



State of New Jersey

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DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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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 **06512-25 T.A.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C212079009 (HUDSON COUNTY DEPT OF FAM SVCS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's termination of Work First New Jersey/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families ("WFNJ/TANF") benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's WFNJ/TANF benefits because she had exhausted the 60-month lifetime limit for WFNJ benefits and did not qualify for any further extension of benefits at the present time. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. This matter was scheduled for several hearing dates, however, due to various issues, was continually postponed until an updated MED-1 form was provided to the Agency on October 15, 2025. See Initial Decision at 2-3. Consequently, on October 23, 2025, the Honorable Evelyn J. Marose, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents, and the record was closed. On November 14, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision in this matter, 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 determination, based on the discussion below.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.3(a), "eligibility for cash assistance benefits shall be limited to a lifetime total of 60 cumulative months for an adult individual recipient." See also N.J.A.C. 10:90-1.1(d) ("Assistance benefits provided under WFNJ are time-limited and considered a temporary cash subsidy[.]"). However, an individual may receive additional months of cash assistance if he/she qualifies for an exemption from, or extension of, the time limit, as set forth at N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.4 and -2.5 respectively. The goal of WFNJ is help the recipient achieve self-sufficiency through obtaining employment and removal from the program. See N.J.S.A. 44:10-62(a).

Here, the record reveals that Petitioner had received 102 total months of WFNJ (consisting of 23 months of General Assistance ("GA") and 79 months of TANF benefits), and as such, had exceeded the 60-month lifetime limit for receipt of WFNJ benefits. See Initial Decision at 3-4; see also Exhibit R-1. The Agency provided Petitioner with the opportunity to submit medical documentation documenting a permanent disability, specifically a MED-1 form, which was submitted to the Agency on February 2, 2025, and indicated that Petitioner was permanently disabled for purposes of a work activity. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibits R-2, P-1, P-2. The Agency, upon its review of the MED-1, contacted the physician's office to confirm the contents of the MED-1, and noted that the physician verbally opined that Petitioner could participate in a work activity. Ibid.; see also Exhibits R-6, R-7, R-8. Petitioner argued, at the time of the pre-hearing conference, that it was her physician's opinion that she was permanently disabled and therefore would qualify for an extension of eligibility for WFNJ/TANF benefits. See Initial Decision at 3.



Following the pre-hearing conference, on September 30, 2025, Petitioner was provided with time to supply an updated MED-1 to the Agency, which was submitted on October 15, 2025. See Initial Decision at 3. The October 15, 2025 MED-1 indicated that Petitioner was "Temporarily Unable to Participate in a Work Activity" and included a letter from Petitioner's physician indicating that Petitioner's medical condition was not a permanent disability. See Initial Decision at 3-4; see also Exhibit P-3.

Based on the foregoing, the ALJ in this matter found that the Agency appropriately terminated Petitioner's WFNJ/TANF benefits, as there was no evidence presented that Petitioner would qualify for an exemption from, or extension of, the lifetime limit of benefits. See Initial Decision at 4-5; see also Exhibit P-3 and N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.4, -2.5. I agree.

By way of comment, should Petitioner's circumstances change, and she is able to present a 12-month MED-1 to the Agency, she is without prejudice to reapply for WFNJ/TANF benefits. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.4(a)(3).

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is hereby ADOPTED, and the Agency's determinations are AFFIRMED, as outlined above.

Officially approved final version. December 24, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

