



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 17268-24 D.P.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C114845008 (GLOUCESTER COUNTY DIV. OF SOC. SVCS.)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's termination of his Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits case at recertification. The Agency terminated Petitioner's SNAP benefits case at recertification because Petitioner's certification period had ended and no required interview, necessary for the continuation of SNAP benefits, beyond the certification end date, had occurred. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On January 17, 2025, the Honorable Carl V. Buck III, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. The record was then held open until January 28, 2025, at which time it was closed. On February 11, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

Here, the record reveals that Petitioner applied, and was approved, for SNAP benefits on November 1, 2023. See Initial Decision at 2. Petitioner was due for recertification of SNAP benefits on November 1, 2024 and, in preparation for same, the Agency notified Petitioner, via a Notice of Expiration on September 3, 2024, that he was required to participate in a recertification interview on September 17, 2024, at 2:30 p.m. Ibid.; see also Exhibit R-1 at 3. The Agency representative phoned Petitioner on the appointed date, at the specified time, however, he was unable to reach Petitioner and unable to leave a voicemail. See Initial Decision at 2. On September 17, 2024, the Agency mailed Petitioner a letter informing him he would need to contact the Agency to reschedule his interview. Ibid.; see also Exhibit R-1 at 5. Petitioner contacted the Agency to request an interview and the Agency representative phoned on October 23, 2024, to complete the interview however, he was unable to reach Petitioner and unable to leave a voicemail. See Initial Decision at 2.

In order to determine continued eligibility for SNAP benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-9.1. Without said verification of required information, SNAP eligibility cannot be determined or granted. Ibid. While Petitioner asserted that he had informed the Agency that his phone number changed, the ALJ found that this assertion was not supported by the testimonial evidence presented at the hearing. See Initial Decision at 2-3. Further, testimony provided at the hearing by Petitioner led to questionable information regarding the amount of his rent, his financial responsibility for utilities, and the amount of his veterans' benefits. Ibid. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had not participated in the required telephone interview, and further, had not provided all of the information required to be verified to determine continued eligibility, and as such, the Agency's termination of SNAP benefits, at recertification, to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4-5; see also N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.22, -9.1 et seq. 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 SNAP benefits, but must provide all information and documentation requested in order to determine eligibility.

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

Officially approved final version. March 05, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

