



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 **03233-26 M.G.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **S610311012 (MIDDLESEX COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's termination of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA"), and Emergency Assistance ("EA"), benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's WFNJ/GA benefits, contending that the assistance unit's income exceeded the WFNJ/GA benefits financial eligibility limits, and terminated Petitioner's EA benefits because she was no longer a WFNJ/GA cash benefits recipient, nor a Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits recipient. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On May 5, 2026, the Honorable Diane Hoagland, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On May 27, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determinations.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As Assistant Commissioner, Division of Family Development ("DFD"), 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 determinations, based on the discussion below.

In order to be eligible for WFNJ/GA benefits, the total countable income of the unemployable single adult, or couple without dependent children, must be equal to or less than the maximum benefit payment level for the size of the assistance unit as set out in Schedule V at N.J.A.C. 10:90-3.6(a). See N.J.A.C. 10:90-3.1(b)(1). Effective July 1, 2019, the maximum benefit level for an unemployable WFNJ/GA AU, consisting of one person, is \$277 per month. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-3.6(a); see also DFD Informational Transmittal ("IT") No. 19-21.

Only WFNJ cash assistance recipients and Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits recipients are eligible for EA benefits. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.2(a).

Here, the ALJ found, and the record substantiates, that Petitioner was in receipt of monthly WFNJ/GA benefits, and EA benefits, at the time that she was approved for Social Security benefits. See Initial Decision at 2. Specifically, on January 13, 2026, Petitioner was informed by the Social Security Administration that she was approved for Social Security benefits, and on January 30, 2026, Petitioner was advised that she would be receiving retroactive SSI benefits in the total amount of \$39,527.25. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibits R-5, R-6. Further, the record reflects that on February 1, 2026, Petitioner received a monthly SSI benefits payment, and on March 6, 2026, Petitioner received two retroactive SSI benefits payments. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-7.



Additionally, the record indicates that in March, 2026, Petitioner began to receive monthly Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance ("RSDI") benefits, in the amount of \$1,221 per month. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-7. Based upon the monthly receipt of RSDI benefits, the Agency determined that Petitioner's monthly income exceeded the maximum benefit level of \$277, for continued receipt of WFNJ/GA benefits. See Initial Decision at 2-3; see also Exhibits R-6, R-7, R-8, R-13, R-14; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-3.6(a), and DFD IT No. 19-21. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's termination of WFNJ/GA benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 3. I agree.

The ALJ further found that, because Petitioner is no longer a WFNJ, nor an SSI, benefits recipient, the household is ineligible for EA benefits, and as such, concluded that the Agency's termination of Petitioner's EA benefits was also proper and must be affirmed. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-8, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.2(a). I also agree.

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

Officially approved final version. July 15, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

