



State of New Jersey

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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 01466-18 R.Q.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C497076007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of an extreme hardship extension of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner an extension of EA benefits, and consequently terminated his benefits, because Petitioner had exhausted his lifetime limit of EA benefits, and did not qualify for an extreme hardship extension. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On February 21, 2018, the Honorable Susana E. Guerrero, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On March 12, 2018, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the ALJ found, and Petitioner did not dispute, that he has received 12 months of EA benefits. See Initial Decision at 2, 4; see also Exhibit R-6. Based on the foregoing, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner has exhausted his 12-month lifetime limit of EA benefits. See Initial Decision at 4; see also N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(a). Additionally, the ALJ found that Petitioner did not meet the criteria for an extreme hardship extension of EA benefits, and had failed to provide sufficient justification to extend EA benefits beyond the 12-month lifetime limit. See Initial Decision at 2-3, 4; see also Exhibit R-5, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(b). Therefore, the ALJ concluded that the Agency's denial of an extreme hardship extension of EA benefits to Petitioner, and its consequent termination of EA benefits, was proper and must stand. See Initial Decision at 4; see also Exhibits P-1, R-2, and N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.4(a), (b), (c). I agree.

Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed by Petitioner on March 26 and April 3, 2018.

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.

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

By way of further comment, the Agency shall refer Petitioner to any and all agencies and organizations that may be able to assist with his current needs, including Social Services for the Homeless.



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

Officially approved final version.

APR 17 2018

Natasha Johnson
Director

