



## State of New Jersey

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DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
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*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 **15682-24 A.H.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C139125007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)**

Petitioner challenges the correctness of Respondent Agency's calculation of her monthly Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefit amount. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On February 20, 2025, the Honorable Mumtaz Bari-Brown, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On February 24, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's calculation.

No Exceptions to this Initial Decision were filed.

As the Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Family Development ("DFD"), Department of Human Services, I have considered the ALJ's Initial Decision and following an independent review of the record, the ALJ's Initial Decision is hereby ADOPTED, and the Agency determination is AFFIRMED, based on the discussion below.

SNAP is designed to promote the general welfare and to safeguard the health and well-being of the population by raising the levels of nutrition among low-income households. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-1.1(a). In order to determine an applicant's eligibility for SNAP, the applicant's income and resources must be below a certain threshold. N.J.A.C. 10:87-6.16 outlines the procedures used to calculate net income and benefit levels for SNAP recipients. The regulation provides that the applicant's monthly net income is determined by adding together all earned and unearned income, then subtracting all income exclusions. Then, the standard deduction, based upon the size of the household, is subtracted from the income.

Thereafter, the household is evaluated to determine if a medical deduction is appropriate, which is if the household has medical expenses that exceed \$35.00. If the household is entitled to a medical deduction, then the amount in excess of \$35.00 is subtracted from the applicant's income. Then, the applicant is evaluated for an excess shelter deduction. Such a deduction is permitted when the individual's shelter costs exceed 50% of their net income. If this deduction is allowable, then the difference between the shelter costs and the 50% net income, or up to the maximum allowable amount, is subtracted from the individual's income. The remaining figure is Petitioner's net income. This net income is then compared against the maximum allowable net income amount for the household's size, as outlined at N.J.A.C. 10:87-12.3, to determine eligibility. If eligible, the household's monthly SNAP allotment shall be equal to the maximum food stamp allotment for the household's size, reduced by 30 percent of the household's net monthly income. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-12.6(a)(1).

The record in this matter reflects that the Agency received Petitioner's SNAP application for benefits on September 11, 2024. See Initial Decision at 2. Upon receipt, the Agency determined that additional documents were needed to verify information provided by Petitioner and the state wage system database. Ibid. The Agency mailed Petitioner a requestion



for verification seeking current copies of her lease, utility bill, and three paystubs. Ibid. The Agency contends they received two paystubs and a screenshot Petitioner purported to be a paystub, however, the Agency was unable to view a paystub in the screenshot. Ibid. Thus, Petitioner's SNAP benefits allotment amount was recalculated October 24, 2024, to be \$23, however, Petitioner received a total monthly SNAP allotment of \$95, as the minimum SNAP benefit allotment was raised to that amount due to a change in State law. Id. at 2; see also Exhibit R-1, see also N.J.A.C. 10:87-13.1 et seq. Following that recalculation, the Agency was able to verify Petitioner's income and expenses and her SNAP benefits allotment was again recalculated, effective November 1, 2024, to be \$536. Ibid. Petitioner contends that she submitted all of the information requested and that her SNAP benefit allotment for October 2024 should have been \$536 rather than \$95. See Initial Decision at 2-3. The ALJ concluded that, contrary to Petitioner's assertions, the Agency had properly calculated her SNAP benefits for October 2024, and the record substantiates that Petitioner's SNAP benefits for that month should have been \$95. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's calculations of Petitioner's October 2024 SNAP benefits allotment were correct and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4. Based upon an independent review of the record, I agree.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision in this matter is ADOPTED, and the Agency's determination is hereby AFFIRMED, as outlined above.

Officially approved final version. March 05, 2025

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Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

