

From: Todd, Susan (DSHS) <TODDSE@dshs.wa.gov>
Sent time: 02/11/2014 01:23:41
To: David Preston
Subject: Email regarding DSHS

Dear Mr. Preston,

Your email regarding DSHS was forwarded to me in Customer Relations for the Community Services Division of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) by Representative Cody. I am providing information that I hope will be helpful.

The Washington Apple Health that resulted from the Affordable Care Act became available January 1, 2014. That health care coverage is administered by Health Care Authority. If people made application prior to January 1, DSHS was required to review the applications to determine if the applicant could be eligible for any existing DSHS medical assistance program that would provide coverage prior to January 1.

The DSHS medical assistance programs required additional information to determine eligibility for DSHS medical assistance. Applicants were advised by letter:

You recently applied through Washington Healthplanfinder for health care coverage to begin January 1, 2014.

Based on what you told us about your income, you may be able to receive coverage through a different program before January 1, 2014, if:

- You are unable to work full time for at least 90 days because of your physical or mental health; or
- You are in need of chemical dependency treatment.

To be considered for this coverage, fill out the enclosed supplemental form and return it to DSHS in the enclosed envelope. Once we receive your completed form, we will tell you what you need to do next. If you receive this extra coverage, it will not affect the coverage you applied for through the Washington Healthplanfinder.”

Most applicants who did not meet that criteria did not return the supplemental form. DSHS was required however to acknowledge that the applicant chose not to pursue DSHS medical assistance for that time period prior to January 1, so the denial letter was sent. Letter are required to state the months that were considered. The months would be the application month through the month following the letter date.

The denial letter only referred to DSHS medical and cash assistance, not to Washington Apple Health which is administered through the Health Care Authority. The letter was not a cancellation letter.

This consideration of applications by DSHS was only for applications made prior to the availability of the expanded Medicaid provided through Washington Apple Health. Now that Washington Apple Health is available, this situation would not re-occur. (DSHS continues to provide some medical assistance programs to people who do not qualify for a Washington Apple Health program.)

I am very sorry that the representative at the DSHS Customer Contact Center was unable to provide more information to you when you called about the letter. I am sorry if you were given the information that the letter was a “computer glitch,” as it was not. We will follow up appropriately to make sure that correct information is provided to callers who have questions.

If you have any further questions or concerns about DSHS, please feel free to call me.

Again my apologies for any confusion from DSHS regarding health care coverage.

Sincerely,

Susan Todd
Constituent Program Supervisor
Community Services Division
Economic Services Administration
DSHS
(360)725-4726