



State of New Jersey

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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 **07004-24 J.P.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C230574013 (MONMOUTH COUNTY DIV. OF SOC. SVCS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's termination of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's EA benefits, contending that he had exhausted his lifetime limit of EA benefits, and did not qualify for an extreme hardship extension of EA benefits. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On May 31, 2024, the Jeffrey N. Rabin, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On June 3, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the ALJ in this matter issued a very thorough and comprehensive Initial Decision, outlining the procedural history, providing a detailed factual timeline, and rendering a well thought out analysis, applying law to fact. See Initial Decision at 2-8. Specifically, the ALJ found, and the record substantiates, that Petitioner had received 12 months of EA benefits, and as such, had exhausted his lifetime limit of EA benefits, and further found that Petitioner did not qualify for an extreme hardship extension of EA benefits. See Initial Decision at 3-4, 7; see also Exhibits R-1 at 34-35, R-2, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(a), (b), (c). Additionally, the ALJ found that Petitioner had failed to demonstrate that his circumstances warranted an extreme hardship extension of EA benefits, and that he had not contradicted or opposed any of the testimony or documentation provided by the Agency in this case. See Initial Decision at 3-4, 7. Moreover, the ALJ found that Petitioner had not offered any evidence demonstrating that he was imminently homeless, also a requirement for EA benefits eligibility. *Id.* at 2; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c). Of note, despite the Agency's many attempts to assist Petitioner with addressing his housing and employment issues, Petitioner failed to follow through with any offered assistance, and the ALJ found no obstacles prohibiting Petitioner from participating in finding housing or employment. See Initial Decision at 3-4, 7; see also Exhibit R-1 at 15-30, 36-39. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's termination of Petitioner's EA benefits, and denial of an extreme hardship extension, were proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 7-8; see also Exhibits R-1 at 31-33, 40-42, R-2, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(a), (b). 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 shall refer Petitioner to any and all agencies and organizations that may be able to assist with his current needs, including Social Services for the Homeless.

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



Officially approved final version. June 18, 2024

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

