



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 **01477-25 L.B.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C239805016 (PASSAIC COUNTY BOARD OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of her application for Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner EA benefits, contending that she failed to appear at the Agency regarding paperwork for shelter placement on two separate occasions, without good cause. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On January 23, 2025, the Honorable Daniel J. Brown, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On January 24, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the record reflects that Petitioner applied for EA benefits on November 1, 2024, after which the Agency found a shelter with space to admit Petitioner. See Initial Decision at 2. Petitioner was directed by the Agency to appear at their office on December 2, 2024, to sign paperwork and receive information regarding reporting to the shelter. See Initial Decision at 3. Petitioner did not appear at the Agency on December 2, 2024 and she lost the shelter placement. Ibid. The Agency found another shelter placement for Petitioner and directed her to come to the Agency to sign necessary paperwork on December 6, 2024, however, Petitioner did not appear at that meeting either, and she lost that shelter placement. Ibid.; see also Exhibit P-1. As a result, the Agency determined that Petitioner had caused her own homelessness, and accordingly, denied Petitioner's application for EA benefits, and imposed a six-month EA ineligibility penalty. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(3). Petitioner appeared at the Agency, without an appointment, on December 8, 2024, again requesting a shelter placement. See Initial Decision at 3. Petitioner testified that she did not make her previously scheduled appointments due to her children having half-days at school and that going to the Agency would be an inconvenience. Ibid. Based on the credible testimony of the Agency, and finding that Petitioner's testimony was not credible, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had caused her own homelessness, without good cause. Id. at 3-4. Accordingly, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's denial of EA benefits to Petitioner, and the imposition of a six-month ineligibility penalty, were proper and must stand. Id. at 4; see also Exhibit R-1, and 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, 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, as outlined above.

Officially approved final version. January 29, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

