



## State of New Jersey

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*Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
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*Commissioner*

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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 **03999-24 J.P.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C038686019 (SUSSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of her application at recertification for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for SNAP benefits at recertification, contending that Petitioner had failed to provide information and documentation necessary to determine continued eligibility. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. On June 18, 2024, the Honorable Mumtaz Bari-Brown, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents.

On July 12, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the record reveals that on November 16, 2023, Petitioner completed a redetermination interview for SNAP benefits and that, on the same date, the Agency issued a verification request for additional information and documentation needed to complete the application, specifically Petitioner's federal tax returns for both her personal taxes and business, a 6-month profit and loss statement for her self-employment, and a copy of the past 6 months of Petitioner's Venmo account transactions. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. On November 29, 2023, the Agency received verifications for Petitioner's income and expenses, which included a tax summary for 2022 Federal Income Tax return and paystubs. Ibid. Petitioner did not provide the full 2022 Federal Income Tax return, as requested by the Agency, nor the profit and loss statement. Ibid. From the information Petitioner did submit, the Agency was, however, able to conclude that Petitioner's gross income exceeded the gross income limit of \$3,833 per month for a household of three persons which led to the Agency, on December 5, 2023, terminating Petitioner's SNAP benefits effective January 1, 2024. Ibid. On December 20, 2023, Petitioner provided additional information, which included a termination of employment letter, but never supplied the Agency with the requested full 2022 Federal Income Tax return or the profit and loss statement. Ibid.

On the record, the Agency acknowledged that Petitioner's SNAP benefits should have been terminated due to the missing documents requested during November 2023, but that the benefits were denied, instead, based upon excess income. Ibid. In order to correct the Agency error, a corrected notice of denial was sent on June 12, 2024, which informed Petitioner that the SNAP benefits had been incorrectly denied during March 2024 as over income, but that Petitioner's SNAP case remained closed due to the failure to provide all of the requested, and required, documentation. Ibid. Petitioner testified that Agency personnel informed her that she did not need to provide the full 2022 Income Tax return which led her to submitting only a summary of her tax returns, however, in January 2024, Petitioner provided the full tax return. Ibid. Petitioner claims she also submitted the profit and loss statement at that time; however, submission of such documentation is denied by the Agency. Ibid.



In order to determine eligibility for SNAP benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required, such as household income, including 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 timely provided the requested information required to be verified to determine continuing eligibility, nor had any good cause been provided for failing to do so, and as such, the Agency's denial of SNAP benefits to Petitioner at recertification was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 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 timely provide all information and documentation requested in order to determine eligibility. Petitioner is advised to communicate directly with the Agency with regards to the application and any required documentation.

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

Officially approved final version. August 01, 2024

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Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

