



## State of New Jersey

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*Governor*

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DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
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TRENTON, NJ 08625-0716

NATASHA JOHNSON  
*Assistant Commissioner*

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 **08377-24 I.S.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C238387009 (HUDSON COUNTY DEPT OF FAM SVCS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits in the form of Temporary Rental Assistance ("TRA"), and the imposition of a six-month period of ineligibility for EA benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner EA/TRA benefits, and imposed a six-month EA ineligibility penalty, contending that Petitioner voluntarily quit employment, without good cause, thereby causing her own homelessness. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. A hearing was initially scheduled for June 24, 2024, but was adjourned at Petitioner's request, as she had not received notice of the initial hearing date. On June 26, 2024, the Honorable William J. Courtney, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On June 27, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, reversing the Agency's determination. Here, the Agency denied Petitioner EA/TRA benefits, and imposed a six-month EA ineligibility penalty, contending that she voluntarily quit her employment due to transportation issues, thereby causing her own homelessness. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibits R-1, R-2, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(3). However, the ALJ found Petitioner credible when she testified that she voluntarily quit her employment due to the lack of transportation. See Initial Decision at 2-3. Specifically, due to the breakdown of her car, the lack of public transportation, and the prohibitive cost of other means of transportation, such as Uber and similar services. *Ibid.* Based on the foregoing, the ALJ found that Petitioner had established good cause for her voluntary quit of employment, and as such, concluded that the Agency improperly denied EA/TRA benefits to Petitioner, and improperly imposed a six-month EA ineligibility penalty. See Initial Decision at 3-4; see also Exhibit R-2, and see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(3). On that basis, the ALJ reversed the Agency's determination. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit R-2. I agree.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As Assistant Commissioner, 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.

By way of comment, the Agency is directed to reevaluate Petitioner's eligibility for EA/TRA benefits on an expedited basis. See Initial Decision at 4; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1 et seq.

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



Officially approved final version. July 03, 2024

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Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

