



State of New Jersey

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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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 **05265-26 Q.L.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **S652660012 (MIDDLESEX COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)**

Petitioner challenges the correctness of the Respondent Agency's reduction of her Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits, and the denial of her application for Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits. Petitioner's SNAP benefits were reduced because Petitioner's adult child was removed from the SNAP household. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. On June 9, 2026, the Honorable Joan M. Burke, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held the plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On June 12, 2026, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determinations.

Here, the record reflects that on February 2, 2026, Petitioner applied for WFNJ/GA benefits, while already in receipt of SNAP benefits. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. The Agency sent Petitioner a Request for Verification related to the WFNJ application, and requested a bank statement, a MED-1 form, and proof of a Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") claim. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-2. Petitioner failed to respond to the Agency. *Ibid.* Thereafter, on March 4, 2026, the Agency denied Petitioner's WFNJ/GA application due to her failure to provide information necessary to determine her eligibility for benefits, as well as because Petitioner had already received the lifetime limit of WFNJ/GA benefits, and did not qualify for an exemption from such time limit. *Ibid.*; see also Exhibits R-3, R-4.

On February 9, 2026, the Agency sent Petitioner a request for information to ensure that her SNAP benefits were being properly calculated, which documents were due to the Agency by February 19, 2026. See Initial Decision at 2-3; see also Exhibit R-2. Petitioner failed to respond to the Agency. See Initial Decision at 3. Subsequently, on March 6, 2026, the Agency informed Petitioner that her SNAP benefits would be reduced from \$545 to \$298, effective April 1, 2026, due to the Agency having removed Petitioner's son as a member of the SNAP household pursuant to N.J.A.C. 10:87-3.14. *Ibid.*; see also Exhibit R-3. At the time of the hearing, Petitioner testified that her son is disabled, but that he attends community college online and resides with her, however, Petitioner failed to provide any current medical or educational documentation as requested by the Agency. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit P-1.

Based upon the testimonial and documentary evidence provided, the ALJ concluded that, as to the denial of WFNJ/GA benefits, Petitioner has received ninety-five months of WFNJ benefits, and that benefits are limited to a total of sixty months, unless the individual can satisfy criteria for an extension of, or an exemption from, the lifetime limit, which Petitioner has not substantiated in this matter. See Initial Decision at 4-6; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.4(a)(6), -2.5(a). I agree.



Based on the foregoing, the ALJ further found that, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 10:87-3.14, a SNAP household member who is a student must meet certain qualifications in order to receive SNAP benefits, as outlined in N.J.A.C. 10:87-3.14. See Initial Decision at 6-7. In this matter, Petitioner provided information to the Agency that her son is enrolled in college, and, based upon such information, the Agency requested a college verification and a completed student eligibility form, which were due to the Agency by February 19, 2026. See Initial Decision at 7; see also Exhibit R-2. Petitioner failed to submit the documentation required in order for the Agency to evaluate whether her son could participate as a member of the SNAP household based upon the applicable regulation. Ibid. Accordingly, the ALJ concluded that the reduction in size of Petitioner's SNAP household, which resulted in the reduction of SNAP benefits in April, 2026, was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 7-8; see also Exhibit R-2. I also agree.

Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed by Petitioner on June 15, 2025.

As Assistant Commissioner, Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I have considered the record in this matter and the ALJ's Initial Decision and I concur with the ALJ's decision and hereby adopt the Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law in this matter.

By way of comment, I have reviewed Petitioner's Exceptions, and I find that the arguments made therein do not alter my decision in this matter.

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

Officially approved final version. July 08, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

