



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 **04662-23 J.E.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C180416015 (OCEAN COUNTY BOARD OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner EA benefits, contending that his behavior resulted in his discharge from housing, thereby causing his own homelessness. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On June 1, 2021, the Honorable William T. Cooper, III, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On June 2, 2023, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

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.

Here, the ALJ found, and Petitioner acknowledged, that he was discharged from his housing due to his own behavior while residing there. See Initial Decision at 2-5. Petitioner also acknowledged that he had failed to comply with the required Substance Abuse Initiative/Behavioral Health Initiative ("SAI/BHI") assessment, claiming that he did not understand the need to perform such assessment; and that he had failed to appear at the required shelter placement intake interview, claiming that said interview was unnecessary. Ibid; see also Exhibit R-7. The ALJ found Petitioner's claims unpersuasive. See Initial Decision at 4. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner's behavior had directly caused his discharge from said housing, and as such, that he had caused his own homelessness, without good cause. Id. at 5-6; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(3)(vi). Accordingly, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's denial of EA benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 6-7; see also Exhibit R-1. I agree.

Further, because I concur with the ALJ's conclusion, that Petitioner failed to comply with his SP, I hereby impose upon him a six-month period of ineligibility for EA benefits. See Initial Decision at 4; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(3). Petitioner is advised that the six-month EA ineligibility penalty shall run from May 17, 2023, the date of the Agency's denial, through November 16, 2023. See Exhibit R-1.

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



Officially approved final version.

June 12, 2023

Natasha Johnson

Assistant Commissioner

