



Date Mailed: August 19, 2025
Docket No.: 25-025746
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioner: [REDACTED]

This is an important legal document. Please have someone translate the document.

هذه وثيقة قانونية مهمة. يرجى أن يكون هناك شخص ما يترجم المستند.

এটি একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ আইনি ডকুমেন্ট। দয়া করে কেউ দস্তাবেজ অনুবাদ করুন।

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Ky është një dokument ligjor i rëndësishëm. Ju lutem, kini dikë ta përktheni dokumentin.

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Case No.: [REDACTED]

Petitioner: [REDACTED]

HEARING DECISION

Following Petitioner's request for a hearing, this matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9 and 400.37; 7 CFR 273.15 to 273.18; 42 CFR 431.200 to 431.250; 45 CFR 99.1 to 99.33; and 45 CFR 205.10; and Mich Admin Code, R 792.11002. After due notice, a hearing was held via telephone conference on August 14, 2025. Petitioner appeared along with household member [REDACTED] and was unrepresented. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS or Department) was represented by Melanie Huddlestone and Rhonda Legault. Department Exhibit 1, pp. 1-13 was received and admitted.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly deny Petitioner's Direct Supportive Services (DSS) request for vehicle purchase?

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Administrative Law Judge, based on the competent, material, and substantial evidence on the whole record, finds as material fact:

1. On May [REDACTED] 2025, Petitioner requested vehicle purchase assistance.
2. On June [REDACTED] 2025, Notice of Case Action was sent to Petitioner informing her that the direct supportive services request was denied because the vehicle was not the primary means of transportation for employment related activities.
3. On July 7, 2025, Petitioner requested hearing disputing the denial of DSS for vehicle purchase assistance.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Department policies are contained in the Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM), Department of Health and Human Services Reference Tables Manual (RFT), and Department of Health and Human Services Emergency Relief Manual (ERM).

Direct Support Services (DSS) is established by the Social Welfare Act, MCL 400.1-.119b. The program is administered by the Department pursuant to MCL 400.10 and 400.57a and Mich Admin Code R 400.3603.

Direct Support Services (DSS)

Goods and services provided to help families achieve self sufficiency. DSS includes Employment Support Services (ESS) and Family Support Services (FSS) that directly correlates to removing an employment-related barrier. There is no entitlement for DSS. The decision to authorize DSS is within the discretion of the MDHHS or PATH program, based on local office funding. BEM 232 (October 2023)

Vehicle Purchase

FIP, CDC, MA Family, FAP Family

Authorize up to \$5000 to purchase, not lease, a vehicle to be used as a participant's primary means of transportation for work or employment-related activities. For FIP recipients, see clients served by PATH in this item. Vehicle purchase is limited to once in a client's lifetime. Prior approval through Bridges is required for this service. In a two-parent family, if both parents are required to participate and need separate vehicles, a policy exception must be requested prior to approving a vehicle purchase for a second parent. A vehicle may be purchased for a currently employed client if the client needs a vehicle to accept a verified offer of a better job; or needs a vehicle to retain current employment; and has a demonstrated ability to maintain a job. A vehicle may be purchased for a client who is not currently employed if the client: • Has a demonstrated ability to maintain a job. • Needs a vehicle to accept a verified job offer. • Needs a vehicle to participate in family self-sufficiency activities that will prepare the client for employment. In addition, ensure all of the following before authorizing the purchase: • Public transportation is not reasonably available (such as, considering the location and hours of the employment, child care or long commute as defined as good cause in BEM 233A), and the person has no other means to reach the job site reliably. • The client has the ability to afford any payments, insurance and other expenses associated with owning the vehicle. • The client has a valid Michigan driver's license. • Verify via the Secretary of State records that the client does not own an unusable vehicle The vehicle must be registered to an eligible group member and insured, at a minimum, for public liability and property damage (PLPD). Vehicle insurance, license plates, or vehicle registration are covered under other ESS in this item and do not reduce the \$5000 lifetime limit. A vehicle inspection by a licensed mechanic is required and must be placed into the case file. Vehicle purchases made by MDHHS are not exempt from use and sales tax collected by the Secretary of State. (BEM 232)

In this case, household member [REDACTED] [REDACTED] requested DSS for vehicle purchase. The Department denied the request because Petitioner and household member [REDACTED] [REDACTED] live on Mackinac Island and their primary form of transportation for work is by ferry. In addition, the Department representative testified at hearing that the request would have been denied because public transportation was available and due to limited resources. The Department representative testified that all

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requests for vehicle purchase in their county are denied because it would deplete the DSS funds. The denial because Petitioner and household member Maurice Henderson's primary source of transportation is by ferry is supported by Department policy. BEM 232 Also, the Department has discretion to use DSS as they see fit so the Department could have denied due to limited resources. Petitioner disputed whether there was reliable and available public transportation in St. Ignace. Petitioner testified that it was by appointment and appointments were not always available. It appears that there is not reliable public transportation in St. Ignace and that would not be a proper basis to deny Petitioner's request. However, that was not the sole basis, and the other bases were sufficient.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based on the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, if any, finds that the Department acted in accordance with Department policy when it denied Petitioner's DSS request for vehicle purchase assistance.

Accordingly, the Department's decision is **AFFIRMED**.



AARON MCCLINTIC
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE

APPEAL RIGHTS: Petitioner may appeal this Hearing Decision to the circuit court. Rules for appeals to the circuit court can be found in the Michigan Court Rules (MCR), including MCR 7.101 to MCR 7.123, available at the Michigan Courts website at courts.michigan.gov. The Michigan Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules (MOAHR) cannot provide legal advice, but assistance may be available through the State Bar of Michigan at <https://lrs.michbar.org> or Michigan Legal Help at <https://michiganlegalhelp.org>. A copy of the circuit court appeal should be sent to MOAHR. A circuit court appeal may result in a reversal of the Hearing Decision.

Either party who disagrees with this Hearing Decision may also send a written request for a rehearing and/or reconsideration to MOAHR within 30 days of the mailing date of this Hearing Decision. The request should include Petitioner's name, the docket number from page 1 of this Hearing Decision, an explanation of the specific reasons for the request, and any documents supporting the request. The request should be sent to MOAHR

- by email to MOAHR-BSD-Support@michigan.gov, **OR**
- by fax at (517) 763-0155, **OR**
- by mail addressed to
Michigan Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules
Rehearing/Reconsideration Request
P.O. Box 30639
Lansing Michigan 48909-8139

Documents sent via email are not secure and can be faxed or mailed to avoid any potential risks. Requests MOAHR receives more than 30 days from the mailing date of this Hearing Decision may be considered untimely and dismissed.

Via Electronic Mail:

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Petitioner

