



**State of New Jersey**

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Division of Family Development  
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Chris Christie  
*Governor*

Kim Guadagno  
*Lt. Governor*

Elizabeth Connolly  
*Acting Commissioner*

Natasha Johnson  
*Director*

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

REMAND DECISION

OAL DKT. NO. HPW 8623-15 C.C.

AGENCY DKT. NO. GA242452 (CAMDEN COUNTY BOARD OF SOC. SVCS.)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of her application for an extreme hardship extension of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits in the form of Temporary Rental Assistance ("TRA"). The Agency denied Petitioner's application because she has exhausted her lifetime limit of EA and does not qualify for an extreme hardship extension. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On July 13, 2015, the Honorable Dean J. Buono, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On August 3, 2015, the ALJ issued his Initial Decision affirming the Agency determination.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed.

As the Director of the Division of Family Development ("DFD"), Department of Human Services, I have considered the record for this matter and the ALJ's Initial Decision and, having made an independent evaluation of the record, I hereby ADOPT the Initial Decision and AFFIRM the Agency determination.

EA is limited to 12 cumulative lifetime months, plus limited extensions for an "extreme hardship." See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(a). A recipient of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits may qualify for one six-month EA extension if the Agency determines that a case of extreme hardship exists pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(b)(1). See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(c). While the WFNJ regulations

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list five eligibility criteria to be considered by the Agency, it should be noted the list is not exhaustive. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(b)(1); see also DFD Instruction 13-12-02 (clarifying that extensions “may be granted for additional reasons beyond those listed in [the] regulation...only after conferring with DFD”).

The record reflects that Petitioner is a WFNJ/GA benefits recipient, and that she has received 12 months of EA/TRA to date. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1 at 23-24. On May 14, 2015, Petitioner applied for an EA extreme hardship extension, on the basis that she has been compliant with her WFNJ requirements and still needs EA/TRA to become self-sufficient. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1 at 6-10. On May 26, 2015, the Agency denied Petitioner’s application because she did not meet the criteria for an extreme hardship extension. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1 at 11-16. Specifically, no evidence was provided by Petitioner to prove that she was in danger of a loss of employment or of a bona fide offer of employment. Ibid.

At the hearing, the ALJ concluded, and I concur, that Petitioner is an employable WFNJ/GA benefits recipient who does not meet the criteria for an EA extreme hardship extension. See Initial Decision at 3. Therefore, the ALJ ordered, and I agree, that the Agency’s denial of Petitioner’s application was proper and should be affirmed.

By way of comment, Petitioner is without prejudice to reapply in the future if she is in need of EA and meets the eligibility criteria for an extreme hardship extension.

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

*Signed Copy on File*  
at DFD, BARA

AUG 24 2015

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Natasha Johnson  
Director