



State of New Jersey

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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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 13372-19 C.W.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C744474007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of an extreme hardship extension of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency denied an extension of EA benefits to Petitioner, contending that she and her spouse failed to take reasonable steps to avoid their emergency, and failed to comply with their EA service plan ("SP"). Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On September 26, 2019, the Honorable Gail M. Cookson, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On September 26, 2019, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, reversing the Agency's determination. Here, in order to facilitate Petitioner's move toward self-sufficiency, and based on Petitioner's particular circumstances, specifically the fact that Petitioner's spouse is currently employed and Petitioner is about to start employment, I agree with the ALJ's reversal of the Agency's denial of an extension of EA benefits to Petitioner in the form of back rent. See Initial Decision at 2-3; see also "Notification Form" dated September 18, 2019, "Paystubs," "Income Screen," "Application Form," and N.J.A.C. 10:90-1.1(c), -6.4(b)(1)(i). Further, I find that the Agency shall provide Petitioner with EA benefits in the amount required to bring her rent current, only. See Initial Decision at 4; see also "Consent to Enter Judgment."

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.

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

Officially approved final version.

OCT - 3 2019

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

