



State of New Jersey

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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 **01510-23 N.B.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C227036007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") and Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner WFNJ/GA benefits, contending that she had failed to provide required documents, and denied Petitioner EA benefits because she was not a WFNJ or Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits recipient. A telephonic hearing on this matter, assigned Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") Docket Number HPW 07502-21, was initially held on September 30, 2021. On October 5, 2021, an Initial Decision affirming the Agency's denial of WFNJ/GA and EA benefits to Petitioner was issued by the Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ") in the matter herein. On November 16, 2021, the Division of Family Development ("DFD") issued a Final Agency Decision ("FAD") adopting the Initial Decision with a factual modification. Thereafter, Petitioner filed an appeal of the FAD with the Superior Court of New Jersey, Appellate Division, with said appeal being assigned docket number A-1390-21. On December 16, 2022, the Appellate Division remanded A-1390-21 to the OAL, where the matter was then filed as a contested case on February 21, 2023, with instructions to proceed as ordered by the Appellate Division to reconstruct the record in the case. On April 25, 2023, a telephone conference was held, and then on May 9, 2023, the Honorable Julio C. Morejon, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On May 31, 2023, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, reversing the Agency's August 27, 2021, determination.

Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed by Petitioner on June 12, and June 26, 2023.

The ALJ in this matter issued a very thorough and comprehensive Initial Decision, outlining the procedural history, and providing a detailed and well thought out analysis, applying law to fact. See Initial Decision at 2-9; see also Exhibits P-2, P-3, P-4, P-6, R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-7, R-8, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(5). Based upon an independent review of the lengthy record in this case, I concur with the ALJ's decision to reverse the Agency's August 27, 2021, denial of WFNJ/GA and EA benefits, and hereby ADOPT the Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law in this matter, and remand the matter to the Agency to reevaluate Petitioner's July 8, 2021, application to determine her eligibility for WFNJ/GA and EA benefits as of that date. See Initial Decision at 8-9; see also Exhibit R-1.



By way of comment, I have reviewed Petitioner's Exceptions, and I find that the arguments made therein do not alter my decision in this matter.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is hereby ADOPTED, the Agency's determination is REVERSED, and the matter REMANDED to the Agency, as outlined above.

Officially approved final version. August 30, 2023

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

