



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 **04361-24 N.W.**

AGENCY DKT. NO. **C694047007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)**

Petitioner challenges the correctness of the Agency's determination of his monthly Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits allotment amount at recertification. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for a hearing. A telephonic plenary hearing was scheduled for June 6, 2024, before the Honorable Mumtaz Bari-Brown, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"). See Initial Decision at 2. On the day of the hearing, prior to going on the record, the parties engaged in a discussion about the issues in an attempt to resolve the matter. Ibid. Petitioner was advised that if the matter could not be resolved, the case would proceed to a plenary hearing. Ibid. Petitioner then abruptly hung up from the telephonic proceedings. Ibid. The ALJ held the phone line open for Petitioner to call back in, but he did not do so, and after a reasonable period of time, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner did not wish to continue with the hearing. Ibid. Petitioner thereafter provided no reason via email or phone call to the ALJ's chambers to explain his withdrawal from the proceeding. Ibid. On June 11, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, finding that Petitioner had been advised of the issues and his right to proceed to a plenary hearing, but Petitioner withdrew from the proceeding before going on the record, and did not call back to the proceeding and provided no good cause reason for said failure, and as such, determined that Petitioner abandoned his appeal and dismissed the case.

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, finding that Petitioner appeared for the proceeding before the ALJ, but then left the proceeding and did not return, therefore abandoning his appeal in this matter.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is hereby ADOPTED, and Petitioner's appeal is hereby dismissed.

Officially approved final version. July 03, 2024

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

