



State of New Jersey

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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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 03193-25 P.P.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C104840001 (ATLANTIC CO. DEPT OF FAM. & COM. DEV)

Petitioner appeals regarding the Respondent Agency's processing of his Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") application, contending the Agency failed to consider Petitioner's rental housing cost and sought information previously provided. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. Following the transmittal of the matter, the Agency granted Petitioner's SNAP application and issued full retroactive SNAP benefits to the date of his application. A hearing was initially scheduled for February 21, 2025, and, on that date, Petitioner filed a motion seeking the recusal of the assigned Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ") due to his involvement in an earlier 2023 hearing with Petitioner. See Initial Decision at 2. Following argument, the motion to recuse was denied and Petitioner was offered the opportunity to request a stay of the proceedings to seek interlocutory review. Ibid. Petitioner advised he was satisfied with the reasons set forth on the record denying the recusal. Ibid. After conferencing the matter on February 21, 2025, the Agency requested a short postponement. See Initial Decision at 3. On February 27, 2025, the Agency advised that Petitioner's SNAP application was granted and he would be awarded full retroactive SNAP benefits to the date of his application, November 4, 2024. Ibid. Petitioner acknowledged that he had received the full, retroactive SNAP benefits but wished to proceed with a hearing. Ibid. On March 7, 2025, the Honorable Robert D. Herman, ALJ, held a telephonic plenary hearing and took testimony. Ibid.

On March 21, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision and found that Petitioner had been granted, and accepted, the retroactive SNAP benefits. See Initial Decision at 6. The ALJ concluded that, where a SNAP application's processing is delayed, the greatest relief offered is retroactive benefits to the date of application, to the extent that Petitioner is eligible for same. Ibid. Further, the ALJ found that no contested case existed within the regulatory definition, and, as such, the OAL maintained no jurisdiction, and Petitioner had been granted the greatest relief available via retroactive payment of his SNAP benefits to the date of his application. See Initial Decision at 7-8, see also N.J.A.C. 1:1-1.1(a), -1.3, -2.1, -3.2, -4.1(a), -12.5(a). Accordingly, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner's appeal should be dismissed. See Initial Decision at 8.

Here, based on an independent review of the record, and taking official notice of the records of this office, I find that the Agency provided Petitioner with SNAP benefits from the date of his application, in the amount required to make him whole. See also Initial Decision at 2-6. Therefore, as Assistant Commissioner, Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I find that, as no contested case exists, and this matter has now been rendered moot, Petitioner's appeal may be DISMISSED.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision in this matter is hereby ADOPTED, and Petitioner's appeal now being deemed moot, the matter is hereby DISMISSED.



Officially approved final version. May 16, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

