



State of New Jersey

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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 **03938-26 B.S.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C289935020 (UNION COUNTY DIVISION OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's suspension of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/ GA") benefits. The Agency suspended Petitioner's WFNJ/GA benefits because Petitioner failed to take necessary steps to lift a sanction. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. This matter was initially scheduled for, and a conference was conducted on, March 29, 2026, at which time Petitioner represented that he would be obtaining a completed MED-1 form, and the matter postponed to May 19, 2026. On May 19, 2026, the Honorable Evelyn J. Marose, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On May 26, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received from Petitioner on June 1, 2026.

As Assistant Commissioner, Division of Family Development, 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.

In order to maintain eligibility for receipt of WFNJ benefits, a recipient must cooperate with, and participate in, the WFNJ work activity requirements. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-4.1(a). If a WFNJ recipient fails to comply with their work activities without good cause, the recipient is subject to a sanction resulting in a pro-rata reduction of WFNJ benefits for the first month. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-4.13(b). Thereafter, if the WFNJ benefits recipient is still non-compliant, without good cause, the WFNJ benefits will be suspended for one month. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-4.13(b)(1). If the non-compliance continues, the recipient's case will close the month after the suspension of WFNJ benefits. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-4.13(b)(2).

Following the loss of WFNJ cash assistance benefits due to noncompliance with work activities, the individual must re-apply for WFNJ benefits, satisfactorily complete sanction obligations and comply with work activities in order to be eligible for WFNJ benefits. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(e).

Here, the record reveals that Petitioner is not a recipient of Supplemental Security Income ("SSI"), nor Social Security Disability Insurance ("SSDI") benefits, nor has he obtained a twelve-month MED-1 from a treating physician. See Initial Decision at 2-3. Petitioner has failed to participate in the work activity required by regulation to maintain receipt of WFNJ/ GA benefits. Ibid. Without a medical deferral, or proof of receipt of benefits from SSI or SSDI, the Agency must impose a sanction upon Petitioner for failure to participate in the required work activity and suspend his WFNJ/GA benefits for the period of two months. Ibid. Accordingly, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's determination to suspend Petitioner's WFNJ/



GA benefits, for failure to lift the sanction was proper and must stand. Ibid.; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(5), -2.2(a)(7), -2.11(b)(3). I agree.

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

Officially approved final version. July 16, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

