



## State of New Jersey

MIKIE SHERRILL  
*Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
PO BOX 716

STEPHEN CHA, MD, MHSR  
*Commissioner*

DR. DALE G. CALDWELL  
*Lt. Governor*

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 **20791-25 M.G.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C176695003 (BURLINGTON COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS)**

Petitioner challenges the correctness of the Respondent Agency's calculation of her monthly Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits allotment beginning July 1, 2025. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. The hearing in this matter was initially scheduled for March 9, 2026, but was adjourned as the Agency was not prepared to proceed. On March 20, 2026, the Honorable Andrea Spevak, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On April 6, 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 reviewed the ALJ's Initial Decision and the record, and I hereby ADOPT the ALJ's Initial Decision, and AFFIRM the Agency's determination, based on the discussion below.

Here, the record reflects that Petitioner received SNAP benefits, as a household of four, until December 1, 2025. See Initial Decision at 2. On May 17, 2024, Petitioner was hired by a school district with a contract from September 1, 2024, to June, 20, 2025. Ibid. On December 16, 2024, the Agency completed Petitioner's recertification for SNAP benefits (for the period of December 16, 2024, to May 31, 2025), based upon information submitted by Petitioner including paystubs for pay periods ending November 30, 2024, and December 13, 2024, as well as child support payment records. See Initial Decision at 3. During the December, 2024 recertification process, the Agency asserts that Petitioner never submitted her employment contract. Ibid. Although Petitioner testified at the hearing that she had submitted a copy of her employment contract at a drop box located at the Agency on or about July 1, 2025, she was unable to produce evidence of such assertion. Ibid. On November 14, 2025, Petitioner requested retroactive SNAP benefits from July 1, 2025, asserting that she had no income from that date, and therefore should have received a higher SNAP benefits allotment amount prospectively from that date. See Initial Decision at 2.

Based on the foregoing, the ALJ found that Petitioner had failed, at the time of her recertification in December, 2024, to report the anticipated income change during the course of the forthcoming certification period, as well as to report the change in circumstance following the actual loss of her employment in June, 2025, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:87-5.2. See Initial Decision at 3-4. Accordingly, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had failed to prove, by a preponderance of the credible evidence, that she reported changed circumstances, which would have impacted the amount of her SNAP benefits allotment prior to November 14, 2025, and thus, Petitioner is ineligible for retroactive SNAP benefits beginning July 1, 2025. See Initial Decision at 4. I agree.



By way of comment, the Agency is reminded of its responsibilities in representation and presentation of a matter at a plenary hearing before an ALJ, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:87-8.15.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is hereby ADOPTED, and the Agency's action is AFFIRMED, as outlined in the discussion above.

Officially approved final version. April 22, 2026

---

Natasha Johnson  
Assistant Commissioner

