



State of New Jersey

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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 **15626-24 L.W.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C488669004 (CAMDEN-CCBSS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's SNAP benefits, contending that she failed to provide a signed application. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On January 13, 2025, the Honorable William T. Cooper, III, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On January 21, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As Assistant Commissioner, Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I have reviewed the ALJ's Initial Decision and the record, and I hereby ADOPT the ALJ's Initial Decision, and AFFIRM the Agency's determination.

Applicants for SNAP have a duty to cooperate with the Agency in supplying information requested to verify eligibility for SNAP benefits. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.14. Specifically, an applicant is "required to sign the application that shall contain a statement attesting under penalty of perjury" to the information contained therein. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.12.

Here, the record reveals that Petitioner applied for SNAP benefits on July 22, 2024 and was notified in writing regarding a phone interview to be conducted on July 29, 2024. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1 at 6, 9. On July 29, 2024, the Agency attempted to contact Petitioner to conduct the interview, however, the Petitioner could not be reached. Ibid. On the same date, the Agency mailed a copy of the SNAP application requesting Petitioner sign and return the application by August 11, 2024. Ibid.; see also Exhibit R-1 at 11. Petitioner failed to sign and return the application, and on August 14, 2024, the Agency again attempted to contact Petitioner, however, she again could not be reached. Ibid.; see also Exhibit R-1 at 24. The Agency sent Petitioner notice dated September 16, 2024, that her SNAP benefits application was denied for a failure to provide a signed application. See Initial Decision at 3. Petitioner contends that the Agency did not make enough effort to reach out to her regarding the application. Ibid. The Agency representative testified that Petitioner reapplied for SNAP benefits and was approved, with benefits beginning August 29, 2024, and thus the hearing addressed only the period from July 22, 2024, to August 13, 2024. Ibid. The record reflects that Petitioner had failed to timely provide the requested signed application to the Agency, even after the Agency made good faith efforts to contact her regarding the application. See Initial Decision at 4. Accordingly, the ALJ found that the Agency had properly denied Petitioner SNAP benefits, as it was unable to obtain Petitioner's required signature on the application. Ibid. I agree.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision in this matter is ADOPTED, and the Agency's determination is AFFIRMED.



Officially approved final version. February 07, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

