



## State of New Jersey

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DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
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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 **14035-25 J.S.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **S658883012 (MIDDLESEX COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's termination of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's EA benefits, contending that she had exhausted her lifetime limit of EA benefits and a six-month hardship extension, and did not qualify for any 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 November 25, 2025, the Honorable Deirdre Hartman-Zohlman, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents, and the record was closed.

On November 25, 2025, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the ALJ found, and the record substantiates, that Petitioner, a Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits recipient, has received more than eighteen months of EA benefits, including her 12-month lifetime limit of EA benefits and a six-month hardship extension, which exceeds her lifetime limit of EA benefits, and that she currently does not qualify for any further extension of any kind. See Initial Decision at 2-4; see also Exhibits R-1, R-6, R-7 and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(a), (b), (c). Petitioner did submit a MED-1, however, upon review, the Agency denied the MED-1 form. Ibid. Of note, the record also reflects that, at the time of the EA termination in this matter, Petitioner also did not meet the criteria for an extension of EA benefits under the Emergency Assistance for Special Groups ("EASG") pilot program, as she had not submitted a completed MED-1 form indicating that she could not work for one-year, which is needed to establish permanent disability. See Initial Decision at 2-4; see also State of New Jersey Senate Bill, No. S866, P.L. 2018, c. 164, effective December 20, 2018 ("S866"), now codified at N.J.S.A. 44:10-51(a)(3), also known as Emergency Assistance for Specific Groups ("EASG"), and recently extended pursuant to State of New Jersey Assembly Bill, No. 5549, extends EA benefits eligibility for certain categories of individuals, including, but not limited to WFNJ recipients who are permanently disabled, as documented by a twelve (12) month MED-1 Form, and Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits recipients. See DFD Instruction ("DFDI") No. 25-02-01. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's termination of Petitioner's EA benefits was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 2-4; see also Exhibit R-1, R-6, R-8. I agree.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As Assistant Commissioner, DFD, Department of Human Services, I have considered the ALJ's Initial Decision, and following an independent review of the record, I concur with the ALJ's final conclusion in this matter and hereby ADOPT the Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law.

By way of comment, should Petitioner's circumstances change, and she is able to present a 12-month MED-1 to the Agency, she is without prejudice to reapply for EA benefits.



By way of further comment, the Agency shall refer Petitioner to any and all agencies and organizations that may be able to assist with her current needs, including Social Services for the Homeless.

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

Officially approved final version. January 13, 2026

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Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

