



## State of New Jersey

MIKIE SHERRILL  
*Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
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STEPHEN CHA, MD, MHSR  
*Commissioner*

DR. DALE G. CALDWELL  
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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 21894-25 L.M.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C509031002 (BERGEN COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)

Petitioner Agency charges Respondent with committing an intentional program violation ("IPV"), as defined by N.J.A.C. 10:87-11.3 and 7 C.F.R. 273.16(c), of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP"). The Agency asserts that Respondent intentionally falsified her application for SNAP benefits and provided false information while she received SNAP benefits, thus causing Respondent to receive an overissuance of benefits to which she was not entitled. Respondent was properly noticed of the Administrative Disqualification Hearing, the charges against her, and the proposed disqualification penalty, via Certified Mail, which Respondent signed for on November 28, 2025. See Exhibit P-1; see also N.J.A.C. 10:87-11.5(a)(3)(i) and 7 C.F.R. 273.16(e)(3)(i). Because Respondent failed to execute and return the waiver of her right to a hearing, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing as a contested case. On January 20, 2026, the Honorable Sandra L. Lascari, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents, and the record was closed. Respondent did not appear for the hearing, and the matter proceeded ex parte, which is permissible pursuant to regulation. See N.J.A.C. 1:10-14.1(d), N.J.A.C. 10:87-11.5(a)(4)(i), and 7 C.F.R. 273.16(e)(4). Respondent was given ten days following the hearing to present good cause for her failure to appear. See 7 C.F.R. 273.16(e)(4). Respondent did not respond.

IPVs occur where the person intentionally "made a false or misleading statement, or misrepresented, concealed or withheld facts." See N.J.A.C. 10:87-11.3 and 7 C.F.R. 273.16(c).

On February 10, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, which found that the Agency had met its burden in establishing, by clear and convincing evidence, that Respondent had deliberately and intentionally withheld information from the Agency, which resulted in Respondent receiving an overissuance of SNAP benefits, to which she was not entitled. See Initial Decision at 2; see also N.J.A.C. 10:87-11.3(a), -11.5(a)(6), 7 C.F.R. 273.16(c)(1), and 7 C.F.R. 273.16(e)(4). The ALJ found that Respondent had deliberately and intentionally withheld information from the Agency, by falsifying her lease documentation, which resulted in Respondent receiving an overissuance of SNAP benefits, to which she was not entitled. See Initial Decision at 3-5; see also Exhibit P-1, and N.J.A.C. 10:87-5.2(a)(1), -9.5(a)(3), -11.5(a)(6) and 7 C.F.R. 273.16(c)(1). Accordingly, the ALJ found that Respondent committed a SNAP IPV by concealing and withholding information regarding her lease. See Initial Decision at 2-5. I agree.

As this was the first IPV committed by Respondent, the ALJ ordered the mandatory regulatory penalty of a 12-month disqualification from receipt of SNAP benefits, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:87-11.2(a)(1). See Initial Decision at 5; see also 7 C.F.R. 273.16(b)(1)(i).

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed.



As Assistant Commissioner, Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I have considered the Initial Decision in this matter, and following an independent evaluation of the record, I concur with the ALJ's decision, and hereby adopt the Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law in this matter. See 7 C.F.R. 273.16(e)(6).

Accordingly, based upon the foregoing, I hereby ADOPT the Initial Decision in this matter, and ORDER that Respondent is disqualified from receipt of SNAP benefits for a period of 12 months.

Officially approved final version. March 20, 2026

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Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

