



State of New Jersey

PHILIP D. MURPHY
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 **05641-22 A.H.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C138174002 (BERGEN COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's termination of his Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits, and the imposition of a six-month period of ineligibility for EA benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's EA benefits, and imposed a six-month EA benefits penalty, for causing his own homelessness. The matter was scheduled for a telephonic fair hearing before an Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), at the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL"), on July 12, 2022. An Agency representative was able to contact Petitioner by telephone in advance of the hearing, but Petitioner advised that he was driving at that moment and would call back. See Initial Decision at 2. After not receiving any call back from Petitioner, on July 8, 2022, the Agency representative left Petitioner a detailed message regarding the time and date of the OAL hearing, and the number to which Petitioner would need to call on the date of the hearing. *Id.* at 2. On July 12, 2022, the Honorable Joann LaSala Candido, ALJ, convened the telephonic plenary hearing, but Petitioner did not call in. *Ibid.* As Petitioner had been advised, in advance, of the date and time of the hearing, as well as the number to call, the ALJ found that Petitioner had abandoned his fair hearing, and dismissed Petitioner's appeal. *Ibid.*

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As Assistant Commissioner, Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I have reviewed the ALJ's Initial Decision and the record, and I hereby ADOPT the ALJ's Initial Decision, as I find that Petitioner abandoned his appeal in this matter. As such, the Agency's termination of Petitioner's EA benefits, effective May 31, 2022, and the imposition of a six-month ineligibility period for EA benefits, remain in force as issued.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is hereby ADOPTED, and Petitioner's appeal is hereby dismissed.



Officially approved final version.

August 10, 2022

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

