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**Sent time:** 02/10/2014 06:03:45  
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**Cc:**  
**Subject:** DSHS Cancelled My Obamacare! --What's up with that?  
**Attachments:** DSHS\_nasty-gram.pdf

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## Dear Members of the Washington State Legislative Health Care Committees:

I'm writing this e-mail to alert you to a problem I had with the Department of Social and Health Services. It could be a sign of worse things to come.

Last year I applied for and received health care coverage under the Obamacare mandate. That process was not exactly smooth, but I got through it. Then last week, more than a months after I had assumed my coverage began, DSHS sent me a confusing five-page document (see attached) notifying me that they had cancelled my health care benefit because I didn't show up for some bogus appointment. As you can imagine, this was rather alarming, so I called the number on the paper and, after navigating a labyrinthine menu and waiting on hold for several minutes, I finally got connected with a person who explained that lots of folks had gotten the same letter and were confused and angry about it. She assured me that the letter was nothing to worry about, however. It was a mere computer glitch, she said. It wouldn't be happening again.

"How do I know that?" I asked.

"I just do." she replied.

When I asked to speak to a supervisor at DSHS so I could ascertain for myself that it wouldn't be happening again, I was given the brush-off. "There's no supervisor here," the DSHS staffer told me.

I then decided to write the incident up on my blog. You can read more about it here:

<http://roominate.com/blog/2014/health-insurance-why-is-this-so-damn-hard/>

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DSHS's actions in this matter are unacceptable: both their failure to tweak their computer system and the nonchalant way they are responding to the screw-up. As members of the Health Care Committees, I believe you exercise oversight of DSHS. Therefore, I'm asking you to contact DSHS and have someone in authority there get back to me with some answers . . .

1. DSHS had years to plan for Obamacare/Medicaid switchover, so someone must have been asleep at the wheel. Who was it?
2. How many people got the same cancellation letter that I did?
3. How will DSHS notify people that the letter was in error?
4. What steps have been taken to correct the problem? What assurance does the public have that this will not happen again?

I can get all this information through the public disclosure process, but if I do that it will be time consuming and very expensive, for them. By contrast, it will be relatively painless if you have someone at DSHS contact me directly with this information. I can then include that as a postscript to my blog piece.

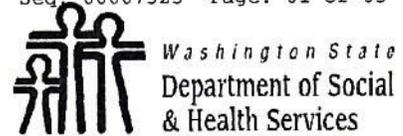
Thanks in advance.

Regards,

David Preston



WHITE CENTER CSO  
PO BOX 11699  
TACOMA WA 98411-6699



Phone #  
TTY/TDD # 800-209-5446  
Toll Free # 877-501-2233

02/04/14

Client ID # [REDACTED]

DAVID B PRESTON  
[REDACTED]  
SEATTLE WA 98106-1875

Dear DAVID B PRESTON

You can't receive cash or health care coverage for these months:

12/2013, 01/2014, 02/2014, 03/2014

You're not eligible for a Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) referral.

The reasons for this decision are:

**For Medical:**

You or a representative did not appear for the scheduled appointment required to determine your eligibility for financial, medical or food stamp assistance.

See WAC rule (Washington Administrative Code): 388-406-0035, 388-406-0050, 388-452-0005

You can check these rules online at <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/>.

If you give us information within 30 days that shows that you are eligible, we may reconsider our decision.

Does Public Assistance have a time limit?

- \* In Washington TANF/SFA cash benefits have a 60 month lifetime limit.
- \* Food Assistance doesn't have a time limit.
- \* Child Care Assistance doesn't have a time limit.

You can:

- \* Apply for benefits, submit a review, or report changes at [www.washingtonconnection.org](http://www.washingtonconnection.org).
- \* Fax information to us at 888-338-7410.

Write your client ID on all copies you send us. Your client ID is [REDACTED].

To contact a WorkFirst case manager or social worker, call 206-716-2300.

Call 877-501-2233 to process an application or review, report changes, or ask questions.



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If you disagree with any of our decisions, you may ask to have the case reviewed. You can also ask for an administrative hearing. Administrative hearing rights are included in this letter.

What happens when enrollment isn't available for Medical Care Services (MCS) and Alcoholism and Drug Addiction Treatment and Support Act (ADATSA)?

- \* Enrollment is limited due to available funding.
- \* You're added to a waiting list when you qualify for MCS or ADATSA and aren't eligible for another program.

What happens when enrollment in MCS or ADATSA is available?

- \* Your position on the waiting list is based on your application date. As space becomes available we'll notify those who waited for coverage the longest.
- \* If you receive an enrollment offer, you must reapply within 30 days.
- \* Your name will be removed from the waiting list if we don't receive your application.
- \* You must reapply and be eligible before you are enrolled.

### **What is Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET)?**

BFET may be able to help you with the following if you receive federally funded Basic Food benefits:

- \* Job readiness training
- \* Basic skills/ English as a Second Language (ESL) training (such as literacy, math, vocational ESL, High School Equivalency preparation)
- \* Vocational training
- \* Job search assistance
- \* Job placement
- \* Job retention
- \* Support services (such as transportation, child care, housing, and clothing)
- \* Skill and Wage Progression (such as gain skills and increase wages)

Go to [www.basicfoodet.org](http://www.basicfoodet.org) to receive more information on your employment and training options or call 877-501-2233. Register today.

Where can you receive automated information about your case?

- \* You can call The Answer Phone at 1-877-980-9220.
- \* When you call you will need to enter your client ID number, which can be found in the bottom right hand corner of this letter.



## Administrative Hearing Rights

### What can you do if you disagree with our decisions?

- \* Ask for an administrative hearing.
- \* Ask for a case review by contacting your local office. This won't delay or replace the hearing and it could resolve the disagreement sooner.

Note: You don't have administrative hearing rights if the change in your benefits was part of a mass adjustment for a group of people required by state or federal law. (RCW 74.08.080 1 b)

### How do you request an administrative hearing?

Do one of the following:

- \* Contact your local office.
- \* Write to:  
The Office of Administrative Hearings  
PO Box 42489  
Olympia, WA 98504-2489

### How soon must you request an administrative hearing?

- \* Within 90 days of receiving this letter.

### Can your benefits continue during the hearing process?

- \* If this letter changes or stops your benefits, you may still receive them while you wait for your hearing.
- \* You must ask for the hearing before your benefits change, end, or within 10 days of this letter, whichever is later.
- \* Food assistance can only continue until your next review.
- \* Denied benefits can't be continued.

### Who may represent you at the administrative hearing?

- \* You may represent yourself.
- \* A lawyer or any other person you choose.

### What if you can't afford legal advice?

- \* Coordinated Legal Education Advice and Referral (CLEAR) may help you find free legal assistance.
- \* Visit <http://nwjustice.org/get-legal-help>
- \* If you are under age 60 call CLEAR at 1-888-201-1014.
- \* If you are age 60 or over call CLEAR Senior at 1-888-387-7111.

### What if you lose the administrative hearing?

- \* You may have to repay some or all of the benefits you received.
- \* You won't have to repay more than 2 months of continued benefits.

### Non Discrimination Statement

The Department of Social and Health Services isn't allowed to discriminate in any program or activity. No one can be excluded from any program on the basis of race, color, creed, political beliefs, national origin, religion, age, gender, disability or birthplace.