



State of New Jersey

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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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 11149-23 W.S.

AGENCY DKT. NO. S513555012 (MIDDLESEX COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of his application for Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner's application for WFNJ/GA, contending that Petitioner had failed to provide information and documentation necessary to determine eligibility for said benefits. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On December 11, 2023, the parties appeared for a telephonic hearing, at which time Petitioner asserted he did not want to proceed without legal representation. The hearing was adjourned until February 26, 2024, at which time both parties requested additional time to exchange documents. On May 20, 2024, the Honorable Nicole T. Minutoli, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a telephonic plenary hearing, took testimony, admitted documents, and the record was closed following a post-hearing document submission by Petitioner.

On June 10, 2024, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the record reveals that the Petitioner applied for WFNJ/GA benefits on June 26, 2023, at which time he was advised by the Agency he was required to submit verification of proof of a Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") pending appeal, as he was on a medical deferral and unable to meet the WFNJ/GA work requirement. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1. Petitioner and the Agency exchanged multiple email correspondences related to his obligation to provide proof of a pending SSI appeal. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibit R-3. On July 26, 2023, the Agency performed a systems look-up, as part of Petitioner's application process, and discovered that Petitioner did not have a pending SSI application or appeal. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit R-4. Petitioner failed to provide the requested documentation, and on July 26, 2023, the Agency denied his WFNJ/GA application. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit R-5. Petitioner presented no evidence to demonstrate good cause for his failure to timely provide information to the Agency and, two days after the denial, on July 28, 2023, in fact provided the requested documentation after his WFNJ/GA case was closed. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibit P-1.

In order to determine eligibility for WFNJ/GA benefits, mandatory verification of certain information is required. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2. Verification for WFNJ/GA benefits requires the applicant to provide all necessary documentation. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(5) (stating that "As a condition of eligibility for WFNJ benefits, the applicant shall, subject to good cause exceptions, be required to provide all necessary documentation."). Based on the credible testimony provided, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had not provided the information required to be verified to determine eligibility, and as such, the Agency's denial of WFNJ/GA benefits to Petitioner was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 5; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-2.2(a)(5). I agree.

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 concur with the ALJ's final conclusion in this matter and hereby ADOPT the Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law.

By way of comment, Petitioner is without prejudice to reapply for WFNN/GA benefits, if he has not already done so, but is reminded that he must provide all information and documentation requested in order to determine eligibility.

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

Officially approved final version. July 11, 2024

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

