

641—76.8(135) Right to appeal—client.

76.8(1) *Right of appeal.* Individuals applying for MCH services and clients receiving MCH services shall have the right to appeal whenever a decision or action of the department or contract agency results in the denial of participation, suspension, or termination from the approved MCH program. Notification of the denial of participation, suspension or termination shall be made in writing and shall state the basis for the action. All hearings shall be conducted in accordance with these rules.

76.8(2) *Notification of appeal rights and right to hearing.* Individuals applying for MCH services shall be notified of the right to appeal and the procedures for requesting a hearing at the time of application for MCH services. Information about the appeal and hearing process shall be provided in writing and shall be immediately available at MCH centers. A health professional shall be available to explain the method by which an appeal or hearing is requested and the manner in which the appeal and hearing will be conducted.

76.8(3) *Request for hearing.* A request for a hearing is a written expression by an individual or the individual's parent, guardian, or other representative that an opportunity to present the individual's case is desired. The request shall be filed with the contract agency within 60 days from the date the individual receives notice of the decision or action which is the subject of appeal.

76.8(4) *Receipt of benefits during appeal.* Individual applicants, who are denied program benefits due to a finding of ineligibility, shall not receive benefits during the administrative appeal period. Clients who are involuntarily suspended or terminated from the MCH program shall continue to receive program benefits during the administrative appeal period.

76.8(5) *Hearing officer.* The hearing officer shall be impartial, shall not have been directly involved in the initial determination of the action being contested, and shall not have a personal stake in the decision. Hearing officers may be contract agency directors, health professionals, community leaders, or any impartial citizen. If prior to the hearing the appealing party objects to a contract agency director serving as the hearing officer in a case involving the director's own agency, another hearing officer shall be selected and, if necessary, the hearing shall be rescheduled as expeditiously as possible. Contract agencies may seek the assistance of the Chief, Bureau of Family Health, Iowa Department of Public Health, Lucas State Office Building, 321 East 12th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075, in the appointment of a hearing officer.

76.8(6) *Notice of hearing.* The hearing officer shall schedule the time, place and date of the hearing as expeditiously as possible. Parties shall receive notice of the hearing at least ten days in advance of the scheduled hearing. The hearing shall be accessible to the party requesting the hearing. The hearing shall be scheduled within three weeks from the date the contract agency received the request for a hearing or as soon as possible thereafter, unless a later date is agreed upon by the parties.

76.8(7) *Conduct of hearing.* The party requesting the hearing or the party's representative shall have the opportunity to:

- a. Examine, prior to and during the hearing, the documents and records presented to support the decision under appeal;
- b. Be represented by an attorney or other person at the party's own expense;
- c. Bring witnesses;
- d. Question or refute any testimony or evidence, including an opportunity to confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses;
- e. Submit evidence to establish all pertinent facts and circumstances in the case; and
- f. Advance arguments without undue interference.

76.8(8) *Decision.* Decisions of the hearing officer shall be in writing and shall be based on evidence presented at the hearing. The decision shall summarize the facts of the case, specify the reasons for the decision, and identify the supporting evidence and pertinent regulations or policy. The decision shall be issued within 90 days of the receipt of the request for the hearing, unless a longer period is agreed upon by the parties.

76.8(9) *Appeal of decision to the department.* A party receiving an unfavorable decision may file an appeal with the department. Such appeals must be filed in writing within ten working days of the mailing date of the hearing decision. Appeals shall be sent to the Contract Administrator, Division of Administration and Professional Licensure, Iowa Department of Public Health, Lucas State Office Building, 321 East 12th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075.

76.8(10) *Contested case.* Upon receipt of an appeal that meets contested case status, the appeal shall be forwarded within five working days to the DIA pursuant to the rules adopted by the DIA regarding the transmission of contested cases. The information upon which the adverse action is based and any additional information, which may be provided by the aggrieved party, shall also be provided to the DIA.

76.8(11) *Hearing.* Parties shall receive notice of the hearing in advance. The administrative law judge shall schedule the time, place and date of the hearing so that the hearing is held as expeditiously as possible. The hearing shall be conducted according to the procedural rules of the DIA found in 481—Chapter 10, Iowa Administrative Code.

76.8(12) *Decision of administrative law judge.* The administrative law judge's decision shall be issued within 60 days from the date of request for hearing. When the administrative law judge makes a proposed decision and order, it shall be served by certified mail, return receipt requested, or delivered by personal service. That proposed decision and order then becomes the department's final decision without further proceedings ten days after it is received by the aggrieved party unless an appeal to the director is taken as provided in subrule 76.8(13).

76.8(13) *Appeal to the director.* Any appeal to the director for review of the proposed decision and order of the administrative law judge shall be filed in writing and mailed to the director by certified mail, return receipt requested, or delivered by personal service within ten days after the receipt of the administrative law judge's proposed decision and order by the aggrieved party. A copy of the appeal shall also be mailed to the administrative law judge. Any request for an appeal shall state the reason for appeal.

76.8(14) *Record of hearing.* Upon receipt of an appeal request, the administrative law judge shall prepare the record of the hearing for submission to the director. The record shall include the following:

- a. All pleadings, motions and rules.
- b. All evidence received or considered and all other submissions by recording or transcript.
- c. A statement of all matters officially noticed.
- d. All questions and offers of proof, objections and rulings thereon.
- e. All proposed findings and exceptions.
- f. The proposed decision and order of the administrative law judge.

76.8(15) *Decision of director.* An appeal to the director shall be based on the record of the hearing before the administrative law judge. The decision and order of the director becomes the department's final decision upon receipt by the aggrieved party and shall be delivered by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by personal service.

76.8(16) *Exhausting administrative remedies.* It is not necessary to file an application for the rehearing to exhaust administrative remedies when appealing to the director or the district court as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.19. The aggrieved party to the final decision of the department who has exhausted all administrative remedies may petition for judicial review of that action pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 17A.

76.8(17) *Petition for judicial review.* Any petition for judicial review of a decision and order shall be filed in the district court within 30 days after the decision and order becomes final. A copy of the notice of appeal shall be sent to the director by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by personal service. The address is Director, Department of Public Health, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075.

76.8(18) *Benefits after decision.* If a final decision is in favor of the person requesting a hearing and benefits were denied or discontinued, benefits shall begin immediately and continue pending further review should an appeal to district court be filed. If a final decision is in favor of the contract agency, benefits shall be terminated, if still being received, as soon as administratively possible after the issuance of the decision. Benefits denied during an administrative appeal period may not be awarded retroactively following a final decision in favor of a person applying for MCH services.

[ARC 0364C, IAB 10/3/12, effective 11/7/12]