State of New Jersey

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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STEPHEN CHA, MD, MHSR
Commissioner

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 **05310-26 S.F.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C091609003** (**BURLINGTON COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS**)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's termination of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's EA benefits as a result of a lump sum payment, for which Petitioner failed to provide documentation. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On June 30, 2026, the Honorable Advia Knight Foster, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephone conference in the matter, at which time the hearing was adjourned to allow the parties to submit additional documentation. On July 6, 2026, the hearing was again adjourned. On August 6, 2026, the ALJ held a plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents, and the record was closed. On August 25, 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 ("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 termination, based on the discussion below.

Here, the record reflects that Petitioner applied for EA benefits on November 18, 2025. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-A. At that time, Petitioner informed the Agency that one of her minor children received monthly Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits. Ibid. On November 18, 2025, the Agency requested various documentation from Petitioner, and thereafter Petitioner participated in her scheduled interview appointment with the Agency and provided various documentation. See Initial Decision at 2-3. Upon review of the documentation submitted, the Agency discovered that the November, 2025 and December, 2025 bank statements were incomplete. See Initial Decision at 3. Additionally, the Agency discovered through a database search that Petitioner had received a lump sum payment of SSI benefits totaling $2,994.75 during November, 2025. Ibid.; see also Exhibit R-A. On January 2, 2026, the Agency requested full bank statements for November, 2025 and December, 2025, as well as a written statement as to how the lump sum of benefits was utilized by Petitioner. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-B. Petitioner provided her bank statements to the Agency on January 15, 2026. Ibid. Petitioner failed to provide the Agency with documentation indicating how the lump sum SSI payment was utilized, specifically if such funds were used on items deemed "appropriate, necessary, or reasonable for decent living" and thereafter, the Agency terminated Petitioner's EA benefits on February 25, 2026. Ibid.; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(1)(ii).

Based on the foregoing, the ALJ found that Petitioner failed to submit verification of expenditures of the lump sum SSI benefits amount received and concluded that the Agency's termination of EA benefits to Petitioner was proper and must be upheld. See Initial Decision at 4; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(1)(ii). I agree.

By way of comment, the Agency shall refer Petitioner to any and all agencies and organizations that may be able to assist with her current needs, including Social Services for the Homeless.

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

Officially approved final version. October 01, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner