



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Division of Family Development

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Chris Christie
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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

FINAL DECISION

OAL DKT. NO. HPW 6161-15 W.P.

AGENCY DKT. NO. GA441602 (HUDSON COUNTY DEPT OF FAM SVCS)

Petitioner appeals from Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits in the form of Temporary Rental Assistance ("TRA") for back rent for the months of April and May 2015. The Agency denied Petitioner EA benefits because it questioned Petitioner's address, and asserted he had the reasonable capacity to plan in advance to prevent homelessness but failed to do so, thereby causing his own homelessness. On May 5, 2015, the Honorable Jesse A. Strauss, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On the same day as the matter was heard, the ALJ issued his Emergent Initial Decision, which reversed the Agency's denial of EA benefits. See Initial Decision at 1-2. After testimony by Petitioner, the ALJ found that Petitioner's address was supported by credible evidence and valid. See Initial Decision at 2. Moreover, he found that Petitioner adequately planned in advance and made a good-faith effort to prevent homelessness because he saved money from his unemployment compensation to pay his rent, while at the same time aggressively searching for employment. *Ibid.* Accordingly, the ALJ concluded, and I concur, that the Agency improperly denied Petitioner EA benefits in the form of back rent for the months of April and May 2015. See Initial Decision at 3.

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 decision 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 action is hereby REVERSED.

Signed Copy on File
at DFD, BARA

MAY 13 2015

Natasha Johnson
Director