



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 **14236-24 D.R.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C074435002 (BERGEN COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's termination of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's 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 February 11, 2025, the Honorable Thomas R. Betancourt, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On February 11, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, reversing the Agency's determination. Here, the ALJ found, the record substantiates, and Petitioner did not dispute, that she had received a cumulative total of 72 months of WFNJ/GA and WFNJ/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families ("TANF") benefits, and as such, had exhausted her 60-month lifetime limit for said benefits. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1 at 4-14, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.3(a). As a regulatory condition for an exemption from the WFNJ benefits 60-month lifetime limit, Petitioner was required to provide the Agency with proof of a pending Supplemental Security Income ("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)(i). The ALJ found that Petitioner had provided proof of a pending SSI application appeal to the Agency. See Initial Decision at 2, 4; see also Exhibit P-1, R-1 at 17. Further, the ALJ found that, although Petitioner's physician had indicated on the MED-1 form that Petitioner's disability was temporary, the dates provided on said MED-1 form clearly indicate that Petitioner's disability is for 12 months, beginning July 29, 2024, through August 1, 2025. See Initial Decision at 2, 4; see also Exhibit R-1 at 18-20. Of note, the record also indicates that the Agency had approved the subject MED-1 form as evidenced by a letter to Petitioner, dated August 19, 2024. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit P-2. Accordingly, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's termination of Petitioner's WFNJ/GA benefits was improper and must be reversed. See Initial Decision at 4-5; see also Exhibit R-1 at 2-3. 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.

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



Officially approved final version. March 27, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

