



## State of New Jersey

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*Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
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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 **18518-25 E.P.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **S619095012 (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 of EA benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's EA benefits, and denied a hardship extension of EA benefits, contending that he had exhausted his lifetime limit of EA benefits, and did not qualify for a further extension of EA benefits at the present time. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On January 23, 2026, the Honorable Jeffrey N. Rabin, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents, and the record was closed. On February 2, 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 ADOPT the Initial Decision and AFFIRM the Agency's determinations, based on the discussion below.

EA benefits are limited to 12 months, plus limited extensions for an "extreme hardship" where the recipient has taken "all reasonable steps to resolve the emergent situation but the emergency nonetheless continues or a new emergency occurs, which causes extreme hardship to the family." N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(b); see also N.J.S.A. 44:10-51. Specifically, a Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") recipient may qualify for an additional six months of EA when an "extreme hardship" exists. Ibid. Thus, the maximum amount of EA that a WFNJ/GA benefits recipient may receive is 18 months.

Here, the ALJ found, and the record substantiates, that Petitioner, a WFNJ/GA benefits recipient, received his 12-month lifetime limit of EA benefits from October 2024 through October 2025. See Initial Decision at 2-3, see also Exhibits R-2, R-11. On September 16, 2025, the Agency advised Petitioner that his EA benefits would end effective October 17, 2025, due to reaching his EA lifetime limit of eligibility for benefits and that his application for an EA hardship extension was denied as he did not meet the criteria for an EA hardship extension. See Initial Decision at 2-3, see also Exhibits R-6, R-7, R-8, R-11, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(a), (b), (c). Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's termination of Petitioner's EA benefits, and the denial of a hardship extension of EA benefits, were proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 2-5; see also Exhibits R-7, R-8. I agree.



By way of comment, the transmittal in this matter included an issue regarding a termination of WFNJ/GA benefits, however, this issue was moot at the time of the hearing as Petitioner's WFNJ/GA benefits had been reinstated effective November 1, 2025. See Exhibit-Case Summary.

By way of additional 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, as outlined above.

Officially approved final version. April 09, 2026

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Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

