



## State of New Jersey

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*Governor*

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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 13280-25 A.B.

AGENCY DKT. NO. S986653009 (HUDSON COUNTY DEPT OF FAM SVCS)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of her application for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for SNAP benefits, contending that Petitioner had failed to provide information and documentation necessary to determine eligibility. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. On September 18, 2025, the Honorable Mumtaz Bari-Brown, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents. On October 10, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, reversing the Agency's determination.

Here, the record reveals that Petitioner completed an application for SNAP benefits and that on May 1, 2025, the Agency sent Petitioner a Request for Verification Form requesting certain information including proof of last known income, information as to whether Petitioner had applied for Unemployment Insurance Benefits ("UIB"), a statement as to how Petitioner was meeting expenses, and an explanation as to a specific bank deposit from a submitted bank statement. See Initial Decision at 2-3; see also Exhibit R-1. On June 2, 2025, the Agency denied Petitioner's SNAP benefits application, effective May 1, 2025, due to her failure to provide the verifications and documentation. See Initial Decision at 2-3; see also Exhibit P-1. At the time of the hearing, Petitioner testified that she provided the requested information to the Agency, in person, and that she did not receive the Agency's Request for Verification Form until after May 30, 2025. See Initial Decision at 4. Petitioner further produced an envelope addressed to her from the Agency with a postmark of May 30, 2025. Ibid.; see also Exhibit P-1.

In order to determine eligibility for SNAP benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required, such as household income, both earned and unearned income. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.14, -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 received the Agency's Request for Verification Form after May 30, 2025, which evidenced that such mailing from the Agency was delayed or mailed closer to such date, which did not provide the Petitioner with the appropriate thirty days to respond to the Agency. See Initial Decision at 5; see also Exhibit P-1. Accordingly, the ALJ found that Petitioner had "no meaningful opportunity" to respond to the Agency's requests and as such, the Agency's denial of SNAP benefits to Petitioner was improper. See Initial Decision at 5. I agree and remand the matter back to the Agency for consideration of the documentation, submitted at the time of the hearing to determine if same satisfies the request for documentation necessary in order to expeditiously determine Petitioner's eligibility for SNAP benefits. If any further documentation is required, the Agency shall communicate same directly to Petitioner and allow the appropriate time for any response.

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, if Petitioner is found eligible for SNAP benefits based upon the documentation provided, benefits will be retroactive to the date of Petitioner's filed application which was May 1, 2025. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.13(a) (stating that an applicant is given notice, on the application for benefits, that if determined eligible, benefits are provided from the date of application).

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is hereby ADOPTED, and the Agency's determination is REVERSED, and the matter is REMANDED back to the Agency for action, as outlined above.

Officially approved final version. November 19, 2025

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Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

