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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 **02740-26 M.C.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C196101003 (BURLINGTON COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for SNAP benefits, contending that she failed to provide verifications as requested and required to determine her eligibility for SNAP benefits. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. This matter was initially scheduled for a hearing on April 30, 2026, at which time an adjournment was granted. On May 13, 2026, the Honorable Kim C. Belin, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents, and the record then closed. On May 29, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, reversing the Agency's determination and ordering the Agency to continue processing the Petitioner's application to make an eligibility determination.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed.

As Assistant Commissioner, Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I have reviewed the ALJ's Initial Decision and the record, and I hereby MODIFY the ALJ's 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 income. 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.

"If by the 30th day, the [Agency] cannot take any further action on the application due to the fault of the household, the household shall lose its entitlement to benefits for the month of application. The [Agency] shall follow the procedures at N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.27(e)." Further, if the household fails to take the required action within 60 days from the date of the application, the SNAP case will close, and a new application for SNAP benefits will be required. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.27(e)(1).

Here, an independent review of the record indicates that, on November 24, 2025, Petitioner applied for SNAP benefits on behalf of her household of six persons. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit R-A. On November 26, 2025, the Agency sent Petitioner a Request for Verification regarding employment of her spouse, C.C., by a per diem employer ("Employer B") and completion of self-employment ledgers for C.C. Ibid. The Request for Verification indicated that the information was due to the Agency by December 8, 2026. See Exhibit R-A. On December 9, 2025, Petitioner submitted self-employment ledgers for C.C. indicating he had earned \$150 during September, 2025, and \$0 income from October, 2025 through December, 2025. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-B. Following such submission, and based



upon the paystubs providing insufficient information, the Agency conducted a database search which revealed that C.C. had earned income from Employer B during the first, second, and third quarters of 2025. Ibid. For purposes of clarity, when the employment database search was conducted, the Agency discovered that C.C. was employed by Employer B, rather than being self-employed. See Exhibit R-B.

On December 26, 2025, the Agency issued a denial of Petitioner's SNAP application for failure to submit mandatory verification, and providing Petitioner thirty days to submit the required documentation. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-C. On January 9, 2026, Petitioner submitted some of C.C.'s paystubs from one employer (Employer P.P.), however, she failed to submit any of C.C.'s paystubs from his second employer (Employer B). Ibid. Subsequently, on January 22, 2026, the Agency issued another denial notification, effective January 9, 2026, due to Petitioner's failure to provide employment verification for C.C. from Employer B. Ibid.

Following the hearing, and in consideration of the testimonial and documentary evidence produced, the ALJ found that N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.27(e)(1) mandates that an applicant shall be given an additional thirty days to comply with the required actions necessary to complete their application for benefits, and that, based on the date of the notification, Petitioner should have had until January 26, 2026 to supply the requested documents, which the Agency failed to provide. See Initial Decision at 4. Accordingly, the ALJ found that the Agency must extend the time limit for verification of information and continue to process the application for SNAP benefits submitted by Petitioner. See Initial Decision at 5.

An independent review of the record reveals that, within the November 26, 2025 Request for Verification, it was indicated that if the information/verification requested was not received by the due date (December 8, 2025) that the application may be denied. See Exhibit R-A. Further, within the December 26, 2025 denial notification to Petitioner, wherein various documentation requests were made, the document states, "You must re-submit a new NJ SNAP application if, at the end of the 30-day period, you have not taken the needed action, and still wish to apply for NJ SNAP benefits." See Exhibit P-2. Further review of the documents submitted by Petitioner show that the paystubs submitted by Petitioner only show the bottom portion of the paystub, such that the paystubs do not show pay dates, nor gross amounts paid, making them insufficient in evaluating the household's earned income. See Exhibit R-B. Pursuant to the regulatory language at N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.27, the Agency shall send a denial notice providing an additional thirty days for the applicant to take the required action, however, no further action is required by the Agency if the household fails to take the required action within 60 days following the date of application. Based on the foregoing, I find that the Agency complied with the notice requirements set forth within regulation, and correctly denied Petitioner's application. The Initial Decision is modified to reflect that above finding, as Petitioner failed to submit the required verifications necessary for the Agency to evaluate when determining eligibility for SNAP benefits.

By way of comment, it should be noted that between the date of the notification on December 26, 2025, and through the date of the Initial Decision in this matter, Petitioner still has not submitted the verifications requested by the Agency, which are necessary when making an eligibility determination for SNAP benefits.

By way of further comment, Petitioner is without prejudice to reapply for SNAP benefits, if she 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 MODIFIED, to reflect these findings, and the Agency's determination is hereby AFFIRMED, as outlined above.

Officially approved final version. July 16, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

