



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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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 13439-14 H.G.

AGENCY DKT. NO. GA22732 (ATLANTIC CO. DEPT OF FAM. & COM. DEV)

Petitioner appeals from Respondent Agency's termination of his Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's WFNJ/GA benefits, as it contended that Petitioner had exhausted his cumulative lifetime limit. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On December 2, 2014, the Honorable W. Todd Miller, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents. On December 8, 2014, the ALJ issued his Initial Decision affirming the Agency's determination.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed.

As the Director of the Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I have considered the record in this matter and the ALJ's Initial Decision and hereby ADOPT the ALJ's Initial Decision and AFFIRM the Agency determination.

The goal of WFNJ is help the recipient achieve self-sufficiency through obtaining employment and removal from the program. See N.J.S.A. 44:10-62(a). Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.3(a), "eligibility for cash assistance benefits shall be limited to a lifetime total of 60 cumulative months for an adult individual recipient." See also N.J.A.C. 10:90-1.1(d) ("Assistance benefits provided under WFNJ are time-limited and considered a temporary cash subsidy"). However, an individual may receive additional months of cash assistance if he/she qualifies for an exemption to, or extension of, the time limit, as set forth at N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.4 and -2.5 respectively.

I agree with the ALJ that Petitioner has exceeded his 60 month lifetime limit of

WFNJ/GA benefits and has not met the criteria for an exemption or an extension of the time limit as set forth in N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.4 and -2.5. Petitioner has received a total of 72 months of cash assistance, including 24 months under the Supportive Assistance to Individuals and Families ("SAIF") Program. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1 at 10-11. Although Petitioner has been diagnosed with anxiety, asthma, and alcohol dependence, none of these diagnoses rise to the level to permit an additional hardship extension permitted under the regulations. Moreover, Petitioner has already surpassed the twelve cumulative months for a hardship extension beyond the 60 month limit. *Id.* at 3. Thus, I concur with the ALJ that the Agency's termination of WFNJ/GA benefits was appropriate.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision in this matter is ADOPTED and the Agency's action is hereby AFFIRMED.

FEB - 9 2015

Signed Copy on File
at DFD, BARA

Jeanette Page-Hawkins
Director