



State of New Jersey

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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 **06609-23 R.M.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C037579008 (GLOUCESTER COUNTY DIV. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits. At redetermination, the Agency denied Petitioner continued WFNJ/GA benefits, contending that she failed to provide proof of a Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits application/appeal required for continued WFNJ/GA benefits eligibility. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On August 18, 2023, the Honorable Rebecca C. Lafferty, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents, and the record closed. The record was reopened on August 23, 2023, to allow for the submission of additional documents. Upon the receipt of additional documentation, the record then closed on August 28, 2023.

On September 8, 2023, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the ALJ in this matter issued a very thorough and comprehensive Initial Decision, outlining the procedural history, providing a detailed factual timeline, and rendering a well thought out analysis, applying law to fact. See Initial Decision at 2-9. Specifically, the ALJ found that as a regulatory condition for continued eligibility for WFNJ/GA benefits, upon a redetermination, scheduled for December 29, 2022, Petitioner was required to provide the Agency with proof that she had appealed her November 22, 2022, denial of SSI benefits, or that she had a current SSI benefits application pending, by January 31, 2023. See Initial Decision at 2-6; see also Exhibit R-1 at 3-5, 10, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(3), (5). The ALJ found that Petitioner was aware that she had to appeal or reapply for SSI, and had been repeatedly reminded to do so, yet she had failed, without good cause, to provide the Agency with such proof. See Initial Decision at 5-8; see also Exhibit R-1 at 42-45 and N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(d). Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's denial of continued WFNJ/GA benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 7-8; see also Exhibit R-1 at 11-12 and R-2 at 4-8. I agree. Of note, the record indicates that Petitioner appealed her November 22, 2022, SSI denial, and began receiving WFNJ/GA benefits as of March 21, 2023. See Initial Decision at 6; see also Exhibit R-1 at 35-37.

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.

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

Officially approved final version. October 12, 2023

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

