



State of New Jersey

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Governor

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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CAROLE JOHNSON
Commissioner

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

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 13799-18 A.M.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C078192012 (MIDDLESEX COUNTY BD OF SOC SCVS)

Petitioner Agency charges Respondent with committing an intentional program violation ("IPV") of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP"). The Agency asserts that Respondent failed to report her spouse's earned income while she was receiving SNAP benefits, 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 on August 18, 2018. See Exhibits P-1, P-2. Because Respondent failed to execute and return the waiver of her right to a hearing, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing as a contested case. See Exhibit P-3. On October 9, 2018, the Honorable David M. Fritch, 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). The record remained open for ten days for Respondent to present good cause for her failure to appear. Respondent did not respond and the record then closed.

On October 24, 2018, the ALJ issued an 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 5. Specifically, the ALJ found that Respondent intentionally did not report her spouse's earned income during the period of January 2017, through July 2017, which resulted in an overissuance of SNAP benefits to Respondent in the amount of \$1,498. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibits P-4, P-14, and N.J.A.C. 10:87-5.2(a)(1), -9.5.

As this was the first IPV committed by Respondent, the ALJ ordered the mandatory regulatory penalty of a 12-month disqualification from receipt of SNAP benefits pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:87-11.2(a)(1). 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 SNAP for a period of 12 months. I further ORDER that the Agency is to recoup the overissuance.

Officially approved final version.

Natasha Johnson

Director

