



State of New Jersey

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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SARAH ADELMAN
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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 **03319-24 T.A.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C098608015 (OCEAN COUNTY BOARD OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appealed from the Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. A telephonic plenary hearing was scheduled for March 15, 2024, at 10:30 a.m., before the Honorable Kimberly M. Wilson, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"). On that date, Petitioner called into the telephonic hearing at 10:09 a.m., at which time the ALJ was conducting another fair hearing, and instructed Petitioner to hang up and call back at the scheduled time of 10:30 a.m. See Initial Decision at 2. Petitioner refused to leave the call and began engaging in disrespectful and hostile behaviors. Ibid. The ALJ then rescheduled and ended the earlier scheduled interrupted hearing. Ibid. Petitioner called back at 10:30 a.m., and was again engaging in disrespectful and hostile behaviors. Ibid. When advised that the 10:30 a.m. hearing would be continued on Zoom at 11:30 a.m., Petitioner threatened to sue the ALJ, hung up the phone, did not call back, and the ALJ ended the call. Ibid. Petitioner was sent the link for the 11:30 Zoom hearing, but failed to appear. Id. at 2-3. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had abandoned her request for a fair hearing, and dismissed the appeal. Id. at 3. On March 18, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, concluding that Petitioner abandoned her appeal, and the ALJ thereby dismissed Petitioner's appeal. 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 March 8, 2024, denial of EA benefits to Petitioner, remains in force as issued.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is hereby ADOPTED, and Petitioner's appeal is hereby DISMISSED.

Officially approved final version. March 27, 2024

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

