



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 **02773-22 S.B.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C296781007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of her application for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for SNAP benefits, contending that Petitioner had failed to provide information and documentation necessary to determine eligibility for said benefits. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. A plenary hearing, initially scheduled for May 5, 2022, was adjourned. On May 26, 2022, the Honorable Nanci G. Stokes, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), conducted a pre-hearing telephone conference in the case, and on May 27, 2022, the ALJ held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. The record remained open until June 2, 2022, for submission of additional documentation by the Agency's counsel, and then closed.

On June 6, 2022, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's denial of Petitioner's application for SNAP benefits. Here, the record reveals that Petitioner applied for SNAP benefits online on October 27, 2021. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-2. The record further reflects that, following a telephone interview with the Agency on November 9, 2021, written notice was sent to Petitioner outlining information and documentation required to determine eligibility. *Ibid.* Included in the items needed was rental information, household composition information, copy of Petitioner's driver's license, needed to prove both identity and proof of address, and also court documentation or a letter from the Division of Child Protection and Permanency ("DCPP") indicating that the children listed on Petitioner's application were indeed placed in Petitioner's custody. *Ibid.* Thereafter, when complete information had not been provided to the Agency, Petitioner's application for SNAP benefits was denied on March 18, 2022. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit R-1. While the Agency acknowledges that Petitioner provided documentation to establish identity and proof of address, household composition could not be verified. See Initial Decision at 5; see also Exhibit R-1, N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19(i) and N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.27(e)(1). Based on the credible testimonial and documentary evidence presented, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had not provided the information required to be verified to determine eligibility, more specifically, as to household composition, and as such, the Agency's denial of SNAP benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 8; see also N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.2, -2.19(i). Based upon an independent review of the record, I agree.



No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

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 concur with the ALJ's final conclusion in this matter and hereby ADOPT the Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law.

By way of comment, the transmittal in this case reflects that Petitioner also appealed a denial of Work First New Jersey/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families ("WFNJ/TANF") benefits. However, as the Initial Decision states that Petitioner withdrew her appeal of the WFNJ/TANF denial, that issue is not addressed in this Final Agency Decision.

By way of further comment, Petitioner is without prejudice to reapply for WFNJ and/or SNAP benefits in her current county of residence if she has not already done so, but is reminded that she must provide all information and documentation requested in order to determine eligibility.

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

Officially approved final version.

July 5, 2022

Natasha Johnson

Assistant Commissioner

