



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 **18882-25 R.I.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **S665859012 (MIDDLESEX COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's termination of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits, and the denial of a hardship extensions of EA benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's EA benefits, and denied Petitioner a hardship extension of EA benefits, contending that he had exhausted his lifetime limit of EA benefits, and did not qualify for a further extension of EA benefits at the present time. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On March 24, 2026, the Honorable Claudia L. Marchese, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents, and the record was closed.

On April 14, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the ALJ found, and the record substantiates, that Petitioner has received his lifetime limit of EA benefits, and currently does not qualify for any further extension of any kind. See Initial Decision at 2-5; see also Exhibits R-5, R-6, R-7, R-8, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(a), (b), (c). Petitioner did submit a Hardship Application, however, upon review, the Agency determined that he did not meet the criteria for a hardship extension of EA benefits. See Initial Decision at 2-4; see also Exhibits R-5, R-6. Of note, the record also reflects that, at the time of the EA termination in this matter, Petitioner also did not meet the criteria for an extension of EA benefits under the Emergency Assistance for Special Groups ("EASG") pilot program, and Petitioner himself admitted same at the hearing before the ALJ. See Initial Decision at 3-4; see also the State of New Jersey Senate Bill, No. S3960, P.L. 2023, c. 198, effective December 21, 2018 ("S3960"), now codified at N.J.S.A. 44:10-51(a)(3), also known as EASG (extending EA benefits eligibility for certain categories of individuals, including, but not limited to WFNJ recipients who are permanently disabled, as documented by a twelve-month MED-1 Form, and Supplemental Security Income benefits recipients), and Division of Family Development Instruction ("DFDI") No. 25-02-01. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's termination of Petitioner's EA benefits, as well as a denial of a hardship extension of EA benefits, were proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 5; see also Exhibit R-6. I agree.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As Assistant Commissioner, DFD, 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, the Agency shall refer Petitioner to any and all agencies and organizations that may be able to assist with his current needs, including Social Services for the Homeless.

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



Officially approved final version. May 28, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

