



STATE OF WISCONSIN
Division of Hearings and Appeals

In the Matter of

Redact

DECISION

FOO/165867

PRELIMINARY RECITALS

Pursuant to a petition filed May 07, 2015, under Wis. Admin. Code § HA 3.03(1), to review a decision by the Dodge County Department of Human Services in regard to FoodShare benefits (FS), a telephonic hearing was held on June 02, 2015, at Juneau, Wisconsin.

The issue for determination is whether the county agency correctly reduced the petitioner's FoodShare (FS) benefits from \$194 to \$16 effective May 1, 2015, due to petitioner no longer having any utility bill to create a FS utility deduction.

There appeared at that time and place the following persons:

PARTIES IN INTEREST:

Petitioner:

Redact

Respondent:

Department of Health Services
1 West Wilson Street, Room 651
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

By: Redact, ESS
Dodge County Department of Human Services
143 E. Center Street
Juneau, WI 53039-1371

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE:

Gary M. Wolkstein
Division of Hearings and Appeals

FINDINGS OF FACT

- 1. Petitioner (CARES # Redact) is a resident of Dodge County who receives FoodShare (FS) benefits for a household of one.
2. The petitioner receives gross monthly Supplemental Security Income (SSI) of \$816.78.

3. During her April, 2015 FS renewal review, petitioner informed the county agency that she no longer pays any utility bill because her utilities are included in her rent.
4. A FS recipient only receives a utility credit deduction when that FS recipient pays for utility bills per Operations Memo 14-16, issued April 18, 2014 (effective 4-28-14). Petitioner's lack of a real estate utility bill resulted in no utility deduction (except \$30 credit for her phone bill) in calculating her FS benefits, as documented by the county's FS budget screens for the petitioner during the relevant months. See Exhibit 2.
5. The county agency sent an April 13, 2015 Notice of Decision to the petitioner stating that effective May 1, 2015, her FS benefits would be reduced from \$194 to \$16, due to no utility bill expense deduction (except \$30 credit for his phone bill), as explained in Findings of Fact #3 and #4 above. See Exhibit 2

### DISCUSSION

In determining the amount of FS to be issued each month, the county must budget all income of the FS household, including all earned and unearned income. 7 C.F.R. §273.9(b). From the gross household income, certain deductions as discussed in the *FoodShare Wisconsin Handbook*, §4.6 are allowed: (1) standard deduction - which currently is \$134 per month for all households. 7 C.F.R. §273.9(d) (1); (2) earned income deduction - which equals 20% of the household's total earned income. 7 C.F.R. §273.9(d) (2); (3) medical expense deduction – for medical expenses exceeding \$35 in a month for an elderly or disabled person. 7 C.F.R. §273.9(d) (3); (4) dependent care deduction for child care expenses. 7 C.F.R. §273.9(d) (4); and **(5) shelter expenses deduction - the deduction is equal to the excess expense above 50% of net income remaining after other deductions.** 7 C.F.R. §273.9(d) (5). The maximum FS allotment amounts, based on household size, are listed at *FoodShare Wisconsin Handbook*, §8.1.7. The *FS Handbook* can be viewed online at <http://www.emhandbooks.wi.gov/fsh/>.

During the June 2, 2015 hearing, the county agency representative provided petitioner a detailed explanation regarding the calculation of the May 1, 2015 reduction in her FS benefits. ESS Redact explained and documented that due to petitioner no longer having a utility expense deduction, her FS benefits decreased as of May 1, 2015. See Findings of Fact #2 - #5 above. The petitioner admitted that she had no utility bill, and was unable to refute the county's case that it had correctly calculated the petitioner's household income and lack of utility deduction for a FS household which thus reduced his FS benefits. The petitioner explained that she has many bills and needs the additional FS benefits (before the FS reduction). However, in reviewing MES' calculation of petitioner's FS benefits based upon FS policy and law, I find no error. Accordingly, for the above reasons, I must conclude that the county agency correctly reduced the petitioner's FoodShare (FS) benefits from \$194 to \$16 effective May 1, 2015, due to petitioner no longer having any utility bill to create a FS utility deduction.

### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The county agency correctly reduced the petitioner's FoodShare (FS) benefits from \$194 to \$16 effective May 1, 2015, due to petitioner no longer having any utility bill to create a FS utility deduction.

**THEREFORE, it is**

**ORDERED**

The petition for review herein be and the same is hereby Dismissed.

## REQUEST FOR A REHEARING

You may request a rehearing if you think this decision is based on a serious mistake in the facts or the law or if you have found new evidence that would change the decision. Your request must be **received within 20 days after the date of this decision**. Late requests cannot be granted.

Send your request for rehearing in writing to the Division of Hearings and Appeals, 5005 University Avenue, Suite 201, Madison, WI 53705-5400 **and** to those identified in this decision as "PARTIES IN INTEREST." Your rehearing request must explain what mistake the Administrative Law Judge made and why it is important or you must describe your new evidence and explain why you did not have it at your first hearing. If your request does not explain these things, it will be denied.

The process for requesting a rehearing may be found at Wis. Stat. § 227.49. A copy of the statutes may be found online or at your local library or courthouse.

## APPEAL TO COURT

You may also appeal this decision to Circuit Court in the county where you live. Appeals must be filed with the Court **and** served either personally or by certified mail on the Secretary of the Department of Health Services, 1 West Wilson Street, Room 651, Madison, Wisconsin 53703, **and** on those identified in this decision as "PARTIES IN INTEREST" **no more than 30 days after the date of this decision** or 30 days after a denial of a timely rehearing (if you request one).

The process for Circuit Court Appeals may be found at Wis. Stat. §§ 227.52 and 227.53. A copy of the statutes may be found online or at your local library or courthouse.

Given under my hand at the City of Madison,  
Wisconsin, this 3rd day of June, 2015

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\sGary M. Wolkstein  
Administrative Law Judge  
Division of Hearings and Appeals



**State of Wisconsin\DIVISION OF HEARINGS AND APPEALS**

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The preceding decision was sent to the following parties on June 3, 2015.

Dodge County Department of Human Services  
Division of Health Care Access and Accountability