



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 **04636-23 L.S.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C094448015 (OCEAN COUNTY BOARD OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner Agency charges Respondent with committing an intentional program violation ("IPV") of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") program. The Agency asserts that Respondent intentionally failed to accurately report her household composition, and also failed to report changes in household income, while she received SNAP benefits, thereby causing Respondent to receive an overissuance of benefits to which she was not entitled. Respondent was properly noticed of the Administrative Disqualification Hearing, the charges against her, and the proposed disqualification penalty, via certified mail, return receipt requested, on April 28, 2023. See Exhibit P-1 at 1, 2-3. Because Respondent failed to execute and return the waiver of her right to a hearing, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing as a contested case. *Id.* at 4-5. The hearing was initially scheduled for June 12, 2023, but was rescheduled, as Respondent required the assistance of a Spanish language interpreter. On the rescheduled date of August 1, 2023, with the presence of an interpreter to assist Respondent, the Honorable Judith Lieberman, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents, and the record then closed.

On August 14, 2023, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, which found that the Agency had met its burden in establishing, by clear and convincing evidence, that Respondent had deliberately and intentionally withheld information from the Agency, which resulted in Respondent receiving an overissuance of SNAP benefits, to which she was not entitled. See Initial Decision at 7. The ALJ found that Respondent, while receiving SNAP benefits, deliberately and intentionally did not report changes in her household composition and income, specifically, that L.F.F., Respondent's non-marital partner and father of Respondent's children, had lived in the same household with Respondent, and that L.F.F. had earned income, which resulted in an overissuance to Respondent in the amount of \$7,911 in SNAP benefits, for the period of March, 2019, through December, 2020. *Id.* at 2, 3, 4, 5; see also Exhibits P-2, P-3, P-4, P-5, P-6, P-7, P-8, P-9, P-10, P-11, P-12; and N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.2, -5.4(a)(1), (2), -9.5.

As this was the first IPV committed by Respondent, the ALJ ordered the mandatory regulatory penalty of a 12-month disqualification from receipt of SNAP benefits, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:87-11.2(a)(1). See Initial Decision at 7.



No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed.

As Assistant Commissioner, Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I have considered the Initial Decision in this matter, and following an independent evaluation of the record, I concur with the ALJ's decision, and hereby adopt the Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law in this matter.

I direct that the Agency proceed to recoup the overissuance.

Accordingly, based upon the foregoing, I hereby ADOPT the Initial Decision in this matter, and ORDER that Respondent is disqualified from receipt of SNAP benefits for a period of 12 months. I further ORDER that the Agency is to recoup the overissuance.

Officially approved final version. August 29, 2023

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

