what specifically you are delivering to your caseworker. Submit the original receipt with your appeal and make a copy of the receipt for your records.

If you cannot get to your welfare office, send your appeal by certified mail return receipt requested or by fax with a confirmation of receipt.

**Even if you don't get a written notice, you
can still 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.

TO APPLY FOR LEGAL HELP:

1-800-326-9177

or

apply.midpenn.org

**For more information
about MidPenn Legal
Services go to:**

www.midpenn.org



This pamphlet contains general legal information and not specific legal advice.

Although the information is believed to accurate at the time of preparation,
individual situations may require individual analysis, such that it may be advisable to
consult with a lawyer. September 2013