



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 01608-20 J.T.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C662555007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner WFNJ/GA benefits, contending that she failed to provide required documentation. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On March 15, 2021, the Honorable Evelyn J. Marose, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On March 17, 2021, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the ALJ found that the Agency had properly noticed Petitioner regarding the specific documentation required to be provided to the Agency in order for it to determine her eligibility for WFNJ/GA benefits. See Initial Decision at 2, 4; see also Exhibit R-4, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(5). Further, the ALJ found that the Agency had contacted Petitioner by telephone on several occasions at the two telephone numbers provided by Petitioner, to inquire about the status of the necessary information and to offer assistance to her in acquiring the required information if needed. See Initial Decision at 3. The record reflects that the Agency was only able to leave messages on one of those two telephone lines. *Ibid.* The ALJ also found that Petitioner had never returned any of the Agency's calls, nor had she provided any of the information required. *Id.* at 2, 4. At the hearing, Petitioner claimed that she could not provide the information required because the Agency's request was not specific enough, and further, that she had telephoned the Agency on several occasions, at which time none of the Agency representative offered to assist her regarding her application. *Id.* at 3. However, the ALJ found that Petitioner could not substantiate her claims. *Id.* at 3-4. Moreover, Petitioner stated that she had not intended to provide her personal information to the Agency in any form, such as email, but rather, insisted that she be permitted to come into the Agency for processing of her application in person, which was prohibited due to the COVID-19 pandemic. *Id.* at 3. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had not provided the Agency with the documentation required to determine her eligibility for WFNJ/GA benefits, and therefore, the Agency's denial of WFNJ/GA benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4-5; see also Exhibit R-7, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(5). I 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.

By way of comment, Petitioner is advised that she may reapply for WFNJ/GA benefits but must supply all required information and documentation necessary to determine eligibility.

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

Officially approved final version.

MAY 27 2021

Natasha Johnson

Assistant Commissioner

