



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 **14995-24 M.C.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C190436015 (OCEAN COUNTY BOARD OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner EA benefits, contending that she failed to provide required documentation to the Agency needed to determine her EA benefits eligibility, and failed to verify that her emergent situation was beyond her control. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On October 29, 2024, the Honorable Mary Ann Bogan, Administrative Law Judge, ("ALJ") held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On October 30, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. The ALJ in this matter issued a very thorough and comprehensive Initial Decision, providing a detailed and well thought out analysis, applying law to fact. See Initial Decision at 2-5. Here, the ALJ found that Petitioner had failed to provide sufficient documentation to the Agency necessary for it to assess her eligibility and need for EA benefits, without good cause. *Id.* at 2-3, 5; see also Exhibits R-3 through R-9, R-11, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-1.6(a), -2.2(a)(5). Specifically, the ALJ found that Petitioner had failed to provide the Agency with her current bank statements, updated utility bill statements, and a W-9 form. See Initial Decision at 2. Additionally, the ALJ found that Petitioner had sufficient income from temporary disability and unemployment benefits to avoid her emergent situation, but rather, had spent those funds on nonessential bills, and failed to provide any documentation to reconcile that those funds had been spent on items deemed appropriate, necessary, or reasonable for decent and/or daily living. See Initial Decision at 2-3; see also Exhibits R-10- R-11, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(1)(ii). Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's denial of EA benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4-5; see also Exhibit R-1, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(5), (d), -6.1(c)(1)(ii). 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 her 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. November 12, 2024

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

