



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 **06771-25 N.G.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C159655001 (ATLANTIC CO. DEPT OF FAM. & COM. DEV)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for SNAP benefits for failure to provide information necessary to determine eligibility. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. On June 13, 2025, the Honorable Elaine B. Frick, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On June 16, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

Here, Petitioner applied for SNAP benefits on October 31, 2024, and thereafter, on November 26, 2024, the Agency sent Petitioner a Request for Verification asking for various documentation including her driver's license, birth certificate, rent/mortgage receipt, and telephone bill. See Initial Decision at 2-3; see also Exhibit R-1 at 51. The information was due within ten days, but noted that Petitioner should contact the Agency if she could not provide the information within that timeframe or needed assistance in providing the information. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1 at 51. For reasons unspecified in the record, Petitioner received expedited SNAP benefits in the amount of \$296 on November 26, 2024. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1 at 11. Thereafter, the Agency issued Petitioner a benefit decrease notice on December 6, 2024, advising that her SNAP monthly benefit would be reduced to \$137 per month as of January 1, 2025, due to an increase in Petitioner's monthly Social Security benefits amount. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit P-1 at 4. On December 31, 2024, Petitioner brought a completed form to the Agency which explained her prior residential status and reason for relocating to the county. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1 at 13. Subsequently, on January 9, 2025, Petitioner delivered various documentation to the Agency. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1 at 15. At the time of the hearing, the Agency representative testified that the documents delivered to the Agency on January 9, 2024, fulfilled the requested documentation from the Request for Verification of November 26, 2024. See Initial Decision at 3. Also on January 9, 2025, the Agency issued a denial notification to Petitioner, indicating that Petitioner was ineligible for SNAP benefits effective October 31, 2024, due to Petitioner's failure to provide the information needed to process her application for benefits. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit R-1 at 4, 5. At the time of the hearing, Petitioner admitted that she did not provide the verifying documentation requested by the Agency in the November 26, 2024 Request for Verification until January 9, 2025. See Initial Decision at 4. The ALJ found that the Agency properly issued the Request for Verification within the thirty-day processing time period prescribed within regulation, and allowed for an additional ten days after November 26, 2025, for the submission of documentation. See Initial Decision at 6; see also N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.26. Recognizing that the series of events in this matter, including the issuance and later reduction of SNAP benefits to Petitioner, created confusion for Petitioner, the ALJ ultimately found that Petitioner failed to provide the verifications requested by the Agency in a timely manner for processing of her SNAP benefits application. See Initial Decision at 7-8. Accordingly, the ALJ found that the Petitioner failed to timely provide the



Agency with the required documentation necessary to determine Petitioner's eligibility for SNAP benefits, and concluded that the Agency's denial of Petitioner's application for said benefits was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 8; see also N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.14, -2.15, -2.19, -2.20, -2.21, -2.22. 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, Petitioner is without prejudice to reapply for SNAP benefits, if she has not already done so, but is advised that she must provide all documentation necessary to determine eligibility. Petitioner is advised to communicate directly with the Agency with regards to the application and any required documentation.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is hereby ADOPTED, and the Agency's determination is AFFIRMED, as outlined above.

Officially approved final version. July 18, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

