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AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

COMMONWEALTH OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

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June 24, 2025

Secretary Friedlander
Cabinet for Health and Family Services
275 E. Main Street
Frankfort, KY 40621

Dear Secretary Friedlander,

I am writing to formally request information regarding the recent denial of Home and Community Based Waiver (HCBW) services to a significant number of Kentuckians. These denials have raised serious concerns among constituents and stakeholders about the criteria and processes involved in the determination of eligibility, as well as the broader implications for vulnerable individuals who depend on these critical services.

As you are aware, under Kentucky Revised Statute (KRS) Chapter 43, the Office of the Auditor of Public Accounts holds the responsibility not only to examine the financial integrity and operational performance of public agencies, but also to make recommendations to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of public programs and policies. In line with this mandate, we are seeking clarification on the following:

1. What specific factors or events precipitated the denial of HCBW services to these individuals?
2. What steps has the Cabinet taken to review and address these denials, including any reassessments, appeals, or corrective actions?
3. What preventative measures are being implemented to ensure that such widespread denials do not occur in the future, including improvements in policy, communication, or administrative oversight?

We are committed to ensuring that public resources are administered effectively and that services reach those who are eligible and in need. Transparency on this issue is crucial not only for accountability, but also for restoring confidence among the Kentuckians who depend on the Commonwealth's support systems. We appreciate the Cabinet's cooperation and timely response to this request, and we stand ready to work collaboratively in making informed recommendations that strengthen public trust and program integrity. Please feel free to contact my office directly should you need further information or wish to coordinate a formal response.

Sincerely,

Heather Wagers
Deputy Ombudsman
Commonwealth Office of the Ombudsman