



Date Mailed: October 30, 2025
Docket No.: 25-031742
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioner: [REDACTED]

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

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Docket No.: 25-031742

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; 42 CFR 438.400 to 438.424; 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 by telephone on October 6, 2025. Petitioner appeared and represented herself. The Department of Health and Human Services (Department) was represented by Tiara Dawson, Eligibility Specialist.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly issue State Emergency Relief (SER) assistance to Petitioner's heat and electric service provider?

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 [REDACTED] 2025, the Department received an application for SER assistance from Petitioner for payment of her heat in the amount of \$809, electricity in the amount of \$389, and water/sewer in the amount of \$311. (Exhibit A, pp. 7 – 12).
1. On February 14, 2025, the Department retrieved Petitioner's account information and past due balances from her heat and electric provider, DTE Energy (DTE).
2. On February 14, 2025, the Department sent Petitioner a State Emergency Relief Decision Notice (SER Decision), approving her for SER assistance for:
 - a. Heat in the amount of \$401.23 with no co-pay,
 - b. Electric in the amount of \$214.42 with no co-pay, and
 - c. Water/Sewer in the amount of \$350 with a co-pay of \$5.96 to be paid by Petitioner, with proof due to the Department by March 11, 2025.

(Exhibit A, pp. 13 – 16).

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3. On March 19, 2025, the Department received verification of Petitioner's water/sewer co-pay. (Exhibit A, p. 19; Exhibit B, p. 1, Serial No. 110).
 4. On March 26, 2025, the Department issued the approved payments to DTE for Petitioner's heat and electric services. (Exhibit A, p. 20).
 5. On August 25, 2025, the Department received Petitioner's request for hearing disputing a delay in assistance payments being made on her behalf by the Department and a requirement that she provide a security deposit in the amount of \$460. The request was unclear regarding which service required the security deposit. (Exhibit A, pp. 3 – 5).
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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).

The State Emergency Relief (SER) program is established by the Social Welfare Act, MCL 400.1-.119b. The SER program is administered by the Department (formerly known as the Department of Human Services) pursuant to MCL 400.10 and Mich Admin Code, R 400.7001-.7049.

Petitioner requested a hearing to dispute a delay by the Department in issuing approved SER assistance to her heat and electric service provider. During the hearing, Petitioner clarified that her primary dispute was that her heat and electric service provider, DTE, was requiring a \$460 security deposit from her as a result of the Department's delay in issuing approved SER assistance. Petitioner contended that she should not be responsible for paying the deposit.

The SER program provides assistance to applicants to secure or maintain safe, decent, affordable housing and other essential needs when an emergency situation arises, including helping clients avoid interruption of utilities due to shut off notices, among other assistance. ERM 101 (March 2013), p. 1; ERM 100 (October 2024), pp. 1 – 5; ERM 301 (December 2024), p. 1; ERM 302 (December 2022), p. 1. SER assistance for energy services may also include assistance for deposits and other charges or fees if they are necessary to prevent an emergency and are required by the provider. ERM 301, p. 5; ERM 104 (October 2022), pp. 1 – 2.

The undersigned Administrative Law Judge's jurisdiction concerning SER assistance is limited to disputes regarding:

- Denial of an application and/or supplemental payments,

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- Reduction in the amount of program benefits or service,
 - Suspension or termination of program benefits or service,
 - Restrictions under which benefits or services are provided, and
 - Delay of any action beyond standards of promptness (BAM 600 (July 2025), p. 5).

Although Petitioner's primary dispute was that DTE is requiring a \$460 security deposit from her, because there was no evidence that Petitioner requested SER assistance for payment of a security deposit for DTE, or that Department denied such a request, this decision will address only Petitioner's dispute regarding whether the Department properly issued the approved payments to DTE on March 26, 2025.

When a client applies for SER assistance, the Department sends the client a SERDN approving or denying the requested service(s). ERM 208 (October 2024), p. 5. If the Department does not cover the full cost of a requested service, the SERDN will inform the client of the co-payment amount they must pay and the due date for returning proof of such payment to the Department. ERM 208, pp. 2 – 5. When a client applies for multiple services, the client is only required to pay the co-payment on one service; however, the co-payment must be paid before the Department will issue approved assistance for any other SER service. ERM 208, p. 2; ERM 401 (January 2024), p. 2.

In this case, Petitioner applied for SER assistance on [REDACTED] 2025, for three services: heat, electric, and water/sewer. On February 14, 2025, the Department sent Petitioner a SERDN that approved her for heat and electric assistance with no co-pays, and water/sewer assistance with a \$5.96 co-pay. The SERDN informed Petitioner that no payments would be made for any assistance until she provided proof of payment of the water/sewer co-pay, which was due to the Department by March 11, 2025.

Petitioner testified that she attempted to provide proof that she paid her required water/sewer co-pay to the Department before March 11, 2025. However, she further testified that she was unable to submit the proof to the Department through her on-line client portal and was unable to travel to the local office at that time. Although Petitioner also testified that she called the Department and advised them that she was unable to submit the proof online, there was no evidence that the Department received a call or that Petitioner otherwise requested help to provide the proof on or before March 11, 2025. (Exhibit B, p. 1, Serial No. 107 – 110); ERM 103 (October 2024), p. 7.

However, the evidence established that the Department did receive Petitioner's verification of her water/sewer co-pay in the local office on March 19, 2025, and that it issued the approved payments for Petitioner's heat and electric assistance to her provider on March 26, 2025. Because Petitioner requested SER assistance for all three services within the same 30-day period, and the Department did not receive proof of payment of her co-payment until after the deadline on the SERDN, the Department

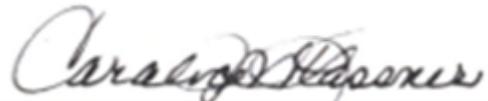
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acted properly when it did not issue the approved payments for Petitioner's heat and electric assistance until March 26, 2025.

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 issued the approved SER payments to DTE on March 26, 2025.

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



CARALYCE M. LASSNER
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

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Respondent

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