



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 12540-19 A.B.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C057977017 (SALEM COUNTY BOARD 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 she failed to comply with her EA service plan ("SP") by failing to provide required documentation, and for failing to attend scheduled meetings with the Agency. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On October 7, 2019, the Honorable Tama B. Hughes, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On October 16, 2019, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the record reflects that on July 18, 2019, Petitioner executed an SP, wherein she agreed, among other things, to conduct and submit to the Agency five housing searches per week, to apply for low income housing, to develop a weekly household budget, and to attend all scheduled meetings with the Agency. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibits R-1 at 14-19, and R-2. The ALJ found that Petitioner, without good cause, failed to provide the required housing searches, failed to apply for low income housing, and failed to develop an acceptable household budget. See Initial Decision at 3-4; see also Exhibit R-1 at 31-35, 39-44. The ALJ also found that Petitioner had been given many opportunities to provide said documentation at Agency meetings scheduled for August 8, 22, and 29, 2019, but that she had failed to attend any of those meetings. See Initial Decision at 2-3; see also Exhibit R-1 at 14, 21, 26, 30. Petitioner admitted that the housing searches she had submitted simply listed the property names, and that she had not actually contacted anyone regarding those properties. See Initial Decision at 2. Based on the testimony and evidence presented, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had failed to comply with her SP, without good cause, and therefore, the Agency's termination of Petitioner's EA benefits was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4-5; see also Exhibit R-1 at 1-5, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.6(a). I agree.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As the Director of the 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.



Further, because I concur with the ALJ's conclusion that Petitioner failed to comply with her SP, I hereby impose upon her a six-month period of ineligibility for EA benefits. See Initial Decision at 5; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.6(a). As Petitioner has been receiving continued assistance pending the outcome of this fair hearing, her six-month EA ineligibility penalty shall begin to run as of the date of the issuance of this Final Agency Decision.

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

Officially approved final version.

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

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