



State of New Jersey

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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 **21465-25 A.G.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C185285015 (OCEAN COUNTY BOARD OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency denied EA benefits to Petitioner, contending that she had exhausted her lifetime limit of EA benefits, and did not qualify for any further extension of EA benefits at the present time. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. On January 27, 2026, the Honorable Allison Friedman, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents, and the record was closed. On February 17, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

Here, the ALJ found, and the record substantiates, that Petitioner has received twenty-four months of EA benefits, including hardship extensions, which exceeds her lifetime limit of EA benefits, and that she currently does not qualify for any further extension of any kind. See Initial Decision at 2-4; see also Exhibits R-1, R-3, R-4, R-5, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(a), (b), (c). Petitioner did previously submit a MED-1 form, however, it expired on January 1, 2026, at the end of the second hardship extension. See Initial Decision at 4. Of note, the record also reflects that, at the time of the EA denial in this matter, Petitioner also did not meet the criteria for an extension of EA benefits under the Emergency Assistance for Special Groups ("EASG") pilot program, as she had not submitted a completed MED-1 form indicating that she could not work for one-year, which is needed to establish permanent disability. *Ibid.*; see also State of New Jersey Senate Bill, No. S866, P.L. 2018, c. 164, effective December 20, 2018 ("S866"), now codified at N.J.S.A. 44:10-51(a)(3), also known as Emergency Assistance for Specific Groups ("EASG"), and recently extended pursuant to State of New Jersey Assembly Bill, No. 5549, which extends EA benefits eligibility for certain categories of individuals, including, but not limited to WFNJ recipients who are permanently disabled, as documented by a twelve (12) month MED-1 Form, and Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits recipients. See Division of Family Development Instruction ("DFDI") No. 25-02-01. Further, at the time of the hearing, the testimonial and documentary evidence presented did not indicate that Petitioner would qualify for any of the specified EASG groups for whom additional benefits may be made available. See Initial Decision at 4. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's denial of EA benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 5; see also Exhibits R-1, R-3, R-4, R-5. I agree.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As Assistant Commissioner, DFD, 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, should Petitioner's circumstances change, and she is able to present a 12-month MED-1 form to the Agency, she is without prejudice to reapply for EA benefits.

By way of further comment, the Agency shall refer Petitioner to any and all agencies and organizations that may be able to assist with her current needs, including Social Services for the Homeless.

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

Officially approved final version. April 09, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

