



State of New Jersey

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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 **13747-26 E.D.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C262315009 (HUDSON COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)**

Petitioner Agency charges Respondent with committing an intentional program violation ("IPV") of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP"). The Agency asserts that Respondent intentionally failed to report the accurate composition of her household, receipt of household earned income, and correct rental payment amount, while receiving 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. See Exhibit P-4. Respondent executed and returned the waiver of her right to a hearing, however, the waiver was not timely executed nor received by the Agency, and therefore, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing as a contested case. Ibid. On August 26, 2026, the Honorable Patrice E. Hobbs, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ,") held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents into evidence. Respondent did not appear for the hearing, and the matter proceeded ex parte, which is permissible pursuant to our regulatory scheme. See N.J.A.C. 1:10-14.1(d). Respondent was given ten days following the hearing, to present good cause for her failure to appear. Respondent did not respond and the record was closed on September 6, 2026.

On September 8, 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 2-5. Specifically, the ALJ found that Respondent intentionally failed to report the accurate composition of her household and receipt of earned income, namely that of Respondent's husband, J.C, who also resided in the household, as well as by submitting falsified rental documentation, which resulted in an overissuance of SNAP benefits to Respondent in the amount of \$41,585, for the period of January, 2020 through June, 2026. Ibid.; see also Exhibits P-1, P-2, P-3, and N.J.A.C. 10:87-5.1, -5.2(a)(1), -5.4(a)(1), -6.3, -9.5.

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 3-4.

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.



By way of comment, Petitioner executed a Waiver of Right to Administrative Disqualification Hearing on June 23, 2026, and accepted a disqualification from the SNAP program for a period of 12 months due to an alleged IPV. See Exhibit P-4. Of note, the waiver of a right to an Administrative Disqualification Hearing establishes the related SNAP claim as an IPV claim, regardless of whether the individual admits to the underlying facts. See 7 C.F.R. 273.18(b)(1), N.J.A.C. 10:87-11.20(e)(1).

I direct that the Agency proceed to recoup the overissuance of SNAP benefits.

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. I further ORDER that the Agency is to recoup the overissuance of SNAP benefits.

Officially approved final version. September 17, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

