



State of New Jersey

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Commissioner

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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 **05025-26 C.L.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C034030018 (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, contending that there was no eligible child in her household. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On May 7, 2026, the Honorable Sarah G. Crowley, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On May 21, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the ALJ found, and the record substantiates, that Petitioner's daughter, the only eligible child in the household, is now twenty years of age, but was still enrolled in school as of September, 2025, although she has failed to attend such schooling. See Initial Decision at 2. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.7(a), children in the WFNJ/TANF program are eligible "up to the age of 18, or up to the age of 19 if they are full-time students in a secondary school, or in the equivalent level of vocational or technical training, and are reasonably expected to complete the program before reaching age 19. Children up to the age of 21 are also eligible for WFNJ/TANF if they are enrolled in a special education program." See Exhibit R-1. While the testimonial evidence in this matter indicates that Petitioner's daughter may be enrolled in school, she has not attended since September, 2025, and has not graduated. See Initial Decision at 2. Consequently, because Petitioner no longer had an eligible child in her household, the Agency terminated her WFNJ/TANF benefits, effective April 1, 2026. Based on the testimony and documentation submitted, the ALJ concluded that the Agency properly terminated WFNJ/TANF benefits to Petitioner. See Initial Decision at 2-3; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.7(a). I agree.

Additionally, while not specifically addressed by the ALJ in the Initial Decision, because I agree that the Agency correctly terminated Petitioner's WFNJ/TANF benefits, I also find that any termination of EA benefits would also be proper in this matter, as Petitioner was no longer a WFNJ benefits recipient, a threshold requirement for EA eligibility. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.2(a).

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, Petitioner is advised that she may apply for WFNJ/General Assistance benefits, if appropriate. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.7(b).



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

Officially approved final version. July 16, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

