



State of New Jersey

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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 **06964-25 D.W.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C093359013 (MONMOUTH COUNTY DIV. OF SOC. SVCS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of her application for Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits and Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for WFNJ/GA benefits, contending that she had exhausted her 60-month cumulative lifetime limit of WFNJ benefits, and did not qualify for an exemption from said lifetime limit. The Agency further denied Petitioner's application for EA benefits, contending that she was 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 for a hearing. The matter was initially scheduled for an emergent hearing on April 28, 2025, however, Petitioner failed to appear. The matter was rescheduled and on April 29, 2025, the Honorable Allison Friedman, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On April 30, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determinations.

"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 from, 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).

Only WFNJ cash benefits recipients and SSI recipients are eligible for EA benefits. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.2(a).

Here, Petitioner applied for WFNJ/GA benefits on March 7, 2025, and during her intake interview, the Agency determined that she had received 63 months of WFNJ/GA benefits, and she was provided a MED-1 form to be completed by her physician. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibits R-1, R-2. On March 10, 2025, the MED-1 form was returned to Agency and the physician certified that Petitioner is not limited in her ability to work or participate in occupational training. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-4. Petitioner does not receive, nor have an active or pending application for, SSI benefits. See Initial Decision at 2. Following an internal review of her application, the Agency determined that Petitioner had previously received more than 60 months of WFNJ benefits, and as such, had exhausted her lifetime limit for said benefits, and does not qualify for any exemption, as Petitioner has failed to provide the Agency with proof of a pending SSI benefits application or a MED-1 form indicating a 12-month permanent disability. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-4 and N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.3(a). On April 7, 2025, the Agency denied Petitioner's WFNJ/GA benefits



application. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-5 and 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 5. I agree. Further, the ALJ found that, as Petitioner was not a WFNJ or SSI benefits recipient, the Agency's denial of Petitioner's application EA benefits was also proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 5; see also Exhibit R-5, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.2(a). I also 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, but is 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. May 07, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

