

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Chris Christie Governor

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Elizabeth Connolly Acting Commissioner

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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 20197-15 V.N.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C642740 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of her application for Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits and imposition of a six-month EA penalty. The Agency denied Petitioner EA benefits because she refused the Agency's offer to place her in a shelter. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On December 18, 2015, the Honorable Thomas R. Betancourt, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents.

On the same day, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. The record shows that Petitioner was denied EA benefits for refusing the Agency's offer to place her in a shelter. See Initial Decision at 2. The ALJ also found that Petitioner is not in imminent danger of being homeless because she currently resides with her mother. Ibid. Accordingly, the ALJ concluded that the Agency properly denied Petitioner EA benefits. Id. at 3.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed.

As the Director of the 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 in this matter.

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Additionally, I agree with the Agency's imposition of a six-month EA penalty in this matter. As such, Petitioner is ineligible for EA benefits for a period of six months from the effective date of the Agency's denial. See Initial Decision at 1.

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

DEC 2 9 2015

Signed Copy on File at DFD, BARA

Natasha Johnson Director