



## 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 **14941-24 K.B.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C137583011 (MERCER COUNTY BOARD OF SOC. SVCS..)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of an extension of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner EA benefits, contending that she had exhausted her lifetime limit of EA benefits, plus all available extensions, and did not qualify for a further extension of EA benefits. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for an emergent hearing. On October 28, 2024, the Honorable Carl V. Buck III, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On October 29, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

Here, the record reflects that the assistance unit consists of Petitioner and her four children. See Initial Decision at 2. The record further reflects that, on October 8, 2024, Petitioner applied for EA benefits, seeking a Family Violence Risk Assessment Referral/Outcomes Report ("FVO") waiver of the EA assistance time limit, was referred for an FVO evaluation, and the evaluation occurred on October 10, 2024. Ibid. The FVO evaluation resulted in the evaluator not recommending an EA time limit waiver and referring Petitioner to Domestic Violence ("DV") services, which were declined by Petitioner. Ibid.; see also Exhibit R-3. On October 21, 2024, the Agency denied Petitioner's application for EA benefits on the basis that Petitioner had exhausted her lifetime limit of EA benefits, plus all available extensions. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-4.

The ALJ found, and the record substantiates, that Petitioner has received in excess of 34 months of EA benefits, which included hardship extensions, and as such, she has exhausted her lifetime limit of EA benefits and does not qualify for any further extension. See Initial Decision at 3-4; see also Exhibits R-1, R-2, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(a), (b), and (d). Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's October 21, 2024, denial of an extension of EA benefits, was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 3-4; see also Exhibits R-1 and R-2. I agree.

Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received by Petitioner on November 6, 2024.

As Assistant Commissioner, DFD, 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.

By way of further comment, I have reviewed Petitioner's Exceptions, and I find that the arguments made therein do not alter my decision in this matter.



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

Officially approved final version.

November 12, 2024

---

Natasha Johnson

Assistant Commissioner

