



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 **01785-23 E.R.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C129600008 (GLOUCESTER COUNTY DIV. OF SOC. 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 March 30, 2023, the Honorable Elaine B. Frick, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents.

On April 10, 2023, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the record reveals that Petitioner applied for SNAP benefits on October 10, 2022. See Initial Decision at 2, 11; see also Exhibit R-1 at 3-12. Thereafter, on October 14, 2022, the Agency sent Petitioner a Request for Verification, seeking, amongst other things, verification of income to be submitted to the agency by October 28, 2022. See Initial Decision at 11; see also Exhibit R-1 at 13. Petitioner submitted an outdated letter, from March, 2022, and asserts that that letter, together with a handwritten note, should have satisfied the Agency's request for verification documentation, and further maintains that the Agency should have assisted Petitioner in obtaining the requested information. See Initial Decision at 11-12. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for benefits on November 14, 2022, due to Petitioner's failure to provide documentation. See Exhibit R-1 at 25. The record also reveals that Petitioner subsequently submitted the requisite verification documentation on December 6, 2022, and further thereafter reapplied for SNAP benefits in December, 2022, and was deemed eligible for same with eligibility beginning in December, 2022. See Initial Decision at 7. In order to determine eligibility for SNAP benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required, such as household income, both earned and unearned income. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19, -2.20. Without said verification of required information, SNAP eligibility cannot be determined or granted. *Ibid.* The ALJ in this matter issued a thorough and comprehensive Initial Decision, applying law to fact. See Initial Decision at 11-13. Following the presentation of testimonial and documentary evidence in this case, the ALJ concluded that the Agency had correctly requested verifying information to clarify Petitioner's employment situation, and when it was not forthcoming, the Agency correctly denied Petitioner SNAP benefits, and as such, the Agency's November 14, 2022, denial of SNAP benefits to Petitioner was



proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 13; see also N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19, -2.20. Based on an independent review of the record, I agree.

Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received from counsel for Petitioner on April 17, 2023.

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, I have reviewed the Exceptions submitted on behalf of Petitioner and find that the arguments made therein do not alter my decision in this matter.

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

