



## State of New Jersey

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*Governor*

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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 **00379-25 F.G.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C796897007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner WFNJ/GA benefits, contending that the household is composed of Petitioner, a minor child, and the minor child's mother, which would require application for Work First New Jersey/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families ("WFNJ/TANF") benefits. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On April 22, 2025, the Honorable Evelyn J. Marose, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On May 1, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

Here, the ALJ found, and the record substantiates, that Petitioner's application for WFNJ/GA benefits was denied effective September 26, 2024, due to Petitioner having legal custody of his minor child, along with the child's mother, and that all three persons lived together. See Initial Decision at 2. The Agency informed Petitioner that he could apply for WFNJ/TANF benefits and include all household members. Ibid. Petitioner testified that he resides at the same address as the minor child and the child's mother, as well as that he provides care and home schooling for the child. Ibid. Petitioner contends that he should be eligible for WFNJ/GA benefits as he never married the mother of his child and because he sleeps in the basement of the home. Ibid. The ALJ concluded that an eligible assistance unit under WFNJ/TANF is comprised of all individuals living together and functioning as one economic unit, which shall be understood to include parents and related dependent children. See Initial Decision at 3; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.7(a). Consequently, because Petitioner has an eligible child in his household, as well as the child's mother, the Agency denied Petitioner's WFNJ/GA benefits application due to the composition of the assistance unit. Ibid. Based on the testimony and documentation submitted, the ALJ concluded that the Agency properly denied WFNJ/GA benefits to Petitioner. See Initial Decision at 3-4; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.7(a). 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, Petitioner is advised that he may apply for WFNJ/TANF benefits, if he has not already done so.

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



Officially approved final version.

May 22, 2025

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Natasha Johnson

Assistant Commissioner

