



State of New Jersey

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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 **04900-26 J.A.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C360994007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's SNAP benefits application, contending that she failed to provide verifications as requested and required to determine her eligibility for SNAP benefits. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. On April 14, 2026, the Honorable Mumtaz Bari-Brown, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents. The record was then held open to allow for the submission of documentation and closed on April 16, 2026. On April 28, 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, Department of Human Services, I have considered the ALJ's Initial Decision, and following an independent review of the record, the ALJ's Initial Decision is hereby ADOPTED and the Agency determination is AFFIRMED, based on the discussion below.

In order to determine eligibility for SNAP benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required, such as household income, both earned and unearned income, as well as residency. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19, -2.20. Without said verification of required information, SNAP eligibility cannot be determined or granted. *Ibid.*

Here, the record reveals that Petitioner submitted her SNAP application on January 5, 2026. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit R-6. On January 8, 2026, Petitioner completed an interview with the Agency and, on that same date, a Request for Verification form was sent from the Agency to Petitioner requesting certain documentation by January 20, 2026. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit R-2. Specifically, the Agency requested a current utility bill and proof of self-employment income from January 5, 2025 to January 5, 2026. See Initial Decision at 4. On January 14, 2026, Petitioner submitted an invoice, as well as two self-attested letters indicating she had no income from two other businesses, which the Agency questioned in light of the bank statements submitted indicating transactions related to the businesses. See Initial Decision at 4-6; see also Exhibits R-4, R-5. On January 20, 2026, the Agency sent Petitioner an additional Request for Verification form, as well as a Request for Contact, requesting proof of income for the prior 30 days. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit R-2. Petitioner did not submit the requested documentation, and thereafter, on February 4, 2026, the Agency denied Petitioner's application for SNAP benefits. *Ibid.*; see also Exhibit R-1. Based on the testimonial and documentary evidence presented, the ALJ concluded that the Agency correctly denied Petitioner's SNAP benefits application, as Petitioner failed to verify the information necessary to complete and process her SNAP application. See Initial Decision at 5-7; see also N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19, -2.20, -2.27. I agree.



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

Officially approved final version. May 14, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

