

Actions to Collect the Debt

A debt was made because you or your household was not eligible. The debt has been referred to the Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA) for collection. DIA will collect on this debt by doing one of the following:

- Bill you for the debt, or
- If you are not making payments and you are past due on your account:
 - Take your Iowa income tax refund, or
 - Take money that is owed to you by any state agency. For example, all or part of your income tax refund or state wages.
- If you gave wrong information on purpose or kept information from DHS to get more benefits than you were eligible for, your case can be referred for a criminal investigation.
- File a civil suit to collect the debt.

You Have the Right to Appeal

What is an appeal?

An **appeal** is asking for a hearing because you do not like a decision the Department of Human Services (DHS) makes. You have the right to file an appeal if you disagree with a decision. You do not have to pay to file an appeal. [441 Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 7].

How do I appeal?

Filing an appeal is easy. You can appeal in person, by telephone or in writing. To appeal in writing, do **one** of the following:

- Complete an appeal electronically at <https://dhssecure.dhs.state.ia.us/forms/>, or
- Write a letter telling us why you think a decision is wrong, or
- Fill out an Appeal and Request for Hearing form. You can get this form at your county DHS office.

Send or take your appeal to the Department of Human Services, Appeals Section, 5th Floor, 1305 E Walnut Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0114. If you need help filing an appeal, ask your county DHS office.

How long do I have to appeal?

You have 90 calendar days to file an appeal from the date of a decision.

If you file an appeal more than 30 but less than 90 calendar days from the date of a decision, you must tell us why your appeal is late. If you have a good reason for filing your appeal late, we will decide if you can get a hearing.

If you file an appeal 90 days after the date of a decision, we cannot give you a hearing.

How will I know if I get a hearing?

You will get a hearing notice that tells you the date and time a telephone hearing is scheduled. You will get a letter telling you if you do not get a hearing. This letter will tell you why you did not get a hearing. It will also explain what you can do if you disagree with the decision to not give you a hearing.

Can I have someone else help me in the hearing?

You or someone else, such as a friend or relative can tell why you disagree with the Department's decision. You may also have a lawyer help you, but the Department will not pay for one. Your county DHS office can give you information about legal services. The cost of legal services will be based on your income. You may also call Iowa Legal Aid at 1-800-532-1275. If you live in Polk County, call 243-1193.

Policy Regarding Discrimination, Harassment, Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity

It is the policy of the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide equal treatment in employment and provision of services to applicants, employees, and clients without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, disability, political belief or veteran status.

If you feel DHS has discriminated against or harassed you, please send a letter detailing your complaint to: Iowa Department of Human Services, Hoover Building, 5th Floor – Policy Bureau, 1305 E Walnut, Des Moines, IA 50319-0114 or via email contactdhs@dhs.state.ia.us