



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Division of Family Development
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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 14957-14 C.B.

AGENCY DKT. NO. GA109160 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)

Petitioner appeals the Respondent Agency's denial of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") cash benefits because she failed to provide requested documents. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On December 29, 2014, the Honorable Joan Bedrin Murray, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On January 16, 2015, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision which reversed the Agency determination.

No exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

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 having made an independent evaluation of the record, I ADOPT the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law in the Initial Decision and REVERSE the Agency determination.

The ALJ found that Petitioner timely and fully complied with an Agency request for information in connection with her WFNJ/GA application, and successfully completed her WFNJ 28-day work requirement on August 13, 2014. Initial Decision at 2; Exhibits R-1 and R-2. The Agency took no action to grant benefits, and six weeks later, Petitioner timely, and in good faith, complied with a second Agency request for information which the ALJ found "unclear and confusing." Initial Decision at 3-4; Exhibits R-3 and R-4.

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On October 27, 2014, the Agency denied WFNJ/GA benefits because Petitioner allegedly failed to provide requested information. Initial Decision at 3; Exhibit R-5. Under the totality of the circumstances, I concur with the ALJ that Petitioner is eligible for WFNJ/GA cash benefits effective August 13, 2014, and that the subsequent Agency denial of WFNJ/GA benefits was inappropriate.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is ADOPTED and the Agency determination is REVERSED

MAR 03 2015

Signed Copy on File
at DFD, BARA

Natasha Johnson
Deputy Director