



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 **08367-23 R.A.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C506024002 (BERGEN COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of her applications for Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA"), Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program ("SNAP"), and Emergency Assistance ("EA"), benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's applications for WFNJ/GA and SNAP benefits, contending that Petitioner had failed to provide information and documentation necessary to determine eligibility for said benefits. Petitioner was denied EA benefits because she was not a Work First New Jersey ("WFNJ") benefits recipient. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On October 24, 2023, the Honorable Thomas R. Betancourt, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On October 24, 2023, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determinations. Here, the record reveals that Petitioner applied for WFNJ/GA and SNAP benefits on April 18, 2023, and Petitioner also completed a self-assessment on that same date. See Initial Decision at 2. As a result of the self-assessment, the Agency requested additional information necessary to determine eligibility. *Ibid.* On May 8, 2023, the Agency sent Petitioner a Notification of Extending Pending Status requesting additional information, which was due to the Agency by May 18, 2023. When the requested information was not returned by the due date, the Agency denied Petitioner's application for WFNJ/GA and SNAP benefits on May 18, 2023. *Ibid.* The record also reflects that, thereafter, Petitioner submitted previous employment and earnings information for herself on June 12, 2023, but not the additional information requested for Petitioner's son, and as such, the denial remained as previously issued. *Ibid.* In order to determine eligibility for SNAP and WFNJ benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19 and N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2. Eligibility for SNAP benefits requires verification of gross non-exempt income, and verification for WFNJ benefits requires the applicant to provide all necessary documentation. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19(b) and N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(5) (stating that "As a condition of eligibility for WFNJ benefits, the applicant shall, subject to good cause exceptions, be required to provide all necessary documentation."). Based on the credible testimony provided, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had not provided the information required to be verified to determine eligibility, and as such, the Agency's denial of both WFNJ/GA and SNAP benefits to Petitioner was



proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4-5; see also N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19(b) and 10:90-2.2(a) (5). I agree. Additionally, as Petitioner was not a WFNJ benefits recipient, the ALJ further found that the Agency's denial of EA benefits to Petitioner was also proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4-5; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.2(a) (stating that only WFNJ and Supplemental Security Income benefits recipients are eligible for EA benefits). I also 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 WFNJ and SNAP benefits in her current county of residence, but is reminded that she 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. November 6, 2023

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

