



*State of New Jersey*

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Division of Family Development  
P.O. Box 716  
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625

Chris Christie  
*Governor*

Kim Guadagno  
*Lt. Governor*

Jennifer Velez  
*Commissioner*

Jeanette Page-Hawkins  
*Director*  
Tel. (609) 588-2000

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 10225-14 E.R.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C154539 (PASSAIC COUNTY BOARD OF SOC. SVCS.)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's imposition of a sanction for failure to attend a work activity. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On September 4, 2014, the Honorable Irene Jones, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. The record was closed on September 4, 2014. On September 9, 2014, the ALJ issued her Initial Decision affirming the Agency determination.

No exceptions were filed to the Initial Decision.

As the Director of the Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I have considered the record for this matter and the ALJ's Initial Decision, and having made an independent evaluation of the record, I accept and adopt the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law as contained in the Initial Decision.

Petitioner receives Work First New Jersey/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families ("WFNJ/TANF") in the amount of \$322.00 per month.

Petitioner was assigned a work activity scheduled to commence on May 1, 2014 and terminate on May 21, 2014. Initial Decision at 2. Petitioner's uncle had passed away and the funeral was held in Puerto Rico on April 30, 2014. Ibid. Petitioner testified that she left New Jersey for Puerto Rico two or three days before the April 30, 2014 funeral. Ibid. She further testified that she remained in Puerto Rico for approximately one week. Ibid. Petitioner obtained a letter from the funeral director

documenting her attendance at the service. Exhibit P-1. Petitioner testified that upon her return, she immediately presented this letter to her case worker. Initial Decision at 2. On May 14, 2014, Petitioner was notified that her cash assistance was being reduced to \$161.00 effective June 1, 2014, as a result of her failure to comply with the work activity. Exhibit R-1.

The ALJ concluded that Petitioner had good cause for her failure to attend the work activity. Consequently, the ALJ reversed the Agency's imposition of the sanction against the Petitioner.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision in the action is hereby ADOPTED and the Agency action is REVERSED.

*Signed Copy on File*  
at DFD, BARA

**NOV 07 2014**

---

Jeanette Page-Hawkins  
Director