



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 11855-23 P.F.

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C354684007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)**

Petitioner challenges the Respondent Agency's denial of retroactive Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits allotments for the months of August and September, 2023. The Agency denied SNAP benefits for those months because Petitioner failed to submit requested documentation necessary to determine continued eligibility. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On January 18, 2024, the Honorable Mumtaz Bari-Brown, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents. The record remained open for the submission of additional documentation and then closed on January 23, 2024. On February 14, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's denial for retroactive SNAP benefits for August and September, 2023.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received from either party.

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 hereby ADOPT the Initial Decision, and AFFIRM the Agency determination.

In order to determine eligibility for SNAP benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required, such as household income, both earned and unearned income, as well as residency. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19, -2.20.

The record in this matter reflects that Petitioner's recertification for SNAP benefits was coming due, and as a result, by notice dated June 8, 2023, the Agency notified Petitioner of necessary verification documents which would need to be submitted for continued eligibility. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. When the required documentation was not received, the Agency terminated Petitioner's SNAP benefits effective July 25, 2023. *Ibid.* Thereafter, Petitioner reapplied for SNAP benefits in late September 2023, and began receiving SNAP benefits effective October 1, 2023. See Initial Decision at 3. While Petitioner maintained that she had timely submitted the required application and had gone to the Agency offices in person to complete same, the Agency records indicated that that application was for Work First New Jersey cash benefits, not SNAP benefits. *Id.* at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ agreed that the Agency's termination of SNAP benefits at recertification, for failure to provide required documentation, and the denial of Petitioner's request for retroactive benefits for August and September, 2023, was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4-5; see also Exhibit R-1, N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19 and -2.20. I agree.

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



Officially approved final version. March 21, 2024

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

