



## State of New Jersey

MIKIE SHERRILL  
*Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
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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 12848-25 E.L.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C497600004 (CAMDEN-CCBSS)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for WFNJ/GA benefits, contending that Petitioner failed to provide information necessary to determine eligibility for said benefits. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. On November 20, 2025, and continuing on December 18, 2025, the Honorable Carl V. Buck III, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held telephonic plenary hearings, took testimony, and admitted documents into evidence. The record was then held open until January 5, 2026, to allow for the submission of additional documentation, and the record closed on that date. On February 2, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, reversing the Agency's determination.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

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

In order to determine eligibility for WFNJ benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2. Eligibility for WFNJ/GA benefits requires the applicant to provide all necessary documentation. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(5) (stating that "As a condition of eligibility for WFNJ benefits, the applicant shall, subject to good cause exceptions, be required to provide all necessary documentation.").

Here, the record reveals that Petitioner applied for WFNJ/GA benefits on May 16, 2025. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. On June 16, 2025, the Agency notified Petitioner that his application was denied, due to his failure to provide proof of a recent Unemployment Insurance Benefits ("UIB") claim in Pennsylvania. Ibid. Although a processing error gave the impression that Petitioner was denied benefits based upon a small amount of monetary support provided by his mother, this was not the true reason for the denial of his application, which was that Petitioner had provided UIB letters from June 27, 2023, and January 13, 2024, but had not provide the Agency with any proof that he had filed for any more recent UIB claim. See Exhibit R-1. Based upon this processing error in the denial reasoning, a new notice was generated explaining that the reason for the denial of the WFNJ/GA application was that an updated UIB letter from Pennsylvania was not submitted to the Agency within 30 days of the Petitioner's May 16, 2025 application. Ibid. Petitioner later submitted a new WFNJ/GA application on November 5, 2025, which was approved on December 12, 2025. Ibid.

Based on the testimony and documentary evidence provided, the ALJ in this matter analyzed the case through the lens of the denial of benefits being made based upon Petitioner's income, and concluded that a denial, based upon Petitioner's



income exceeding the amount for benefit eligibility, was improper. See Initial Decision at 4. While I may agree with that conclusion, an independent review of the record clearly indicates that the correct reason for the Agency's denial was that Petitioner had not provided all information required to be verified to determine eligibility, specifically that Petitioner had not provided an updated UIB letter to the Agency within 30 days of his May 16, 2025 application. Ibid; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(5). Based upon the correct underlying basis for the denial of the May 16, 2025 application, I find that the Agency's denial was proper and must stand. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(5). The Initial Decision in this matter is modified to reflect the above findings as to the correct basis for the Agency's denial of Petitioner's application.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is hereby MODIFIED, and the Agency's determination is AFFIRMED, as outlined above.

Officially approved final version.      March 24, 2026

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Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

