



State of New Jersey

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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SARAH ADELMAN
Commissioner

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Lt. Governor

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 **18142-25 V.H.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C117663008 (GLOUCESTER COUNTY DIV. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits and the imposition of a six-month period of ineligibility for EA benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner EA benefits, contending that she caused her own homelessness by being evicted from affordable housing due to non-payment of rent. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On October 23, 2025, the Honorable Andrea Spevak, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On October 24, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determinations.

Here, Petitioner entered into a settlement agreement with her affordable housing landlord on April 10, 2025, whereby she agreed to pay back rent in addition to her current monthly rent. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. On May 27, 2025, Petitioner was evicted from her affordable housing unit for failure to pay rent and failure to abide by the terms of her settlement agreement. See Initial Decision at 3. On September 19, 2025, Petitioner applied for EA benefits and was provided with immediate need shelter pending the review of her EA application by the Agency. *Ibid.*; see also Exhibit R-1. On October 16, 2025, the Agency advised Petitioner that her EA application would be denied, and a six-month period of EA benefits ineligibility would be imposed, due to her causing her own homelessness. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1.

Based on the testimony and evidence presented, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had caused her own homelessness, without good cause, due to nonpayment of affordable rent and failure to abide by the terms of her settlement agreement with her landlord. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1. Accordingly, the ALJ found that the Agency's denial of EA benefits to Petitioner, and the imposition of a six-month period of ineligibility for EA benefits, were proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(c)(1)(ii), -6.1(c)(3)(vi). I agree.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As the Assistant Commissioner of the 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's six-month EA ineligibility penalty, shall run from October 16, 2025, the effective date of the Agency's denial, through April 16, 2026. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1 at 48.

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



Officially approved final version. November 10, 2025

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

