



## State of New Jersey

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*Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
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*Commissioner*

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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 15499-25 B.A.

AGENCY DKT. NO. S653562012 (MIDDLESEX COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's termination of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits, and the denial of a hardship extension for EA benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's EA benefits contending that he, and his assistance unit member "J.R.," had exhausted their lifetime limit of EA benefits, and denied Petitioner a hardship extension because neither assistance unit member qualified 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 November 13, 2025, the Honorable Joan M. Burke, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents, and the record was closed.

On November 21, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determinations. Here, the ALJ found, and the record substantiates, that Petitioner has received more than twelve months of EA benefits, which exceeds both his, and J.R.'s, lifetime limit of EA benefits, and that he and J.R. currently do not qualify for any further extension of any kind. See Initial Decision at 2-5; see also Exhibits R-1, R-4, R-5, R-6, R-11, R-12, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(a), (b), (c). Although Petitioner provided testimony as to J.R. having a medical condition, Petitioner failed to submit a MED-1 form for review by the Agency. See Initial Decision at 4. Further, in order for a household to qualify for a hardship extension, both adults living in the household must meet hardship extension criteria. Ibid. The record also reflects that, at the time of the EA hardship extension denial in this matter, neither Petitioner, nor J.R., met the criteria for an extension of EA benefits under the Emergency Assistance for Special Groups ("EASG") pilot program, as he had not submitted a completed MED-1 form indicating that a member of the household could not work for one-year, which is needed to establish permanent disability. See 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 2-5. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's termination of EA benefits, as well as the denial of a hardship extension of EA benefits, were proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 5; see also Exhibits R-5, R-6. I agree.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.



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, the Agency shall refer Petitioner to any and all agencies and organizations that may be able to assist with his current needs, including Social Services for the Homeless.

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

Officially approved final version. January 13, 2026

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Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

