



State of New Jersey

MIKIE SHERRILL
Governor

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DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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STEPHEN CHA, MD, MHSR
Commissioner

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Lt. Governor

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 **13341-26 J.P.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C507720004 (CAMDEN-CCBSS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner EA benefits, contending that he refused appropriate housing offered by the Agency. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On August 18, 2026, the Honorable Robert D. Herman, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On August 19, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received from Petitioner on August 20, 2026.

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.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.3(a)(1), the "agency shall determine the most appropriate form of emergency housing which is required to address the need and authorize payment of the costs of adequate emergency shelter/housing, taking into consideration individual/family circumstances and services provided." Ibid.

Here, on July 15, 2026, Petitioner applied for EA benefits, and, due to the medical conditions presented, the Agency offered a motel placement to Petitioner, which offer of housing Petitioner refused on August 12, 2026. See Initial Decision at 2. Petitioner's application for EA benefits was denied by notice of August 14, 2026, indicating that he refused to accept reasonable housing accommodations, as well as that he failed to provide requested documentation relevant to his application for benefits. Ibid.; see also Exhibit R-1. Petitioner traveled from out-of-state to New Jersey in order to receive treatment due to his cancer diagnosis, and, until July, 2026, his housing accommodations were paid for by the American Cancer Society. See Initial Decision at 3. Petitioner indicated that such housing supports were no longer available through the organization, and, due to Petitioner's medical situation, the Agency offered Petitioner a motel placement, which Petitioner refused, reasoning that he needed a "sterile environment". Ibid. Petitioner submitted letters from two of his medical providers, indicating that, due to his health, he should not be in crowded locations or use public transportation. Ibid.; see also Exhibit R-1. Such documentary evidence was bolstered by the testimony of Petitioner's oncology social worker at the time of the hearing. See Initial Decision at 4. Petitioner refused the offered motel placement without ever viewing the placement, and the Agency indicated that, if a problematic situation were to present at the placement, that other housing could be considered. See Initial Decision at 3.



Based on the testimony and record provided, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had refused the reasonable motel placement offered by the Agency, without good cause, which placement was an appropriate form of EA benefits to meet Petitioner's emergent need based on the facts presented, and as such, the Agency's denial of EA benefits was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 5-6; see also Exhibit R-1, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.3(a)(1). I agree.

By way of comment, Petitioner may reapply for EA benefits, but is advised that it is the Agency who shall determine the most appropriate form of housing necessary to address his emergency and individual circumstances. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.3(a)(1). Petitioner is further advised that if he again refuses appropriate placement offered by the Agency, he may again be denied EA benefits, and a six-month period of ineligibility for EA benefits imposed. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(3).

By way of further comment, I have reviewed Petitioner's Exceptions, and I find that the arguments made therein do not alter my decision in this matter.

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

Officially approved final version. September 01, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

