



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 **16456-25 B.M.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C064357005 (CAPE MAY COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA"), and Emergency Assistance ("EA"), benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner WFNJ/GA benefits, contending that Petitioner failed to verify information necessary to determine eligibility for said benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner EA benefits because he is not a WFNJ benefits recipient, nor a Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits recipient. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. On September 25, 2025, the Honorable Rebecca C. Lafferty, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents into evidence, and the record then closed. On September 26, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determinations.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed.

As the Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I have reviewed the record and the Initial Decision, and I hereby ADOPT the Initial Decision, and AFFIRM the Agency's determinations, based on the discussion below.

An applicant for WFNJ benefits may be required to apply for various benefits including unemployment insurance benefits. N.J.A.C. 10:90-1.12. An applicant who refuses or neglects to apply for these benefits within 30 days of written notification, without good cause, shall be ineligible to receive cash assistance. Ibid.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:90-1.15, an adult applicant who voluntarily quits employment, without good cause, including situations in which an applicant has been discharged from employment due to an action or inaction on his or her part in violation of the employer's written rule or policies, or lawful job-related instructions, shall be ineligible for WFNJ cash assistance benefits for a period of 90 days beginning with the date of quit.

Here, the record reveals that Petitioner applied for WFNJ/GA and EA benefits on August 20, 2025, and was placed in a temporary shelter under immediate need while his applications were processed by the Agency. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibits R-1 at 38-49, R-2 at 11-20. Thereafter, the Agency sent Petitioner a Request for Verification form requesting that he provide various documentation to complete his application, including proof of application for unemployment benefits by September 19, 2025. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1 at 51. Petitioner did provide some requested documentation to the Agency on September 17, 2025 and September 19, 2025. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1 at 63-70, 78-97. The Agency additionally performed a search with the Department of Labor and determined that Petitioner had no current claim filed for unemployment benefits. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1 at 53-57, 73. As of the date of the hearing, there was no documentary record of any recent unemployment claim



on behalf of Petitioner. See Initial Decision at 3. Further, on September 19, 2025, Petitioner submitted an employment separation letter, indicating that he was terminated from his employment due to violating the attendance policy. Ibid.; see also Exhibit R-1 at 75. On September 19, 2025, the Agency sent Petitioner two Notification Forms, one of which denied his WFNJ/GA benefits application due to his failure to apply for unemployment benefits, and the second denying his EA benefits application as he was not a WFNJ benefits recipient and did not otherwise qualify and additionally because he had failed to provide all documents requested to determine his eligibility for benefits. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibits R-1 at 20-27, R-2 at 31-39. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had not provided the information required to be verified to determine eligibility, specifically by failing to apply for unemployment benefits within 30 days, and further due to voluntary cessation of employment, and as such, the Agency's denial of WFNJ/GA benefits, and the imposition of a 90-day penalty for receipt of WFNJ/GA benefits was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 3-5; and N.J.A.C. 10:90-1.12, -1.15, -2.2. I agree.

Further, based on Petitioner's ineligibility for receipt of WFNJ/GA benefits, the ALJ concluded that, because Petitioner was not a WFNJ benefits recipient, nor an SSI benefits recipient, the Agency's denial of Petitioner's EA benefits was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 6-7; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.2(a). I also agree.

By way of comment, Petitioner is without prejudice to reapply for WFNJ/GA benefits, following the 90-day penalty period from the last date of employment. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-1.15. Petitioner is reminded that he must provide all required information and documentation necessary to determine eligibility.

By way of further comment, the Agency shall refer Petitioner to any and all agencies and organizations that may be able to assist with his current needs, including Social Services for the Homeless.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is hereby ADOPTED, and the Agency's action is hereby AFFIRMED, as outlined above.

Officially approved final version. October 09, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

