



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 **02023-23 B.M.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **S959963009 (HUDSON COUNTY DEPT OF FAM SVCS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of his application for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for SNAP benefits, contending that Petitioner had failed to provide information and documentation necessary to determine eligibility. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On May 2, 2023, the Honorable Mumtaz Bari-Brown, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On June 14, 2023, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the record reveals that Petitioner applied for SNAP benefits on October 11, 2022, and thereafter, the Agency called the Petitioner to conduct a phone interview in order to obtain and verify information to process Petitioner's SNAP application. See Initial Decision at 2. Petitioner acknowledges receiving the phone call, but maintains that he is a student and was unable to answer the telephone call because he was in class and had left his phone in his locker. Ibid. Petitioner further states that he mailed the Agency his identification card in January 2023 and uploaded documents sometime between January and February 2023. Ibid. Despite the Petitioner's assertions, the Agency denied Petitioner's application for benefits on November 18, 2022, due to Petitioner's failure to provide information pertaining to proof of address, shelter expense, and other necessary information to process the application. Ibid. In order to determine eligibility for SNAP benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required, such as household composition, household income, residency, and post-secondary institution attendance verification. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19, -2.20, -5.11. Without said verification of required information, SNAP eligibility cannot be determined or granted. Ibid. Following the presentation of testimonial and documentary evidence in this case, the ALJ found the Agency's evidence credible, and therefore concluded that Petitioner had not provided the requested information required to be verified to determine SNAP benefits eligibility, and as such, the Agency's denial of SNAP benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 3-4; see also Exhibit R-1, and N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19, -2.20, -5.11. 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 without prejudice to reapply for SNAP benefits, if he has not already done so, but must provide all information and documentation requested in order to determine eligibility.

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

Officially approved final version. July 5, 2023

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

