



State of New Jersey

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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 **07734-26 M.W.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **S799179009 (HUDSON COUNTY DEPT OF FAM SVCS)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's termination of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits, and the denial of a further extension of EA benefits. The Agency terminated Petitioner's EA benefits, and denied Petitioner an extension of EA benefits, contending that he had exhausted his lifetime limit of EA benefits, and all available EA extensions 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 July 23, 2026, the Honorable Thomas R. Betancourt, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents, and the record was closed. On July 23, 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 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 determination, based on the discussion below.

EA benefits are limited to 12 cumulative months, plus limited extensions for an "extreme hardship" where the recipient has taken "all reasonable steps to resolve the emergent situation but the emergency nonetheless continues or a new emergency occurs, which causes extreme hardship to the family." N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(b); see also N.J.S.A. 44:10-51. Specifically, General Assistance ("GA") recipients may qualify for an additional six months of EA when an "extreme hardship" exists. Ibid. Thus, the maximum amount of EA that a GA recipient may receive is 18 months.

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 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, which certifies a disability for a period of 12 months, and Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") benefits recipients. See DFD Instruction ("DFDI") No. 25-02-01.

Here, the ALJ found, and the record substantiates, that Petitioner has received his 12-month lifetime limit of EA benefits, as well as a six-month hardship extension, and currently does not qualify for any further extension of any kind, including under EASG. See Initial Decision at 2-4; see also Exhibit R-1, N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(a), (b), (c), and 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), and extended pursuant to State of New Jersey Assembly Bill, No. 5549, and Division of Family Development Instruction



("DFDI") No. 25-02-01. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's termination of Petitioner's EA benefits, and the denial of a further extension of EA benefits, were proper and must stand, and that Petitioner is ineligible for any further extension of EA benefits at the present time. Ibid. I agree.

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

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

Officially approved final version. August 18, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

