



State of New Jersey

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
PO BOX 716

SARAH ADELMAN
Commissioner

TAHESHA L. WAY
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 **11191-25 A.R.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C010952010 (HUNTERDON COUNTY BD. 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 had exhausted her lifetime limit of EA benefits, and did not qualify for any further extension of EA benefits at the present time. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On July 22, 2025, the Honorable Sarah G. Crowley, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents, and the record was closed. Petitioner was provided additional time to submit a one-year MED-1 form and proof of appeal of social security benefits, and the record was closed on July 24, 2025.

On August 4, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the ALJ found, and the record substantiates, that Petitioner has received one-hundred months of EA benefits, including hardship extensions, which exceeds her lifetime limit of EA benefits, and that she currently does not qualify for any further extension of any kind. See Initial Decision at 2-3; see also Exhibit R-1 and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(a), (b), (c). At the time of the hearing, Petitioner did not dispute the number of months of EA benefits she has received and provided testimony that she recently changed physicians and her new physician will not provide a one-year MED-1 form. See Initial Decision at 2. Further, Petitioner testified that she recently had her social security application denied, and she may seek an appeal of that decision. Ibid. Of note, the record also reflects that, at the time of the EA termination in this matter, Petitioner also did not meet the criteria for an extension of EA benefits under the Emergency Assistance for Special Groups ("EASG") pilot program, as she had not submitted a completed MED-1 form indicating that she could not work for one-year, which is needed to establish permanent disability. See Initial Decision at 2-3; see also State of New Jersey Senate Bill, No. S866, P.L. 2018, c. 164, effective December 20, 2018 ("S866"), now codified at N.J.S.A. 44:10-51(a)(3), also known as Emergency Assistance for Specific Groups ("EASG"), and recently extended pursuant to State of New Jersey Assembly Bill, No. 5549, extends EA benefits eligibility for certain categories of individuals, including, but not limited to WFNJ recipients who are permanently disabled, as documented by a twelve (12) month MED-1 Form, and Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits recipients. See Division of Family Development Instruction ("DFDI") No. 25-02-01. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's termination of Petitioner's EA benefits was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit R-1. I agree.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As Assistant Commissioner, DFD, 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, should Petitioner's circumstances change, and she is able to present a 12-month MED-1 to the Agency, she is without prejudice to reapply for EA benefits.

By way of additional comment, the Initial Decision references that Petitioner "is the victim of domestic violence." See Initial Decision at 2. It is unclear if Petitioner is currently experiencing domestic violence sufficient to qualify for a waiver of the EA lifetime limit under the Family Violence Option Initiative ("FVO"), N.J.A.C. 10:90-20.1 et seq. Upon a review of the official records of this office, it does not appear that the Agency considered Petitioner's eligibility for an FVO waiver of the EA time limit. Therefore, the Agency shall immediately evaluate Petitioner's eligibility for a waiver of the EA time limit under the FVO Initiative in accordance with N.J.A.C. 10:90-20.1 et seq. To that end, the Agency shall schedule any risk assessment or re-assessment, as appropriate, with the designated victim provider agency within ten business days of the date of this Final Decision. If found eligible for a waiver of the EA time limit, the Agency retains discretion to determine and provide the most appropriate form of EA to address Petitioner's situation, including shelter placement. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.3(a). If found ineligible for a waiver of the EA time limit, the Agency's EA termination shall stand affirmed as issued.

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. August 27, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

