



State of New Jersey

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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Commissioner

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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 **04821-22 R.M.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C073638020 (UNION COUNTY DIVISION OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits, and the imposition of a six-month period of ineligibility for EA benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for EA benefits, and imposed a six-month EA benefits penalty, for causing his own homelessness. The matter was originally scheduled for a telephonic fair hearing before the Honorable Margaret M. Monaco, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), on July 21, 2022, but was adjourned at Petitioner's request. See Initial Decision at 2. The hearing before ALJ Monaco commenced on June 24, 2022, but did not conclude on that date due to Petitioner's telephone difficulties. Ibid. The matter was then scheduled to continue on June 28, 2022, however, the hearing was adjourned due to the inability of Petitioner's counsel to locate Petitioner. Ibid. The case was then downgraded to a non-emergent hearing and rescheduled for July 7, 2022, but was again adjourned because of counsel's continued inability to reach or locate Petitioner. Ibid. The case was then rescheduled with a peremptory date of July 25, 2022. Ibid. On that date, Petitioner's counsel and the Agency representative appeared, but, despite proper notice, Petitioner did not appear. Ibid. The endeavors taken by Petitioner's counsel to reach and locate Petitioner were placed on the record. Ibid. As Petitioner had been advised, in advance, of the date and time of the hearing, and Petitioner's counsel having been unsuccessful in their attempt to reach and/or locate Petitioner, the ALJ found that Petitioner had abandoned his fair hearing, and dismissed Petitioner's appeal, without prejudice. 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 June 13, 2022, denial of EA benefits to Petitioner, 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

