



State of New Jersey

MIKIE SHERRILL
Governor

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
PO BOX 716

STEPHEN CHA, MD, MHSR
Commissioner

DR. DALE G. CALDWELL
Lt. Governor

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 **17574-25 D.E.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **S707894009 (HUDSON COUNTY DEPT OF FAM SVCS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of his application for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for SNAP benefits contending that Petitioner had failed to provide information and documentation necessary to determine eligibility. Thereafter, because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. On November 18, 2025, the Honorable Mumtaz Bari-Brown, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents. At the conclusion of the hearing, the record was held open for further submissions and then closed on November 24, 2025. On January 5, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

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 ADOPT the Initial Decision and AFFIRM the Agency's determination, based on the discussion below.

The New Jersey SNAP Program is designed to promote the general welfare and to safeguard the health and well-being of the population by raising the levels of nutrition among low-income households. See N.J.A.C. 10:87- 1.1(a). In order to determine an applicant's eligibility for SNAP, the applicant's income and resources must be below a certain threshold. In addition, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:87-8.5(a), "[A] household may request a hearing on any action by the [Agency] or loss of benefits which occurred in the prior 90 days...[h]owever, if the household establishes that its failure to make the request within the advance notice period was for good cause, the [Agency] shall reinstate the benefits to the prior basis." Ibid.

Based on the record presented, Petitioner applied for SNAP benefits on December 10, 2024, however, he did not submit any supporting documents at the time of his application. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. Also on December 10, 2024, the Agency sent Petitioner a Request for Verification Form requesting information, including a copy of his lease, utility bill, disability award letter, and a letter from his relative stating his living and eating arrangements, which was due to the Agency by December 22, 2024. Ibid. On January 8, 2025, the Agency determined Petitioner was ineligible for SNAP benefits and issued a denial letter. Ibid.

In order to determine eligibility for SNAP benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required, such as household income, both earned and unearned income. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.14, -2.19, -2.20. Without said verification of required information, SNAP eligibility cannot be determined or granted. Ibid. Following presentation of testimonial and documentary evidence in this case, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had not provided the requested information required



to be verified to determine eligibility, and as such, the Agency's denial of SNAP benefits to Petitioner at recertification was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4; see also N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.14. I agree.

By way of comment, Petitioner is without prejudice to reapply for SNAP benefits, if he has not already done so, but must timely provide all information and documentation requested in order to determine eligibility. Petitioner is advised to communicate directly with the Agency with regards to the application and any required documentation.

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

Officially approved final version. January 22, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

