



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 **09463-25 T.D.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C465899004 (CAMDEN-CCBSS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner EA benefits, contending that she refused appropriate housing offered by the Agency. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On September 15, 2025 the Honorable Deirdre Hartman-Zohlman, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On September 23, 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 ("DFD"), 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, based on the discussion below.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.3(a)(1), the "agency shall determine the most appropriate form of emergency housing which is required to address the need and authorize payment of the costs of adequate emergency shelter/housing, taking into consideration individual/family circumstances and services provided." Such emergency housing may include placement in a shelter. Ibid.

Here, on April 15, 2025, Petitioner applied for EA benefits, which application was approved by the Agency on April 17, 2025, and Petitioner was placed in a motel, as there was no space available at the shelter. See Initial Decision at 2. On April 17, 2025 Petitioner signed both shelter rules and motel placement rules which included terms that stated she was aware she was being placed in a motel because all shelters were full at that time and that, once the shelter had an opening, she would be relocated to the shelter. Ibid.; see also Exhibit R-1. Petitioner was placed at the motel and advised on April 30, 2025, that space had become available at the shelter, at which time she refused the shelter placement. See Initial Decision at 3. Petitioner failed to report to the shelter on May 1, 2025, and instead went to the Agency where she was informed that she had no medical documentation indicating that she could not be placed at a shelter placement. Ibid. Petitioner was placed at a different motel beginning May 1, 2025 until May 13, 2025, when she was again referred to the shelter. Ibid. Petitioner did not appear at the shelter on May 13, 2025, or on May 14, 2025. Ibid. On May 14, 2025, the Agency issued a termination of benefits notice to Petitioner, indicating that she had refused the shelter placement offered. Ibid.; see also Exhibit R-1.

Based on the testimony and record provided, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had refused the shelter placement offered by the Agency, without good cause, which placement was an appropriate form of EA benefits to meet Petitioner's



emergent need based on the facts presented, and as such, the Agency's denial of EA benefits was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4-5; see also Exhibit R-1, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.3(a)(1). I agree.

By way of comment, Petitioner may reapply for EA benefits, but is advised that it is the Agency who shall determine the most appropriate form of housing necessary to address her emergency and individual circumstances. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.3(a)(1). Petitioner is further advised that if she again refuses appropriate placement offered by the Agency, she may again be denied EA benefits, and a six-month period of ineligibility for EA benefits imposed. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(3).

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

Officially approved final version. November 07, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

