



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 **07129-23 V.A.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C192152020 (UNION COUNTY DIVISION OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appealed from the Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits and the imposition of a six-month period of EA ineligibility due to Petitioner's voluntary cessation of employment, without good cause. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On August 15, 2023, the Honorable William J. Courtney, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ") convened the telephonic plenary hearing. See Initial Decision at 2. Following testimony from both parties, the matter was downgraded to a non-emergent case, and it was agreed to adjourn the matter to allow the parties to further discuss Petitioner's particular circumstances. A status conference was then scheduled for January 29, 2024, but neither party appeared. Ibid. Three additional status conferences were then scheduled, and again no one appeared. Ibid. A final status conference was then scheduled for April 11, 2024, and when neither party appeared, the record then closed. Prior to the final status conference, the ALJ sent a letter to the parties requesting a status update with respect to Petitioner, and if no further information was to be forthcoming, the case would be decided based on the information provided at the initial fair hearing date on August 15, 2023. Ibid. The Agency responded promptly to this letter, indicating that the six-month EA penalty had since lapsed, and the Agency had no record that Petitioner had reapplied for EA benefits. Ibid. As a result, since Petitioner had provided no documentation to challenge the basis of the Agency's denial of EA benefits, or to establish good cause, the ALJ determined that the Agency's July 19, 2023, denial of EA benefits, and the imposition of a six-month EA ineligibility penalty, were proper and must stand. Id. at 2-3; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(3). I agree.

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 in this matter.

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

Officially approved final version. April 18, 2024

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

