



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 **02629-26 D.C.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C283272020 (UNION COUNTY DIVISION OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner EA benefits, contending that she moved to New Jersey without a plan after she voluntarily left her out-of-state housing. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On February 18, 2026, the Honorable Patrice E. Hobbs, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On February 18, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As Assistant Commissioner, Division of Family Development ("DFD"), 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.

Here, the record reveals that Petitioner applied for EA benefits on December 31, 2025. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. Prior to her application for EA benefits, earlier in 2025, Petitioner had been residing with her mother in New Jersey, when the two had a dispute which resulted in Petitioner seeking a restraining order against her mother due to allegations of domestic violence. Ibid. Petitioner then relocated to Florida, where she rented an apartment. Ibid. In December, 2025, Petitioner returned to New Jersey, in an effort to repair her relationship with her mother, however, such efforts proved unsuccessful and Petitioner's mother will not allow Petitioner to reside with her. See Initial Decision at 2-3. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for EA benefits on December 31, 2025, and found that Petitioner had failed to take reasonable steps to resolve her homelessness, that she left her housing in Florida, and that Petitioner failed to plan when she came to New Jersey. Ibid. Based on the testimonial and documentary evidence presented, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's denial of EA benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1 and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(1). 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 determinations are AFFIRMED, as outlined above.



Officially approved final version. February 24, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

