



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 **03974-26 A.S.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C310900020 (UNION COUNTY DIVISION 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 she had caused her own homelessness. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On March 12, 2026, the Honorable Mindy Gensler, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On March 13, 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, 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 be eligible for EA benefits, N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c) provides, in pertinent part, that the individual must have an actual or imminent eviction from prior housing, and the assistance unit is in a state of homelessness or imminent homelessness due to circumstances beyond their control or the absence of a realistic capacity to plan to avoid their emergent situation. Documentation must be presented to the Agency demonstrating that an eviction is pending or has occurred. N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.3(a)(1)(ii).

Here, the record reveals that Petitioner applied for EA benefits on February 2, 2026, and informed the Agency that she was unable to return home due to a restraining order being entered against her for threatening her stepmother. See Initial Decision at 2. On February 2, 2026, the Agency denied Petitioner's application for EA benefits, citing that she had caused her own homelessness. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(3)(vi). Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner's behavior directly caused her loss of housing, and as such, she had caused her own homelessness. See Initial Decision at 3; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(3)(vi). Accordingly, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's denial of EA benefits to Petitioner, and the imposition of a six-month EA ineligibility penalty, were proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 3; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(3). I agree.

By way of 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, as outlined above.



Officially approved final version. March 24, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

