



## State of New Jersey

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*Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
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*Commissioner*

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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 **02372-25 C.K.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **S661836012 (MIDDLESEX COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's termination of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits, and the imposition of a six-month period of ineligibility for EA benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's EA benefits, and imposed a six-month EA ineligibility penalty contending that he failed to comply with his EA service plan ("SP"). Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On February 7, 2025, the Honorable Joan M. Burke, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On February 10, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the record reflects that on July 26, 2024, Petitioner executed an SP wherein he agreed, among other things, to conduct weekly housing and employment searches, and to provide proof of such searches to the Agency, weekly. See Initial Decision at 2, 4-5; see also Exhibit R-6. Petitioner admitted that he had failed to conduct the required weekly housing searches, claiming that he had just been released from prison, and could not obtain, and therefore provide, personal identification that would have been required to obtain housing and/or employment. See Initial Decision at 3. However, the ALJ found that at the time of the hearing, Petitioner still did not have identification, yet he was able to submit his first weekly housing searches to the Agency in January 2025. Id. at 5; see also Exhibit R-8. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner failed to comply with his SP, without good cause, and that the Agency's termination of Petitioner's EA benefits, and imposition of a six-month EA ineligibility penalty, were proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 5-6; see also Exhibit R-9, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.6(a). 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 in this matter.

By way of comment, Petitioner is advised that his six-month EA ineligibility penalty shall run from February 8, 2025, the effective date of the termination, through August 8, 2025. See Exhibit R-9.

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 in this matter is hereby ADOPTED, and the Agency's determination is AFFIRMED.



Officially approved final version. February 20, 2025

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Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

