



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 **03150-24 D.S.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C076804008 (GLOUCESTER COUNTY DIV. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of her application for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for SNAP benefits, contending that Petitioner had failed to provide information and documentation necessary to determine eligibility. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On April 5, 2024, the Honorable Carl V. Buck, III, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents. The record was held open until April 8, 2024, for the submission of additional documentation and then closed on that date.

On April 17, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the record reveals that Petitioner filed an application for SNAP benefits on January 16, 2024. See Initial Decision at 2. On January 16, 2024, the Agency advised that Petitioner would be called on January 19, 2024, despite no phone number having been listed on the application. Ibid. The Agency sent Petitioner an email that same day requesting that Petitioner contact the Agency to complete her SNAP application. Ibid. The Agency sent Petitioner a Request for Verification on January 19, 2024, seeking, amongst other things, proof of income in the form of paystubs, shelter expenses and identification. Ibid.; see also Exhibit R-1. When the requested documentation was not received, the Agency denied Petitioner's application for SNAP benefits on February 15, 2024. Ibid. In order to determine eligibility for SNAP benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required, such as household income, both earned and unearned income. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19, -2.20. Without said verification of required information, SNAP eligibility cannot be determined or granted. Ibid. Following presentation of testimonial and documentary evidence in this case, the ALJ found the Agency's evidence credible, and no documentation to substantiate Petitioner's assertions, of why the requested information was not submitted to the Agency, had been presented. See Initial Decision at 3-4. The ALJ therefore concluded that Petitioner had not provided the requested information and documentation required to be verified to determine eligibility, and as such, the Agency's denial of SNAP benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4-5; see also N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19, -2.20. 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, Petitioner is without prejudice to reapply for SNAP benefits, if she has not already done so, but must provide all information and documentation requested in order to determine eligibility.

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



Officially approved final version. May 21, 2024

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

