



Date Mailed: November 19, 2025
Docket No.: 25-034353
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Petitioner: [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
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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।

Este es un documento legal importante. Por favor, que alguien traduzca el documento.

这是一份重要的法律文件。请让别人翻译文件。

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 October 22, 2025. Petitioner appeared for the hearing and represented herself. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS or Department) was represented by Caitlin Dodge, Family Independence Manager.

ISSUE

Did the Department properly deny Petitioner's application for State Emergency Relief (SER) assistance with water heater replacement?

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 or around [REDACTED] 2025, Petitioner submitted an application requesting SER assistance with replacement of her hot water heater. (Exhibit A, pp. 6-18)
2. On or around September 17, 2025, the Department sent Petitioner a State Emergency Relief Decision Notice advising her that her application was denied because the home is not her usual, permanent residence. (Exhibit A, pp. 19-21)
3. On or around September 18, 2025, Petitioner requested a hearing disputing the Department's actions with respect to the SER application.
4. After receiving Petitioner's request for hearing, the Department determined that the SER application was improperly denied.
5. On or around September 22, 2025, the Department began reprocessing the SER application.
6. On or around September 22, 2025, the Department sent Petitioner a State Emergency Relief Decision Notice advising her that the request for SER was denied because the contractor does not have a valid license to provide the service. (Exhibit A, pp. 24-26)

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 disputing the Departments actions with respect to her [REDACTED] 2025, application for SER assistance with hot water heater replacement.

SER assists with energy-related and non-energy-related home repairs to correct unsafe conditions and restore essential services. ERM 304 (October 2024), p. 1. Non-energy-related repairs include all home repairs for client owned housing except furnace repair or replacement. Repair or replacement of a hot water heater is considered a non-energy-related home repair. Authorization for payment of non-energy-related home repairs is only made if essential to remove a direct threat to health or safety or is required by law or a mobile home park regulation. The repair must restore the home to a safe, livable condition and SER does not pay for improvements or not essential repairs. The lifetime maximum for non-energy-related home repairs is \$1,500 per SER group. Payment for certain services can only be issued if the contractor holds a valid license. ERM 304, pp. 1-6.

For the SER program, clients must be informed of all verifications that are required and where to return verifications. The Department will send a SER Verification Checklist (VCL) to request verifications and to notify the client of the due date for returning the verifications. The due date is eight calendar days beginning with the date of application. If the application is not processed on the application date, the deadline to return verification is eight calendar days from the date verification is requested. This does not change the standard of promptness date. ERM 103 (October 2023), pp.1-8. The client must make a reasonable effort to obtain required verifications. The specialist must assist if the applicant needs and requests help. If neither the client nor the specialist can obtain the verifications, despite a reasonable effort, use the best available information. If no evidence is available, the specialist must use their best judgment. Verifications are considered timely if received by the date they are due. ERM 103, pp.1-8. The Department will inform all SER applicants in writing of the decision made on their application by sending a DHS-1419, Decision Notice advising of the approval or denial of the application. ERM 108, pp. 1-8.

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At the hearing, the Department representative testified that Petitioner's SER application was initially denied in error and after receiving Petitioner's request for hearing, the Department began reprocessing the application. The Department representative testified that the application was denied again on September 22, 2025, because the contractor did not have a valid license to provide the service. However, the Department conceded that it failed to issue a SER VCL to Petitioner to allow her the opportunity to submit the repair estimate with a valid contractor license number on it. The Department confirmed that Petitioner had submitted multiple estimates from various companies and that at least one of the estimates had a valid contractor ID number on it. The Department acknowledged that the issuance of the September 22, 2025, SER Decision Notice was improper and that the application should not have been denied for the reason identified. The Department agreed that reprocessing of Petitioner's [REDACTED] 2025, SER application was necessary.

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 did not act in accordance with Department policy when it denied Petitioner's application for SER assistance with hot water heater replacement.

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

THE DEPARTMENT IS ORDERED TO BEGIN DOING THE FOLLOWING, IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEPARTMENT POLICY AND CONSISTENT WITH THIS HEARING DECISION, WITHIN 10 DAYS OF THE DATE OF MAILING OF THIS DECISION AND ORDER:

1. Register and reprocess the [REDACTED] 2025, SER application for hot water heater replacement/non-energy home repair to determine eligibility for SER from the application date, ongoing;
2. Supplement Petitioner and/or her SER provider for any SER benefits that she was eligible to receive but did not from the application date, ongoing; and
3. Notify Petitioner in writing of its decision.


ZAINAB BAYDOUN

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE

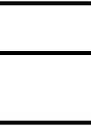
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APPEAL RIGHTS: Petitioner may appeal this Hearing Decision to the circuit court. Rules for appeals to the circuit court can be found in the Michigan Court Rules (MCR), including MCR 7.101 to MCR 7.123, available at the Michigan Courts website at courts.michigan.gov. 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:

Respondent
OAKLAND COUNTY DHHS - SOUTHFIELD DIST
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SOUTHFIELD, MI 48033
MDHHS-OAKLAND-6303-HEARINGS@MICHIGAN.GOV

Via First Class Mail:

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