



# State of New Jersey

MIKIE SHERRILL  
*Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
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STEPHEN CHA, MD, MHSR  
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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 **18737-25 J.M.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C183746003 (BURLINGTON COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's WFNJ/GA benefits application, contending that Petitioner's countable household income exceeded the maximum permissible benefit level for receipt of said benefits. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On March 2, 2026, the Honorable Advia Knight Foster, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents, and the record then closed. On March 18, 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 ("DFD"), Department of Human Services, I have reviewed the ALJ's Initial Decision and the record, the ALJ's Initial Decision is hereby ADOPTED, and I hereby AFFIRM the Agency's determination, based on the discussion below.

Initial financial eligibility for Work First New Jersey ("WFNJ") benefits is determined based upon the assistance unit's ("AU") countable income, both earned and unearned, as well as countable resources. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-3.1(a). If a WFNJ/General Assistance ("GA") AU has income that is equal to or less than the maximum allowable income level, then financial eligibility exists. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-3.1(b) and -3.5(a). The maximum allowable income level for an employable WFNJ/GA benefits AU that consists of one individual is \$278 per month. See DFD Informational Transmittal ("DFD IT") No. 19-21.

Here, the record reflects that Petitioner applied for WFNJ/GA benefits on September 30, 2025. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-A. On October 7, 2025, the Agency denied Petitioner's application for being over the maximum allowable income level for receipt of said benefits. Ibid. Using paystubs provided by Petitioner, the Agency calculated Petitioner's monthly income to be \$1,270. Ibid.; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-3.11(c)(1)(i). As this calculated monthly income exceeded the maximum allowable income level for WFNJ/GA benefits, \$278, on October 7, 2025, the Agency notified Petitioner that his WFNJ/GA application was denied. See Exhibit R-A; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-4, -3.5(a) and DFD IT No. 19-21. Petitioner contended that his income for the paystubs submitted to the Agency is \$276.25 for the week of September 12, 2025, and \$259.27 for the week of September 19, 2025, representing his net income. See Initial Decision at 2-3. However, the ALJ noted that the Agency considers gross income for WFNJ eligibility, and that Petitioner would still exceed the income limit even if under consideration of net income. See Initial Decision at 3; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-3.9(c) (stating that "earned income refers to gross income received by an individual...."). Based on the foregoing, the ALJ in this



matter concluded that the Agency's denial of Petitioner's WFNJ/GA application was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 3. I agree.

By way of comment, Petitioner is without prejudice to reapply for WFNJ/GA benefits, as appropriate, should his circumstances have changed.

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

Officially approved final version. April 30, 2026

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Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

