



## 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 **10137-25 G.C.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C023639008 (GLOUCESTER COUNTY DIV. 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 EA benefits, contending that he caused his own homelessness by being evicted from affordable housing due to non-payment of rent, as well as that he was subject to a formerly assessed six-month period of EA ineligibility. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On June 11, 2025, the Honorable Rebecca C. Lafferty, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On June 12, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determinations.

Here, Petitioner, a Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits recipient, applied for EA benefits on February 24, 2025, requesting shelter placement as he stated he was evicted due to non-payment of rent, as well as having an unauthorized pet. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1 at 31. On that date, the Agency advised Petitioner that his EA application would be denied, and a six-month period of EA benefits ineligibility would be imposed, due to his causing his own homelessness. See Initial Decision at 2. Subsequently, Petitioner contacted the Agency on March 13, 2025, stating that he had been hospitalized for a period of six-months, during which his ex-wife paid his landlord rent in cash, as Petitioner claimed was his prior practice, and that the landlord was denying receipt of rent payments. See Initial Decision at 2-3. Petitioner also contacted the Agency on March 17, 2025, requesting a shelter placement, and was referred by the Agency to a program for homeless individuals. See Initial Decision at 3. A few days later, on March 24, 2025, Petitioner contacted the Agency requesting shelter placement and explaining he was living in a van at a friend's home due to his eviction. Ibid. At that time, the Agency requested a copy of the eviction notice, as well as a letter from Petitioner's friend, however, Petitioner informed the Agency he could not provide the requested documentation. Ibid. Petitioner did provide the Agency with a copy of the landlord/tenant Summons on March 26, 2025, as well as a copy of the thirty-day Notice to Vacate, which was dated February 14, 2025. Ibid.; see also Exhibit R-1 at 17-18. On March 27, 2025, Petitioner contacted the Agency requesting shelter placement and indicated that he is wheelchair dependent. See Initial Decision at 3. At that time, the Agency informed Petitioner they had no appropriate placement for him. Ibid. On June 3, 2025, Petitioner again contacted the Agency requesting a shelter placement, and was reminded of the six-month penalty imposed due to the denial of his February 24, 2025, EA application. See Initial Decision at 3. Petitioner completed an additional EA application on June 5, 2025, and was, on that same date, denied by the Agency which indicated that Petitioner had caused his own homelessness as he failed to pay his rent and that he remained under a six-month period of ineligibility for EA benefits due to a prior application denial. Ibid.; see also Exhibit R-1 at 3-8. Petitioner was evicted on June 10, 2025. See Initial Decision at 4.



Based on the testimony and evidence presented, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had caused his own homelessness, without good cause, due to nonpayment of affordable rent, of \$750 per month, while he received SSI of \$998 per month. See Initial Decision at 5; see also Exhibit R-1 at 19-21, 31. Accordingly, the ALJ found that the Agency's denial of EA benefits to Petitioner, both due to his non-payment of rent for affordable housing, and because he remained in a six-month period of EA benefits ineligibility, were proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 5; see also Exhibit R-1, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(1)(ii), -6.1(c)(3)(vi). I agree.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As the Assistant Commissioner of the 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's six-month EA ineligibility penalty, as imposed on February 24, 2025, shall run through August 24, 2025. See Initial Decision at 3, footnote 1.

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

Officially approved final version. June 26, 2025

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Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

