



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 **03562-25 M.D.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C854267007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Work First New Jersey/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families ("WFNJ/TANF"), and Emergency Assistance ("EA"), benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner WFNJ/TANF benefits, contending that she was over the initial maximum income level for receipt of said benefits, and denied Petitioner EA benefits because she was not a WFNJ, nor a Supplemental Security Income ("SSI"), benefits recipient. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On February 25, 2025, the Honorable William J. Courtney, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On February 26, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the ALJ found that, based on Petitioner's stated income of \$150 per week from the sale of food and merchandise online, her monthly household income was \$649.95, and as such, she was over the initial maximum income level of \$638 allowable for WFNJ/TANF benefits eligibility for an assistance unit of two, such as Petitioner's. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1 at 1, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-3.1(a), (b), -3.2, -3.3(a), and Division of Family Development Informational Transmittal ("DFD IT") No. 19-21. Although Petitioner claimed that she had mistakenly reported an income of \$150 weekly to the Agency, the ALJ found such claim to be incredible, as Petitioner had been able to previously pay her rent, and had failed to provide any testimony as to how that was possible if she had \$0 earned income. See Initial Decision at 2-3. The record also reflects that Petitioner is not a WFNJ, nor an SSI benefits recipient, a threshold requirement for EA benefits eligibility. Id. at 2; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.2(a) (limiting eligibility for EA benefits to WFNJ and SSI benefits recipients). Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner is ineligible for WFNJ/TANF and EA benefits, and accordingly, concluded that the Agency's denial of said benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1 at 4. 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. March 04, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

