



State of New Jersey

MIKIE SHERRILL
Governor

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
PO BOX 716

STEPHEN CHA, MD, MHSR
Commissioner

DR. DALE G. CALDWELL
Lt. Governor

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 20306-25 K.J.

AGENCY DKT. NO. S560053009 (HUDSON COUNTY DEPT OF FAM SVCS)

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 January 13, 2026, the Honorable Susana E. Guerrero, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents into evidence. On January 16, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

Here, the record reveals that Petitioner applied for WFNJ/GA benefits on July 16, 2025. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. On July 23, 2025, the Agency attempted to contact Petitioner via telephone to obtain additional information, including leaving a message for Petitioner to return the phone call. See Initial Decision at 2. The Agency additionally sent Petitioner a Request for Verification, seeking several documents, and advising Petitioner to return the verifications, which were required in order to determine eligibility for benefits, by August 2, 2025. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. Petitioner failed to respond to the Agency, and on August 13, 2025, the Agency denied Petitioner's application for WFNJ/GA benefits. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1.

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."). Based on the credible testimony and documentary evidence provided, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had not provided all information required to be verified to determine eligibility, and as such, the Agency's denial of WFNJ/GA benefits on August 13, 2025, was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 2; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(5). I agree.

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 concur with the ALJ's final conclusion in this matter and hereby ADOPT the Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law.

By way of comment, Petitioner is without prejudice to reapply for WFNJ/GA benefits, if he has not already done so, but is reminded that he must provide all information and documentation requested in order to determine eligibility.

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



Officially approved final version. February 19, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

