



## State of New Jersey

PHILIP D. MURPHY  
*Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
PO BOX 716

SARAH ADELMAN  
*Commissioner*

TAHESHA L. WAY  
*Lt. Governor*

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 **18070-24 K.M.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C049562005 (CAPE MAY COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of an extension of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits, and consequent termination of her EA benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's EA benefits, contending that she had exhausted her lifetime limit of EA benefits, and did not qualify for an extension of EA benefits pursuant to the Emergency Assistance for Specific Groups ("EASG") program. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On January 2, 2025, the Honorable Mamta Patel, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On January 3, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the ALJ in this matter issued a very thorough and comprehensive Initial Decision, outlining the procedural history, providing a detailed factual timeline, and rendering a well thought out analysis, applying law to fact. See Initial Decision at 2-5. Specifically, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner does not have a valid 12-month MED-1 form, a requirement in this case, for an extension of EA benefits pursuant to EASG. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit R-1 at 20-35, and N.J.S.A. 44:10-51(a)(3). The record reflects that Petitioner's mental health provider had previously provided Petitioner with a MED-1 form indicating a six-month disability, and that her health care provider had previously provided her with a MED-1 form indicating a four-month disability. See Initial Decision at 3; see Exhibit R-1 at 20-29. The ALJ also found that a modified MED-1 form, indicating a 12-month disability, was only later provided by Petitioner's health care provider after undue pressure to do so was exerted upon him by Petitioner. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1 at 30-35. Based on the foregoing, and in accordance with the applicable Division of Family Development Instruction ("DFDI") which states that, when a doctor modified the MED-1 form after the prior form was submitted, and after clarification is requested as to such modification, which the Agency had done, if the medical professional reports being pressured into completing the form according to the client's criteria, as is the case here, then the Agency is required to deny the validity of such MED-1 form. See Initial Decision at 3-4; see also Exhibit R-1 at 26-40, and DFDI 24-05-02. Consequently, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner is ineligible for EA benefits, and as such, the Agency's denial of an EASG extension of EA benefits, and consequent termination of Petitioner's EA benefits, due to the exhaustion of her lifetime limit for such benefits, were proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4-5; see also Exhibit R-1 at 44-49, and N.J.S.A. 44:10-51(a)(3), N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(a), (b), (c). I agree.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As Assistant Commissioner, DFD, 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, the Agency shall refer Petitioner to any and all agencies and organizations that may be able to assist with her 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.

January 14, 2025

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Natasha Johnson

Assistant Commissioner

