



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 **21509-25 S.T.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C652256007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)**

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of her application for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for SNAP benefits contending that Petitioner had failed to provide information and documentation necessary to determine eligibility. Thereafter, because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. On January 20, 2026, the Honorable Andrew M. Baron, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents. Following the hearing, the matter was inadvertently closed and returned as a Failure to Appear. After recalling and re-opening the matter, on April 14, 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.

The New Jersey SNAP Program is designed to promote the general welfare and to safeguard the health and well-being of the population by raising the levels of nutrition among low-income households. See N.J.A.C. 10:87- 1.1(a). In order to determine an applicant's eligibility for SNAP, the applicant's income and resources must be below a certain threshold.

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.

Based on the record presented, Petitioner applied for SNAP benefits on March 27, 2025, and was interviewed by the Agency on April 2, 2025. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. On May 31, 2025, the Agency sent Petitioner a Request for Verification Form requesting a copy of rent receipts/payments and utility bills. Ibid. Petitioner partially complied with the submission of documentation, however, when all requested documentation was not received by June 20, 2025, the Petitioner's case was closed. Ibid. Thereafter, on September 12, 2025, Petitioner submitted a new application for SNAP benefits which was approved. Ibid.

Following presentation of testimonial and documentary evidence in this case, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had not provided the requested information required to be verified to determine eligibility, and as such, the Agency's denial of SNAP benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 2-3. I agree. Further, the ALJ concluded



that Petitioner is not entitled to any retroactive benefits from June 1, 2025 through September 11, 2025. See Initial Decision at 2-3; see also Exhibit R-1 and N.J.A.C. 10:87-2.14. I also agree.

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

Officially approved final version. April 29, 2026

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

