

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
APPEALS OFFICE

V.

DOCKET No. 26-3105

Department of Human Services

DECISION

I. INTRODUCTION

A Microsoft Teams hearing on the above-entitled matter came before an Appeals Officer on July 13, 2026, with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and [REDACTED] (hereinafter the "Appellant") for Appeal ID # [REDACTED] regarding Case # [REDACTED]. The Appellant declined the option of a video hearing. The Appellant initiated this matter to appeal DHS' closure of their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) case as stated in the Benefit Decision Notice (BDN) dated April 20, 2026. DHS testified that the Appellant's SNAP case was closed correctly because the Appellant failed to respond to DHS' request for additional verification by the due date. For the reasons discussed in more detail below, the Appellant's Appeal is denied.

II. JURISDICTION

The Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) is authorized and designated by R.I.G.L. § 42-7.2-6.1 and EOHHS regulation 210-RICR-10-05-2 to be the entity responsible for appeals and hearings related to DHS programs. The Administrative Hearing was held in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act (R.I.G.L. § 42-35-1 et seq.) and EOHHS regulation 210-RICR-10-05-2.

III. ISSUE

Did DHS correctly close the Appellant's SNAP case?

IV. STANDARD OF PROOF

It is well settled that in formal or informal adjudications modeled on the Federal Administrative Procedures Act, the initial burdens of production and persuasion rest with the moving part. See 2 Richard J. Pierce, *Administrative Law Treaties* §10.7 (2002). Unless otherwise specified, a preponderance of the evidence is generally required to prevail. See *Lyons v. Rhode Island Pub. Employees Council* 94, 559 A.2d 1130, 134 (R.I. 1989) (preponderance standard is the "normal" standard in civil cases). This means that for each element to be proven, the factfinder must believe that the facts asserted by the proponent are more probably true than false. When there is no direct evidence on a particular issue, a fair preponderance of the evidence may be supported by circumstantial evidence. See *Narragansett Electric Co. vs. Carbone*, 898 A.2d 87 (R.I. 2006).

V. PARTIES AND EXHIBITS

Eligibility Technician, Glenda Ramos, attended the hearing on DHS' behalf. The following exhibits were offered as evidence by DHS:

Exhibit #1 – Appellant's Appeal Form.

Exhibit #2 – April 20, 2026, BDN.

Exhibit #3 – April 4, 2026, Additional Documentation Required Notice.

Exhibit #4 – Screenshot of Electronic Case File.

Exhibit #5 – Eligibility Determination Results.

Exhibit #6 – SNAP Notice Reasons.

The Appellant was present and testified on their own behalf. The Appellant's Authorized Representative, [REDACTED], (hereinafter the "Authorized Representative"), was also present and provided testimony. The Appellant provided the following exhibit as evidence:

Exhibit #7 – Electronic Appeal Form.

VI. RELEVANT LAW/REGULATIONS

Verification is the use of third-party information or documentation to establish the accuracy of statements on the application. 218-RICR-20-00-1.6.1(A). The agency representative must verify, prior to certification of the household, all factors of eligibility which the agency representative determines are questionable and affect the household's eligibility and benefit level. 218-RICR-20-00-1.6.2(A). At recertification, all income information shall be considered outdated and shall require updated verification to determine the accuracy of the information as outlined within this section when determining continued eligibility of uninterrupted benefits. 218-RICR-20-00-1.6.5(A)(1). The household loses its right to uninterrupted benefits for failure to submit all necessary verification within the timeframe established by the agency as long as the timeframe elapses after the deadline for filing a timely application for recertification. 218-RICR-20-00-1.7(A)(1).

VII. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The Appellant completed a SNAP recertification form in March 2026.
2. DHS sent the April 4, 2026, Additional Documentation Required Notice, to both the Appellant and the Authorized Representative, requesting verification of the Appellant's unearned income and utility expenses. The notice states that the required verifications must be submitted to DHS by April 19, 2026.
3. The Appellant failed to send the required verifications to DHS.
4. The Appellant did not dispute that they failed to send in the required verifications to DHS.

VIII. DISCUSSION

As stated above, at recertification, all income information shall be considered outdated and shall require updated verification to determine the accuracy of the information and the household loses its right to uninterrupted benefits for failure to submit all necessary verification within the timeframe established by the agency. DHS testified that the April 4, 2026, Additional Documentation Required Notice, was sent to both the Appellant and the Authorized Representative, and that ultimately DHS never received any verifications from the Appellant. DHS further testified that because the Appellant never responded to their verification request, DHS correctly closed the Appellant's SNAP case on April 20, 2026.

The Appellant testified that they were moving to a new apartment in April and this caused them to be unable to respond to DHS' verification request. It is ultimately the Appellant's responsibility to verify their income at recertification to continue to receive SNAP benefits. Furthermore, the Additional Documentation Required Notice was also sent to the Authorized Representative who could have assisted the Appellant in submitting the required verifications prior to the due date. Neither the Appellant nor the Authorized Representative disputed their receipt of the April 4, 2026, Additional Documentation Required Notice, nor did they dispute that the Appellant failed to submit the required verifications to DHS. Because the Appellant failed to submit the required unearned income verification by April 19, 2026, there is a preponderance of evidence to show that DHS correctly closed the Appellant's SNAP case.

IX. CONCLUSION OF LAW

After careful review of the testimony and evidence present at the administrative hearing, this Appeals Officer concludes that:

1. At recertification, all income information is considered outdated and requires updated verification.
2. Households that fail to submit all necessary verification within the timeframe established by the agency lose their right to uninterrupted SNAP benefits.

3. DHS sent the Appellant and the Authorized Representative an Additional Documentation Required Notice requesting verification of the Appellant's unearned income by April 19, 2026.
4. The Appellant did not verify their unearned income by April 19, 2026.
5. DHS correctly closed the Appellant's SNAP case on April 20, 2026.

X. DECISION

Based on the foregoing findings of fact, conclusions of law, evidence, and testimony it is found that a final order be entered that there is sufficient evidence to support DHS' closure of the Appellant's SNAP case.

APPEAL DENIED

/s/ Jack Peloquin

Jack Peloquin

Appeals Officer

NOTICE OF APPELLATE RIGHTS

This decision is a final order under R.I.G.L. § 42-35-12. Under R.I.G.L. § 42-35-15, this Order may be appealed to court within thirty (30) days of the mailing of this decision. Such appeal, if taken, must be completed by filing a complaint in court. The filing of the complaint does not itself stay enforcement of this order. The agency may grant, or the reviewing court may order, a stay upon the appropriate terms.

Appeals are generally filed in the Providence County Superior Court. However, appeals affecting or concerning children under the age of eighteen (18) and/or appeals of a DCYF action may need to be filed in Providence Family Court. If you have any questions about which court a complaint for appeal should be made, you should seek the advice of an attorney, Rhode Island Legal Services, or the clerk of the court where you wish to file your appeal. The courts' contact information can be found on the judiciary's website (<https://www.courts.ri.gov>). Copies of the appeal must be served upon all parties in your case within ten (10) days of the filing of your appeal.

If you exercise any of these appellate rights, please inform the EOHHS appeals office of this so we can prepare a copy of the record for the court. You can contact the Appeals Office at OHHS.AppealsOffice@ohhs.ri.gov, 401.462.2132 (Phone), 401.462.0458 (Fax), or at 3 West Road, Virks Building, Cranston, RI 02908.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that I mailed, via regular mail, postage prepaid, a true copy of the foregoing to

_____, and to _____

_____; copies were sent, via email, to _____

_____, _____, Kirsten Cornford, the DHS

Policy Office at dhs.policyquestions@dhs.ri.gov, and the DHS Appeals Unit at DHS.Appeals@dhs.ri.gov

on this 14th day of July, 2026.


