



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 **08238-26 C.J.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C077989018 (SOMERSET COUNTY BOARD OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's termination of Work First New Jersey/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families ("WFNJ/TANF"), and Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's WFNJ/TANF benefits, first due to a failure to provide documentation, and then, following receipt of such documentation, imposing a two-month period of ineligibility for WFNJ benefits, contending that Petitioner had voluntarily ceased employment. The Agency terminated Petitioner's EA benefits because she was no longer a WFNJ benefits recipient, nor was she a Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits recipient. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On May 28, 2026, the Honorable William T. Cooper III, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On May 29, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determinations.

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 hereby MODIFY the Initial Decision, and AFFIRM the Agency's determinations, based on the discussion below.

"An adult recipient [of Work First New Jersey ("WFNJ") cash benefits] who voluntarily quits a job, without good cause, shall render the entire assistance unit ineligible for WFNJ cash assistance benefits for a period of two months from the date [the Agency] makes the determination that the recipient quit the job." See N.J.A.C. 10:90-4.14(a).

N.J.A.C. 10:90-4.14(b) provides that the "voluntary cessation of employment by [WFNJ] recipients, without good cause, may include, but are not limited to, situations where individuals were discharged from employment due to an action or inaction on his or her part in violation of the employer's written rules or policies, or lawful job related instructions."

Only WFNJ cash assistance recipients and SSI benefits recipients are eligible for EA benefits. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.2(a).

Here, the record reveals that the Agency became aware that Petitioner stated in a Superior Court child support proceeding, on or about April 20, 2026, that she was employed. See Exhibit R-1. Based upon such information, on April 24, 2026, the Agency sent Petitioner a Notification Form indicating that her WFNJ/TANF case would close on June 1, 2026, due to her employment, and that she must provide the Agency with 30 days of consecutive pay stubs in order to verify her income. *Ibid.*; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a). Subsequently, Petitioner provided paystubs to the Agency, and also provided an employer separation notice, wherein her employer cited that she had been discharged from employment due to "performance/conduct," which then led the Agency, by notice of May 21, 2026, to impose a two-month



period of ineligibility from receipt of WFNJ/TANF benefits. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit R-1; and N.J.A.C. 10:90-4.14(a), (b).

At the time of the imposition of the ineligibility period for receipt of WFNJ/TANF benefits, Petitioner was also receiving EA benefits, which she has received for June, 2026. See Exhibit R-2. On May 18, 2026, the Agency notified Petitioner that her EA benefits would be terminated, with the last EA benefits being issued on June 1, 2026, due to her no longer being a WFNJ benefits recipient. See Exhibit R-2; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.2(a).

Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's termination of Petitioner's WFNJ/TANF benefits, and the imposition of a two-month ineligibility penalty for WFNJ benefits, were proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit R-1 and N.J.A.C. 10:90-4.14(a). I agree.

Additionally, as I agree with the ALJ, that the termination of Petitioner's WFNJ/TANF benefits was proper, I also find that the Agency's termination of Petitioner's EA benefits, due to the fact that Petitioner was no longer a WFNJ benefits recipient, was also proper and must stand. See 10:90-6.2(a) and Exhibit R-2. The Initial Decision is modified to reflect the above findings.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is hereby MODIFIED, and the Agency's determinations are AFFIRMED, as outlined above.

Officially approved final version. June 10, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

