



## State of New Jersey

PHILIP D. MURPHY  
*Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
PO BOX 716

SARAH ADELMAN  
*Commissioner*

TAHESHA L. WAY  
*Lt. Governor*

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 **07479-24 B.S.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C183253007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner SNAP benefits, contending that Petitioner's countable household income exceeded the maximum permissible level for receipt of said benefits. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On September 17, 2024, the Honorable Mumtaz Bari-Brown, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents into evidence. On September 24, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As Assistant Commissioner, Division of Family Development ("DFD"), Department of Human Services, I have considered the ALJ's Initial Decision and following an independent review of the record, the ALJ's Initial Decision is hereby MODIFIED and the Agency determination is AFFIRMED, based on the discussion below.

Regulatory authority applicable to SNAP benefit cases, defines income as "all income from whatever source unless such income is specifically excluded." See N.J.A.C. 10:87-5.3. In order to determine an applicant's eligibility for SNAP, the applicant's income and resources must be below a certain threshold. In accordance with N.J.A.C. 10:87-6.16(d)(1), households which contain an elderly or permanently disabled individual, as defined by N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.34, must meet the net income test for SNAP eligibility. N.J.A.C. 10:87-6.16(d)(2), states that households that do not contain an elderly or permanently disabled household member must meet both the gross income test, as well as the net income test, meaning that the respective income amounts must be below the established standards. See also N.J.A.C. 10:87-12.3, -12.4.

Gross income is determined by adding together the household's monthly earned and unearned income, minus any earned income exclusions. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-6.16(b), (b)(1). That total gross income amount is then utilized to determine a household's SNAP eligibility in accordance with N.J.A.C. 10:87-6.16(d)(1) and (2).

An independent review of the record reflects that Petitioner's SNAP household is comprised of one person. See Initial Decision at 2. The record further shows that Petitioner has monthly earned income in the amount of \$3,159. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. There is no indication in the record that Petitioner is handicapped, disabled or elderly, and as such, the household must meet the both the gross and net income tests for SNAP eligibility. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.34(a)(1), (2), and N.J.A.C. 10:87-6.16(d)(1), (2).

The maximum allowable gross income amount for SNAP eligibility, for a household of one person, is \$2,248. See DFD Instruction 23-09-01 at 13. As Petitioner's household's gross income is over the gross income threshold, Petitioner's



household was determined to be ineligible for SNAP benefits. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ found that Petitioner's household exceeded the gross income threshold for SNAP benefits eligibility and therefore the Agency's denial of SNAP benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1. I agree, however, the Initial Decision is modified to reflect the correct gross income threshold for the household size of \$2,248, rather than the incorrect amount of \$2,224 stated in the Initial Decision. See Initial Decision at 2.

By way of comment, Petitioner is without prejudice to reapply for SNAP benefits, should her circumstances warrant.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision in this matter is hereby MODIFIED and the Agency's determination is AFFIRMED, as outlined above.

Officially approved final version.      October 08, 2024

---

Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

