



## What Can I Do If I Am Sanctioned?



### What is a sanction?

Everyone who receives cash assistance or food stamps signs a self-sufficiency contract. If anyone in your household does not do what is required under the self-sufficiency contract, then the whole house will lose its cash assistance. That person's share of food stamps will also be stopped.

Your Medicaid benefits cannot stop unless you have already had two sanctions.



### What can I do if I am told I will be sanctioned?

You have the right to a state hearing to dispute the sanction. You can ask for a state hearing anytime within 90 days of the mailing date of the sanction notice.

If you ask for a state hearing within 15 days of the mailing date on the sanction notice, your benefits will continue until the state hearing is decided. If you win your state hearing, then you will not be sanctioned.

To win your state hearing, you must show you had a good reason for not doing what was in your self-sufficiency contract or your work assignments. Some examples of good reason, or "good cause", are:

- A death in the family.
- You were sick or were at the doctor. (You may be asked for a doctor's note.)
- You had a job interview
- You had no child care.
- You had transportation problems.
- You were denied reasonable accommodations for your disability.



### What will happen if I am sanctioned?

When you are sanctioned:

- The first time, the sanction will last one month.
- The second time, the sanction will last two months.
- The third time, the sanction will last for six months. You may lose your Medicaid for six months.

If you agree with the sanction or if you lose your state hearing, then you will have to wait out the length of the sanction. After your time is up, then you need to replay for cash assistance and sign a form at the Job and Family Services office to get your food stamps back.



## How can I avoid a sanction?

- If you are going to miss a work assignment for a good reason, let the Job and Family Services office know right away.
- You do not have to agree to an assignment you cannot do because of a disability. You have the right to a reasonable accommodation.
- You have rights to have your needs assessed and to get appropriate services and assignments. Ask for what you need to participate, such as transportation, child care, or an interpreter.
- Tell your Job and Family Services office if you need help in getting documents to statements from your doctor, employer, or other person. The Job and Family Services office should help you.
- If you do not understand something, ask someone at the Job and Family Services office to explain it to you.
- You do not have to sign anything you have not read or do not understand. Read your self-sufficiency contract before you sign it. Ask questions and get answers to those questions.
- When giving documents to your county Job and Family Services office, always get and keep a receipt. Also, make copies of the documents.
- Call your caseworker at Job and Family Services to discuss any problem right away. If the problem is not fixed, talk to your caseworker's supervisor. Keep a record of your calls.

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If you are seeking representation or legal advice, please contact SEOLS.  
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