



State of New Jersey

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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 **21644-25 E.T.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C219852004 (CAMDEN-CCBSS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's reduction in benefit amount of her Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits amount, and challenges the imposition of a 30 percent contribution towards the cost of her Emergency Assistance ("EA") shelter costs. The Agency reduced the amount of Petitioner's WFNJ/GA benefits in order to satisfy the terms of Petitioner's EA service plan ("SP"), which requires a 30 percent contribution to shelter costs. This matter was initially scheduled for May 4, 2026, at which time Petitioner requested an adjournment, which was granted. On June 2, 2026, the Honorable Carl V. Buck III, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents into evidence. The record was then held open to allow for additional submissions and closed on June 3, 2026. On June 16, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed.

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 ALJ's Initial Decision, and AFFIRM the Agency action, based on the discussion below.

"Recipients of emergency assistance ["EA"], including those receiving [Supplemental Security Income ("SSI")], shall contribute 30 percent of their total household income towards payment of all emergency shelter arrangements, including utilities[.]" See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.5(a).

Here, the record reflects that Petitioner began to receive EA benefits in December, 2025, at which time she was notified by the Agency (on November 20, 2025), that her WFNJ/GA benefit amount would be reduced by \$55 per month, effective December 1, 2025, and, further, she executed an EA service plan ("SP"), which included an agreement to a Voluntary Restricted Payment ("VRP"), of 30 percent of her WFNJ/GA grant, which would be contributed to her shelter costs. See Initial Decision at 2-3; see also Exhibit R-1 and N.J.A.C. 10:90-3.23(f)(1). Petitioner signed the SP; however, she hand-wrote in an objection to the VRP and then filed an appeal, which led to the fair hearing in this matter. Ibid.

Based on the foregoing, the ALJ found that Petitioner agreed to a VRP contribution towards the cost of housing, which was agreed upon within the EA SP. See Initial Decision at 3-4; see also Exhibit R-1, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.5. Accordingly, the ALJ in this matter concluded that the Petitioner is required and obligated to contribute to her shelter costs pursuant to regulatory authority and the terms of her EA SP. See Initial Decision at 3. I agree, and further note that the 30 percent VRP is required in accordance with applicable regulatory authority. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.5(a).



By way of comment, if Petitioner fails to pay the VRP, as obligated by regulation and her EA SP, the Agency may terminate her EA benefits, and seek to impose a six-month period of EA ineligibility. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.6(a).

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

Officially approved final version. August 04, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

