



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 **03798-25 K.S.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C187285003 (BURLINGTON COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits, at redetermination, as well as the termination of her Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits, at recertification, and the termination of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's redetermination application for WFNJ/GA benefits, contending that Petitioner had failed to provide information and documentation necessary to determine continued eligibility. The Agency terminated Petitioner's SNAP benefits at recertification contending that Petitioner had failed to provide information and documentation necessary to determine continued eligibility. Additionally, Petitioner's EA benefits were terminated because she was no longer a WFNJ/GA benefits recipient, nor was she a Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits recipient. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. On April 30, 2025, the Honorable Joan M. Burke, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents. On May 14, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determinations.

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, and AFFIRM the Agency's determinations, based on the discussion below.

In order to determine eligibility for WFNJ/GA benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2. Verification for WFNJ/GA benefits requires the applicant to provide all necessary documentation. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(5) (stating that "As a condition of eligibility for WFNJ benefits, the applicant shall, subject to good cause exceptions, be required to provide all necessary documentation.").

Only WFNJ cash assistance recipients and SSI benefits recipients are eligible for EA benefits. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.2(a).

Here, the record reflects that Petitioner applied for EA benefits on May 20, 2024, and was determined eligible for immediate need housing assistance. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-A. During October 2024, Petitioner was due for her WFNJ/GA redetermination, which she submitted late on November 26, 2024. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-B. The redetermination application for WFNJ/GA indicated that Petitioner was self-employed. Ibid. On November 26, 2024, the Agency sent Petitioner a Request for Verification for income verification for the past three months, as well as a separation letter from her self-employment at a flea market. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-B. On December 28, 2024, the Agency sent an additional Request for Verification for all sources of earned income and verifications of all bank statements, as well as Petitioner's 2023 taxes. Ibid. On the same date, the Agency sent



Petitioner a Request for Contact, in regards to her SNAP benefits, requesting income verification and bank statements. Ibid. On January 10, 2025, the Agency issued a denial letter for WFNJ/GA benefits, effective November 1, 2024 as well as a termination notice for SNAP benefits, effective February 1, 2025. Ibid. On January 30, 2025, the Agency notified Petitioner that her EA placement was terminated, and her final night at her placement would be February 28, 2025. Ibid. The Agency contends that while some documentation was received, it was insufficient to determine Petitioner's eligibility, or continued eligibility, for benefits, specifically as Petitioner failed to submit information from her bank account or income derived from her self-employment. See Initial Decision at 4. Petitioner testified that she submitted all of the requested documentation. See Initial Decision at 4-5. While Petitioner contends that she, and her business, were affected by a fire, she submitted no corroborating evidence, and cited various dates, circumstances, and locations. See Initial Decision at 5. The ALJ, after considering the testimonial and documentary evidence, found Petitioner to not be credible. See Initial Decision at 6. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had not provided the documentation required to be verified for WFNJ/GA benefits continued eligibility, and as such, that the Agency's termination of WFNJ/GA benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 8; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(5). I agree. As Petitioner was no longer eligible for WFNJ/GA, the ALJ further concluded that Petitioner was ineligible for receipt of EA benefits, and as such, that the Agency's termination of EA benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 8; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.2(a).

Additionally, in order to determine eligibility for SNAP benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required, such as household income, both earned and unearned income. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19, -2.20. Without said verification of required information, SNAP eligibility cannot be determined or granted. Ibid. Following presentation of testimonial and documentary evidence in this case, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had not provided the requested information required to be verified to determine continued eligibility, and as such, the Agency's termination of Petitioner's SNAP benefits at recertification was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 8; see also N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19, -2.20. I also agree.

By way of comment, Petitioner is without prejudice to reapply for WFNJ/GA and SNAP benefits, but is reminded that she must provide all information and documentation requested in order to determine eligibility. Petitioner is advised to communicate directly with the Agency with regards to the applications and any required documentation. Additionally, should Petitioner be found eligible for WFNJ benefits, she is advised that she is without prejudice to reapply for EA benefits, provided she continues to need EA benefits, and is otherwise eligible for same in accordance with N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1 et seq.

By way of further comment, the Agency shall refer Petitioner to any and all agencies and organizations that may be able to assist with her current needs, including Social Services for the Homeless.

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

Officially approved final version. May 27, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

