



State of New Jersey

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
PO BOX 716

SARAH ADELMAN
Commissioner

TAHESHA L. WAY
Lt. Governor

TRENTON, NJ 08625-0716

NATASHA JOHNSON
Assistant Commissioner

The following Decision is distributed for your information. This Decision has been made in consideration of the specific facts of this case. This Decision is not to be interpreted as establishing any new mandatory policy or procedure otherwise officially promulgated.

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FINAL DECISION

OAL DKT. NO. HPW 12200-23 A.G.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C124952020 (UNION COUNTY DIVISION OF SOC. SVCS.)

Petitioner appealed from the Respondent Agency's sanctioning of her Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. A telephonic plenary hearing was scheduled for February 1, 2024, before the Honorable Elissa Mizzone Testa, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"). On that date, Petitioner called into the scheduled telephonic hearing, and prior to commencing the hearing, the ALJ found that Petitioner was engaging in disrespectful and hostile behaviors. See Initial Decision at 2. Despite repeated admonishments by the ALJ for Petitioner to stop such behaviors, Petitioner continued with her behaviors. Ibid. Consequently, the ALJ advised Petitioner that the telephonic hearing was ended, and that she was instructed to hang up. Ibid. Petitioner refused to hang up, and as a result, the ALJ had no choice but to terminate the telephone call. Ibid. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had abandoned her request for a fair hearing, and dismissed the appeal. Ibid. On February 2, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, concluding that Petitioner abandoned her appeal, and the ALJ thereby affirmed the Agency's determination. Ibid.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As Assistant Commissioner, Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I have reviewed the ALJ's Initial Decision and the record, and I hereby ADOPT the ALJ's Initial Decision, as I find that Petitioner abandoned her appeal in this matter. As such, the Agency's sanctioning of Petitioner's WFNJ/GA benefits remains in force as issued.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is hereby ADOPTED, Petitioner's appeal is hereby dismissed, and the Agency's determination is AFFIRMED.

Officially approved final version. March 21, 2024

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

