



State of New Jersey

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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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 12677-23 W.B.

AGENCY DKT. NO. **S970629009 (HUDSON COUNTY DEPT OF FAM SVCS)**

Petitioner challenges the Respondent Agency's denial of retroactive Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits allotments back to February 26, 2023. The Agency denied retroactive SNAP benefits for those months because Petitioner had failed to submit requested documentation necessary to determine eligibility with the February 26, 2023, application. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On February 6, 2024, the Honorable Mumtaz Bari-Brown, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents. The record remained open for the submission of documentation and then closed on February 12, 2024. On February 14, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's denial for retroactive SNAP benefits.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received from either party.

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 hereby ADOPT the Initial Decision, and AFFIRM the Agency determination.

In order to determine eligibility for SNAP benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required, such as household income, both earned and unearned income, as well as residency. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19, -2.20.

The record in this matter reflects that Petitioner submitted an application for SNAP benefits on February 26, 2023. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1. On March 15, 2023, the Agency sent Petitioner a Request for Verification, requesting additional information and documentation necessary to determine eligibility. Ibid. The Agency was also unable to reach Petitioner via telephone, and as a result, on March 25, 2023, the Agency denied Petitioner application for benefits, on the basis that it was unable to locate Petitioner, and also that Petitioner had failed to provide the documentation necessary to establish eligibility. Ibid. Thereafter, on October 23, 2023, Petitioner went to the Agency and met with a supervisor, apparently provided missing proof of citizenship and was granted SNAP benefits from that date. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit R-1. While it is unclear if Petitioner submitted a new application in October, 2023, it is clear, and the ALJ found, that Petitioner had been advised of documentation needed to process Petitioner's February 26, 2023, application, and Petitioner never provided the needed documentation, nor did Petitioner answer when the Agency attempted to contact him in an effort to obtain needed verification information. See Initial Decision at 6. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ found that the Agency's denial of Petitioner's request for retroactive benefits back to his February 26, 2023, application was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 6-7; see also Exhibit R-1, N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19 and -2.20. I agree.



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

Officially approved final version. April 11, 2024

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

