



## State of New Jersey

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*Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
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SARAH ADELMAN  
*Commissioner*

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*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 **07320-25 A.B.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C281654016 (PASSAIC COUNTY BOARD OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's EA benefits, contending that she abandoned affordable housing, without a plan for alternative housing, thereby causing her own homelessness. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On May 5, 2025 the Honorable Aurelio Vincitore, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On May 6, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

Here, the record reflects that Petitioner, without making any advance housing arrangements, voluntarily abandoned permanent, affordable housing, after residing there for at least a year, during September 2024, without an eviction notice or landlord-tenant court summons. See Initial Decision at 2-3. Petitioner initially applied for EA during October 2024, which application was denied during December 2024, for a failure to respond to a request from the Agency for verifying documents. See Initial Decision at 3; see Exhibit R-1. During March 2025, Petitioner again applied for EA. Ibid. In processing the application, the Agency found that Petitioner's partner, K.F., had been able to obtain gainful employment during the fourth quarter of 2024, but had left employment to attend trade school, thus depriving the household of his financial resources. Ibid. Further, the Agency determined that Petitioner had abandoned affordable housing. Ibid. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ found that Petitioner had caused her own homelessness by voluntarily abandoning affordable housing and concluded that the Agency's denial of EA benefits was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 3-4; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(3)(vii). I agree.

Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received from counsel for Petitioner on May 8, 2025.

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, I have reviewed the Exceptions submitted on behalf of Petitioner, and I find that the arguments made therein do not alter my decision in this matter.

By way of further 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.

May 08, 2025

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Natasha Johnson

Assistant Commissioner

