



State of New Jersey

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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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 **00918-25 B.B.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C051392012 (MIDDLESEX COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of her application for Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for WFNJ/GA benefits, contending that she had exhausted her 60-month cumulative lifetime limit of WFNJ cash benefits, and did not qualify for an exemption from said lifetime limit. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On March 11, 2025, the Honorable Tricia M. Caliguire, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On March 18, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

"Eligibility for cash assistance benefits shall be limited to a lifetime total of 60 cumulative months for an adult individual." See N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.3(a). "At the end of an individual adult recipient's 60 cumulative months of receipt of cash assistance, the assistance unit shall no longer be eligible to receive [WFNJ] assistance." See N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.3(a)(1). However, an individual may receive additional months of cash assistance if he/she qualifies for an exemption to, or extension of, the time limit, as set forth at N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.4 and -2.5, respectively. In relevant part, a recipient is exempt from the 60-month cumulative lifetime WFNJ limit if a "physical or mental impairment, defect or injury prevents him or her from engaging in full-time employment for a period of 12 or more months on a minimum of one WFNJ/MED-1, Examination Report." N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.4(a)(3)(i).

Here, Petitioner applied for WFNJ/GA benefits on November 8, 2024, after which she was interviewed in person on November 18, 2024, by the Agency and, following the interview, the Agency issued a written request for Petitioner to verify information including proof of an active application for Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits and a MED-1 form completed by her treating physician. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibits R-1, R-2. On November 19, 2024, a revised request for verifications was issued by the Agency requesting proof from Petitioner of her compliance with the Supportive Assistance for Individuals and Families (SAIF) program, which required a response by December 9, 2024. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-3. Following an internal review of her application, the Agency determined that Petitioner had already received more than 60 months of WFNJ/GA, and as such, she had exhausted her lifetime limit for said benefits. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-4 and N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.3(a). On December 9, 2024, the Agency denied Petitioner's WFNJ/GA application. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-5. The ALJ noted that the Agency acknowledged that Petitioner may meet the regulatory definition of unemployable due to her medical conditions, however, she has failed to submit a valid MED-1 form, and, as a regulatory condition for an exemption from the WFNJ/GA benefits 60-month lifetime limit, Petitioner was required to provide the Agency with proof of a pending SSI benefits application, and a MED-1 form indicating a 12-month permanent disability. See Initial Decision at 4; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(3),



-2.4(a)(3)(1). Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's denial of Petitioner's application for WFNJ/GA benefits was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4. I agree.

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, Petitioner is without prejudice to reapply for WFNJ/GA benefits, must be reminded that she must apply for SSI benefits and obtain a valid MED-1 form indicating a 12-month permanent disability.

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

Officially approved final version. April 17, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

