



## 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 **06211-25 K.V.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C018503010 (HUNTERDON COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner EA benefits, contending that she had the capacity to plan, and sufficient funds to pay for housing, but failed to do so, thereby causing her own homelessness. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. A hearing was initially scheduled in this matter on April 11, 2025, at which time Petitioner requested that the emergent designation be removed from the case so that she could retain legal counsel. The matter was rescheduled for May 9, 2025, at which time Petitioner requested an additional adjournment. Thereafter, multiple other adjournments were requested and approved. On August 20, 2025, the Honorable Michael R. Stanzione, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On September 10, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

Here, the record reveals that Petitioner applied for EA benefits on November 26, 2024, and on December 12, 2024, provided documentation showing that she owed a total of five months back rent. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. The Agency referred Petitioner to the Substance Abuse Initiative/Behavioral Health Initiative ("SAI/BHI"), however, Petitioner did not comply with the recommended provider. See Initial Decision at 2. The Agency additionally provided Petitioner with a MED-1 form, which was submitted, incomplete, on February 10, 2025. Ibid. Further, Petitioner provided bank statements to the Agency which indicated that family members were providing her with financial support and that such funds could have been put towards Petitioner's rental arrears. Ibid.; see also Exhibit R-1. On March 4, 2025, the Agency sent Petitioner a notice of termination citing Petitioner's failure to comply with SAI/BHI, failure to comply with Agency child support representatives, and contending that she had financial support to pay for housing, but failed to utilize funds to do so. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1. At the time of the hearing, Petitioner provided testimony as to the financial assistance received, testifying that she needed the money to buy sensitive formula for her child's skin issues and thus the funds could not be utilized for rent. See Initial Decision at 3.

The ALJ found that Petitioner had not complied with her EA service plan, as she failed to attend her mandatory SAI/BHI evaluation. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.6(a). Further, the ALJ found that Petitioner did not provide a completed MED-1 form to the Agency. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1. Additionally, the ALJ found that Petitioner provided proof of financial assistance from family members and failed to utilize the funds received to cure any amount of her back rent. See Initial Decision at 3-4. Therefore, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's denial of EA benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit R-1, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.6(a). I agree.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed.



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, 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.      October 09, 2025

---

Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

