



State of New Jersey

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DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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STEPHEN CHA, MD, MHSR
Commissioner

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Lt. Governor

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 **07089-26 J.D.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C897726007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)**

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 June 4, 2026, the Honorable Mumtaz Bari-Brown, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents. The record was held open until June 5, 2026, to allow for the submission of additional documentation, and the record then closed. On June 23, 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.

In order to determine eligibility for SNAP benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required, such as household income, both earned and unearned. 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.

Based on the record presented, Petitioner applied for SNAP benefits on March 16, 2026, on behalf of himself and his minor child, K.D. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. On March 19, 2026, the Agency conducted the mandatory interview and thereafter, the Petitioner submitted two earnings statements from February, 2026, one page of his lease agreement, a utility bill, and K.D.'s birth certificate. Ibid. When the Agency entered information into a database, they discovered that T.R., listed on K.D.'s birth certificate as his mother, resided at the same address as Petitioner and K.D., and that she was employed. Ibid.

Following the interview, the Agency sent Petitioner a Request for Verification Form requesting information, including paystubs received during the month of February for Petitioner and T.R., proof of rent, and a utility bill. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. Petitioner testified at the hearing that he never received such Request for Verification Form. See Initial Decision at 2. This matter was further complicated by the Agency representative, who testified that T.R. had filed a SNAP application, with the same address as Petitioner, on January 6, 2026, provided a different lease page than Petitioner, indicated an additional household member, W.A., and stated she was employed. See Initial Decision at 2-3;



see also Exhibit R-2. The Agency had previously sent T.R. a Request for Verification Form on January 14, 2026, seeking additional documentation and information. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-2.

Petitioner did not provide the Agency with any of the requested information, and on April 15, 2026, the Agency denied Petitioner's application for SNAP benefits. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-1, and N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.27. Following the presentation of testimonial and documentary evidence in this case, the ALJ concluded that neither Petitioner, nor T.R., had provided the requested information required to determine eligibility, and as such, the Agency's denial of SNAP benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4-5; 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. July 08, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

