



State of New Jersey

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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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 11703-24 H.C.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C093778003 (BURLINGTON COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of his 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 ("OAL") for a hearing. On October 23, 2024, the Honorable Judith Lieberman, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents. Following the hearing on October 23, 2024, the Petitioner sent multiple emails to the OAL, however, the emails contained no messages and no attachments. On that same date, Petitioner was advised that his emails were blank and requests were made that he resend the emails. On October 28, 2024, Petitioner was again advised that his emails were blank and he was directed to resend the emails by October 30, 2024. The record in this matter remained open until October 30, 2024, to permit Petitioner to submit documentation, however, he did not resend the emails by the close of business on that date, and the record was closed.

On November 13, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the record reveals that Petitioner completed an application for SNAP benefits on February 12, 2024, for himself, his wife, and their adult son. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-A. Within the application, Petitioner reported his wife had part-time employment and that his adult son received Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits. See also Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-A. During the processing of the application, the Agency utilized a system database, which reported that Petitioner had employment earnings during the fourth quarter of 2023, as well as that his wife had employment earnings during the third and fourth quarter of 2023. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-B. On March 5, 2024, the Agency sent Petitioner a letter asking him to provide, by March 15, 2024, paystubs for himself and his wife for the last thirty days, a rent or mortgage receipt, and utility bills. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-C. Petitioner provided the Agency with two weekly paystubs from his employer for the weeks of March 1, 2024, and March 8, 2024. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-D. Petitioner did not provide any of his wife's paystubs. See Initial Decision at 3. On April 10, 2024, the Agency sent Petitioner a second request asking him to provide income documentation, including a month of most recent consecutive paystubs for his wife, and four of his own consecutive paystubs, by April 20, 2024. *Ibid.*; see also Exhibit R-E. On May 16, 2024, the Agency issued a denial notice to Petitioner as they had not received the requested income verification information. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-F. On May 28, 2024, following the denial of May 16, 2024, Petitioner did provide two bi-weekly paystubs for his wife. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-G. Petitioner testified that he supplied all documentation to the Agency as requested, however, he was unable to provide any documentary proof of submission to the Agency to the ALJ for consideration. See Initial Decision at 3-4.



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 concluded that Petitioner had not provided the requested information 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, but must timely 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. November 26, 2024

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

