



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 13328-15 E.S.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C010723 (CUMBERLAND COUNTY BD OF SOC SVCS.)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Work First New Jersey/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families ("WFNJ/TANF") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner WFNJ/TANF benefits contending that she could not verify the blood relationship of the dependent child that resided with her. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On October 7, 2015, the Honorable Bruce M. Gorman, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On October 23, 2015, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, reversing the Agency's determination. The ALJ found that the child's familial relationship to Petitioner was established by the Superior Court on June 17, 2015, when it awarded custody of the child to Petitioner, recognizing her as the child's maternal great-grandmother. See Initial Decision at 4. Accordingly, the ALJ found that the Superior Court had established that Petitioner was the dependent child's great-grandmother, and that the Agency could not, now, deny Petitioner WFNJ/TANF benefits on the basis that she could not verify her blood relationship to the dependent child. *Ibid.*

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 ALJ's Initial Decision, and following an independent review of the record, I concur with the ALJ's final conclusion in this matter and hereby ADOPT the Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law in this matter.

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

Signed Copy on File
at DFD, BARA

NOV 18 2015

Natasha Johnson
Director