



## State of New Jersey

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*Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
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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 **02815-24 D.F.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C287908009 (HUDSON COUNTY DEPT OF FAM SVCS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits and the imposition of a six-month period of ineligibility for EA benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner EA benefits, and imposed a six-month EA ineligibility penalty, contending that she had caused her own homelessness. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. A hearing was initially scheduled for March 5, 2024, but Petitioner failed to appear as she was unable to connect to the conference line. The case was rescheduled and on March 7, 2024, the Honorable Patrice E. Hobbs, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On March 8, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the ALJ found that Petitioner voluntarily abandoned permanent Section 8 housing by having her name removed from her mother's Section 8 housing voucher for the sole purpose of qualifying for EA benefits, acknowledging that she understood that she could not thereafter have her name put back on said voucher, thereby causing her own homelessness. See Initial Decision at 2-3; see also "Contact Sheet." Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's denial of EA benefits to Petitioner, and the imposition of a six-month EA ineligibility penalty, were proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 3; see also "Notification Form," and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(3)(i), (vii). I agree.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As Assistant Commissioner, Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I have considered the ALJ's Initial Decision, and following an independent review of the record, I concur with the ALJ's final conclusion in this matter and hereby ADOPT the Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law.

By way of comment, Petitioner is advised that her six-month EA ineligibility penalty shall run from February 26, 2024, the effective date of the Agency's denial, through August 26, 2024.

By way of further comment, the Agency shall refer Petitioner to any and all agencies and organizations that may be able to assist with her current needs, including Social Services for the Homeless.

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



Officially approved final version. March 15, 2024

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Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

