



## State of New Jersey

MIKIE SHERRILL  
*Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
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STEPHEN CHA, MD, MHSR  
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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 16293-25 T.L.

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C075020003 (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, contending that he failed to comply with his EA service plan ("SP"). Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On December 22, 2025, the Honorable Andrea Spevak, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. The record was held open to allow for post-hearing submissions and closed on December 30, 2025. On January 7, 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, I hereby ADOPT the Initial Decision and AFFIRM the Agency's determination, based on the discussion below.

The purpose of EA is to meet the emergent needs of public assistance recipients, such as imminent homelessness, so that the recipient can participate in work activities without disruption and continue on a path to self-sufficiency. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(a). In order to maintain eligibility for EA benefits, the recipient must take reasonable steps to resolve his or her emergent situation. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.6(a). Reasonable steps include, but are not limited to, the EA benefits recipient participating in the development of, and complying with, a written and signed SP. *Ibid.*

Here, the ALJ found, and the record substantiates, that Petitioner executed an SP on April 25, 2025, wherein he agreed, among other things, to submit proof of monthly housing searches and locate a rental by July 25, 2025. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-A, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.6(a). The ALJ found that Petitioner had not submitted any housing searches or rental options to the Agency since January, 2025, even prior to the April SP. See Initial Decision at 3. Thereafter, the Agency notified Petitioner his EA benefits would terminate for failure to comply with his SP. *Ibid.*; see also Exhibit R-A. Based on the facts presented, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's termination of Petitioner's EA benefits was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4. 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 his 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. February 18, 2026

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Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

