



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 **10380-24 O.C.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C655742007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of her application for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for SNAP benefits, contending that Petitioner had failed to provide information and documentation necessary to determine eligibility. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. On November 19, 2024, the Honorable Mumtaz Bari-Brown, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents. On January 6, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

Here, the record reveals that Petitioner completed an application for SNAP benefits on October 30, 2023, for herself and her two minor children. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. Thereafter, the Agency requested additional information from Petitioner on February 26, 2024, and April 18, 2024. See Initial Decision at 2. Specifically, she was asked to submit a social security card and birth certificate, as well as current paystubs and a lease/rent receipt in order to determine her household composition. Ibid. Petitioner submitted current paystubs on or about April 16, 2024, but the Agency did not receive the birth certificate and social security number for "C.J.," who is listed as the father of one minor child on the presented birth certificate, and who was named within the lease submitted, nor information about C.J.'s income. Ibid. On May 23, 2024, the Agency denied Petitioner's SNAP application for failure to provide information. See Initial Decision at 3. Petitioner testified that she signed the lease for her current home where she and her two minor children reside, and that C.J., while listed on the lease, has never lived at the address, nor been a part of her household. Ibid. Petitioner stated that while C.J. was supposed to live with her, he never appeared at the lease signing, never signed the lease, and was therefore not considered a tenant. Ibid. Petitioner further submitted a letter from her landlord from November 15, 2024, supporting her testimony. Ibid. The Agency representative testified that the Petitioner's landlord's letter did not indicate that C.J. had been removed from the lease and, as such, the SNAP denial should stand. Ibid. In order to determine eligibility for SNAP benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required, such as household income, both earned and unearned income. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19, -2.20. Without said verification of required information, SNAP eligibility cannot be determined or granted. Ibid. Following presentation of testimonial and documentary evidence in this case, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had not provided the requested information required to be verified to determine eligibility, and as such, the Agency's denial of SNAP benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 5; see also N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.19, -2.20. I agree.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.



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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, but must timely provide all information and documentation requested in order to determine eligibility.

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

Officially approved final version. January 15, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

