



State of New Jersey

MIKIE SHERRILL
Governor

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
PO BOX 716

STEPHEN CHA, MD, MHSR
Commissioner

DR. DALE G. CALDWELL
Lt. Governor

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 **06519-26 A.D.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **S412773010 (HUNTERDON COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner challenges the correctness of the Respondent Agency's claim for recovery of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits issued to Petitioner from February, 2025 through April, 2025. The Agency asserts that Petitioner received SNAP benefits to which she was not entitled, thereby resulting in the overissuance of benefits which must be repaid. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. On July 28, 2026, the Honorable Sarah G. Crowley, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents into evidence. The record was held open until the following day, at which time the record was closed. Based upon the additional documentation provided on July 29, 2026, the Agency amended the total amount of the overissuance due, which required the record be reopened and again closed on July 31, 2026. On August 14, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed.

As Assistant Commissioner, Division of Family Development ("DFD"), Department of Human Services, I have considered the ALJ's Initial Decision, and following an independent review of the record, I hereby ADOPT the ALJ's Initial Decision, and AFFIRM the Agency action, based on the discussion below.

In the instance of an overpayment of benefits, the Agency must recoup the overissuance. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-11.20. One type of overpayment which is subject to recoupment is one which results from "a misunderstanding or unintended error on the part of the household" receiving benefits, called an "Inadvertent Household Error" ("IHE"). See N.J.A.C. 10:87-11.20(e)(2). Repayment of overissuances may be sought for up to six years following the time that the Agency becomes aware of the overpayment. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-11.20(f)(1)(i).

Here, the record indicates that Petitioner failed to report to the Agency that she received earned income, as verified through various sources. See Initial Decision at 2-5; see also Exhibit R-1. As a result, the Agency determined that SNAP benefits had been overissued in the amount of \$3,472 from February, 2025 through April, 2025. Ibid. Following the hearing, Petitioner submitted shelter expense information which the Agency processed and which impacted the total of the overissuance due, reducing the amount to \$2,946. See Initial Decision at 2-3; see also Exhibit R-1. The ALJ found that the Agency had met its burden in establishing, by a preponderance of the credible evidence, that Petitioner received an overissuance of SNAP benefits to which she was not entitled, which must now be repaid. See Initial Decision at 4-6; see also N.J.A.C. 10:87-5.4(a)(1), -9.5, -11.20. I agree

I ORDER and direct that the Agency proceed to recoup the overissuance.



Accordingly, the Initial Decision in this matter is hereby ADOPTED and the Agency's determination is AFFIRMED, as outlined above.

Officially approved final version. September 17, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

