



State of New Jersey

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
PO BOX 716

SARAH ADELMAN
Commissioner

TAHESHA L. WAY
Lt. Governor

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 10291-23 K.S.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C237765020 (UNION COUNTY DIVISION OF SOC. SVCS.)

Petitioner Agency charges Respondent with committing an intentional program violation ("IPV") of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP"). The Agency asserts that Respondent intentionally failed to report receipt of household earned income, while he received SNAP benefits, thus causing Respondent to receive an overissuance of benefits to which he was not entitled. Respondent was properly noticed of the Administrative Disqualification Hearing, the charges against him, and the proposed disqualification penalty, via certified mail, return receipt requested, on August 10, 2023. See Exhibits P-4 at 1-2, and P-5. Because Respondent failed to execute and return the waiver of his right to a hearing, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing as a contested case. See Exhibit P-4 at 5-6. On October 13, 2023, the Honorable Julio C. Morejon, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. Respondent did not appear for the hearing, and the matter proceeded ex parte, which is permissible pursuant to our regulatory scheme. See N.J.A.C. 1:10-14.1(d). Respondent was given ten (10) days from the date of hearing to show good cause for his failure to appear. Respondent did not contact the OAL, and the record then closed on October 23, 2023.

On October 31, 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 he not entitled. See Initial Decision at 6. Specifically, the ALJ found that Respondent intentionally did not report the receipt of earned income, which resulted in an overissuance of SNAP benefits to Respondent in the amount of \$5,079, for the period of January, 2021, through June, 2022. Id. at 3, 4, 6; see also Exhibits P-1, P-2, P-3; and N.J.A.C. 10:87-5.4(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. November 21, 2023

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

