



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 **03048-25 J.J.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C494537004 (CAMDEN-CCBSS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits, and the imposition of a six-month period of ineligibility for EA benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's EA benefits, and imposed a six-month EA ineligibility penalty, contending that he abandoned affordable housing in another state, and that he moved to New Jersey without a plan for alternative housing, thereby causing his own homelessness. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On February 19, 2025 the Honorable Kimberley M. Wilson, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On February 19, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the record reflects that Petitioner abandoned affordable Section 8 housing in Maryland, by not renewing his lease, and claimed that he moved to New Jersey to make a change in his life. See Initial Decision at 2-5. Here, the ALJ found, and the record substantiates, that Petitioner resided within subsidized housing in Maryland for at least seven years and did not renew his lease, which ended on January 31, 2025. See Initial Decision at 5; see also Exhibit R-1 at 1. On January 31, 2025, when his lease ended, Petitioner moved to New Jersey without making any advance arrangements for his housing, which led to his homelessness and application for EA benefits. See Initial Decision at 2, 6; see also Exhibit R-1 at 13-15. The Agency found that Petitioner had not used any of his financial resources, including his Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits, to secure temporary housing. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1 at 3-6. The ALJ found that Petitioner had caused his own homelessness by voluntarily abandoning his housing in another state, that he had the capacity to plan for housing in New Jersey, and that he had failed to provide any evidence to demonstrate that he had exhausted his available funds for temporary housing. See Initial Decision at 6-7. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's denial of EA benefits, and the imposition of a six-month ineligibility penalty, were proper and must stand. *Id.* at 7; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(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.

By way of comment, Petitioner is advised that his six-month EA ineligibility penalty shall run from January 31, 2025 to July 31, 2025. See Exhibit R-1 at 4.

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 determination is AFFIRMED.

Officially approved final version. February 25, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

