



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Division of Family Development
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Governor

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Director
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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 15703-14 S.C.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C028343 (SOMERSET COUNTY BOARD OF SOC. SVCS.)

Petitioner Agency charges Respondent with committing an intentional program violation ("IPV") of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP"), f/k/a the Food Stamp Program. The Agency asserts that Respondent failed to report a decrease in the number of eligible members of her household, thus causing Respondent to receive an overissuance of benefits to which she was not entitled. Respondent was properly noticed of the Administrative Disqualification Hearing, the charges against her, and the proposed disqualification penalty via certified mail, return receipt requested. Exhibit P-2. Because Respondent failed to execute and return the waiver of her right to a hearing, see Exhibit P-4, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing as a contested case. On December 18, 2014, the Honorable Joseph A. Ascione, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a hearing, took testimony and admitted documents. Respondent did not appear for the hearing, and the matter proceeded *ex parte*, which is permissible pursuant to our regulatory scheme. See N.J.A.C. 1:10-14.1(d).

On January 5, 2015, the ALJ issued his Initial Decision, which found that the Agency had met its burden in establishing, by clear and convincing evidence, that Respondent had deliberately and intentionally withheld information from the Agency, which resulted in Respondent receiving an overissuance of SNAP benefits to which she was not entitled. See Initial Decision at 4-5. Specifically, Respondent intentionally did not accurately report a decrease in the number of eligible members of her household, and as a result, received an overissuance of SNAP benefits for the period of October 2010 through January 2011 in the total amount of \$1,196.00. See Initial Decision at 3-5; see also Exhibits P-6, P-7, P-9, and P-10. As this was the

second IPV committed by Respondent, the ALJ ordered the mandatory regulatory penalty of a twenty-four month disqualification from receipt of SNAP benefits by Respondent pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:87-11.2(a)(2). See Initial Decision at 6.

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 Initial Decision in this matter, and following and independent evaluation of the record, I concur with the ALJ's decision and hereby adopt the Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law in this matter.

I direct that the Agency proceed to recoup the overissuance.

Accordingly, based upon the foregoing, I hereby ADOPT the Initial Decision in this matter, and ORDER that Respondent is ineligible to participate in the SNAP for a period of twenty-four months. I further ORDER that the Agency is to recoup the overissuance.

FEB 11 2015

Signed Copy on File
at DFD, BARA

Jeanette Page-Hawkins
Director