



## State of New Jersey

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*Governor*

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 **04855-24 L.B.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C116907008 (GLOUCESTER COUNTY DIV. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's termination of her Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's SNAP benefits, contending that Petitioner failed to include a family member in the household. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. A telephonic hearing was initially scheduled for May 10, 2024, but was adjourned at Petitioner's request and rescheduled for June 2, 2024. This date was also adjourned at Petitioner's request for June 14, 2024. Due to unfortunate family circumstances, Petitioner requested an additional adjournment to August 2, 2024, which was also adjourned pursuant to Petitioner's request, and rescheduled for September 11, 2024. On the rescheduled date of September 11, 2024, the Honorable Tama B. Hughes, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ,") held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents into evidence, and the record then closed.

On September 25, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's termination of Petitioner's SNAP benefits. The ALJ in this matter issued a thorough and comprehensive Initial Decision, providing a detailed factual timeline, outlining the applicable law, and then applying law to fact. See Initial Decision at 2-8. The record reflects that in August, 2023, Petitioner applied for, and began receiving SNAP benefits, for a household of two, comprised of herself and one child. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1 at 3, 5). Petitioner revised her application in March 2024, in order to update her household to 3 members, herself and two children. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1 at 51. However, in February 2024, Petitioner's case was referred to an Agency investigator, as there was concern that an additional adult was living with Petitioner, and had been since 2023. See Initial Decision at 2. As fully detailed in the Initial Decision, the investigator consulted documents from multiple sources during the investigation, all supporting the conclusion that an additional adult, T.T., was part of Petitioner's household, and had been since 2023. See Initial Decision at 2-5. These sources include, but are not limited to, documents from the Division of Motor Vehicles, Certificates of Parentage, telephone records, property tax records, employment records, the County's systems, Medicaid benefit information, paystubs, and social media sources. See Initial Decision at 3-4; see also Exhibit R-1.

Petitioner did testify during the hearing explaining that T.T. sporadically lived with her, but that he does not assist in paying the mortgage, and T.T. only uses her home address as he changes his addresses frequently. See Initial Decision at 5-6. T.T. also testified that he only uses Petitioner's address for convenience, and that he had not considered changing his address or relying upon a Post Office Box instead. See Initial Decision at 6. After reviewing the documents and hearing the testimony, the ALJ was not convinced Petitioner and T.T. did not live together, as the evidence was overwhelming to the contrary. See Initial Decision at 8. Indeed, the ALJ found that the evidence supported that Petitioner and T.T. have been living together since 2018. Ibid. Since the Petitioner carries the weight of establishing that she has



a separate household from T.T., and the ALJ concluded Petitioner had failed to carry her burden, the ALJ affirmed the Agency's action to terminate Petitioner's SNAP benefits. Ibid. I agree.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed.

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

By way of further comment, Petitioner is without prejudice to reapply for SNAP benefits should her circumstances change.

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

Officially approved final version. November 27, 2024

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Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

