



State of New Jersey

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
PO BOX 716

CAROLE JOHNSON
Commissioner

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

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 00419-20 F.M.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C082514012 (MIDDLESEX COUNTY BD OF SOC SCVS)

Petitioner Agency charges Respondent with committing an intentional program violation ("IPV") of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP"). The Agency asserts that Respondent failed to accurately report household earned income while he was receiving SNAP benefits, thus causing Respondent to receive an overissuance of benefits to which he was not entitled. Respondent was properly noticed of the Administrative Disqualification Hearing, the charges against him, and the proposed disqualification penalty, via certified mail on November 25, 2019. See Exhibits P-1, P-2. Because Respondent failed to execute and return the waiver of his right to a hearing, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing as a contested case. See Exhibit P-3. On January 14, 2020, the Honorable Tricia M. Caliguire, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. Respondent did not appear for the hearing, and the matter proceeded ex parte, which is permissible pursuant to our regulatory scheme. See N.J.A.C. 1:10-14.1(d). The record remained open for ten days for Respondent to present good cause for his failure to appear. Respondent did not respond, and the record then closed on January 24, 2020.

On January 27, 2020, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, which found that the Agency had met its burden in establishing, by clear and convincing evidence, that Respondent had deliberately and intentionally withheld information from the Agency, which resulted in Respondent receiving an overissuance of SNAP benefits to which he was not entitled. See Initial Decision at 4. Specifically, the ALJ found that Respondent intentionally did not accurately report his household earned income, thereby resulting in an overissuance of SNAP benefits to Respondent in the amount of \$2,033, for the period beginning April, 2017, through October, 2018. See Initial Decision at 3, 4; see also Exhibits P-4, P-5, P-6, P-7, P-8, P-9, P-10, P-11, P-12 at 50, and N.J.A.C. 10:87-5.2(a), -5.4(a), -9.5.

As this was the first IPV committed by Respondent, the ALJ ordered the mandatory regulatory penalty of a 12-month disqualification from receipt of SNAP benefits pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:87-11.2(a)(1). See Initial Decision at 5.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed.



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

I direct that the Agency proceed to recoup the overissuance.

Accordingly, based upon the foregoing, I hereby ADOPT the Initial Decision in this matter, and ORDER that Respondent is ineligible to participate in SNAP for a period of 12 months. I further ORDER that the Agency is to recoup the overissuance.

Officially approved final version.

FEB 27 2020

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

