



## State of New Jersey

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*Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
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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 04933-21 A.D.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C708413007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)

Petitioner appeals the correctness of the Agency's Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits furniture voucher allowance amount. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. On June 11, 2021, the Honorable Matthew G. Miller, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On June 14, 2021, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the record reflects that Petitioner requested EA benefits in the form of a furniture voucher. See Initial Decision at 4, 9; see also Exhibit R-1 at 9. The Agency approved Petitioner for a furniture voucher at the maximum regulatory amount of \$585 for an assistance unit of one person, such as Petitioner's. See Initial Decision at 8-9; see also Exhibit R-1 at 5-7, 9, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.3(a)(4)(i). Petitioner then purchased certain allowable items pursuant to said relevant regulatory authority, totaling \$584.95. See Initial Decision at 8; see also Exhibit R-1 at 13. However, Petitioner contended that she should have been granted additional furniture voucher funds for the purchase of the additional items that were included on the "Shopping Guide for Replacement of Furniture and Furnishing" ("Guide") and which were needed to ensure her "physical health and safety." See Initial Decision at 8-9; see also Exhibit R-1 at 14, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.3(a)(4). Nevertheless, the ALJ found that Petitioner had failed to provide any testimony or evidence to show that the Agency was permitted to bypass the monetary limitations set forth in the relevant regulation, or that the Agency had failed to correctly abide by said regulatory provision. See Initial Decision at 10; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.3(a)(4)(i). Based on the foregoing, that ALJ concluded that the Agency had complied with, and had provided Petitioner with, the maximum allowable furniture voucher funds, and that Petitioner is not entitled to any additional EA benefits in the form of a furniture voucher. See Initial Decision at 10; see also Exhibit R-1 at 8-12. I agree.

Further, at the time of the hearing Petitioner raised multiple issues regarding the reimbursement of transportation charges and storage fees. See Initial Decision at 2-3. However, the ALJ found that those issues were not transmitted issues subject to this appeal, and as such, the OAL did not have jurisdiction over those matters. *Id.* at 4-8. Accordingly, such matters were not addressed in the Initial Decision. I also agree.



No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

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 concur with the ALJ's final conclusion in this matter and hereby ADOPT the Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law.

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

Officially approved final version.

JUN 24 2021

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Natasha Johnson

Assistant Commissioner

