



State of New Jersey

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Governor

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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Commissioner

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Lt. Governor

NATASHA JOHNSON
Director

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 13174-18 S.L.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C058839018 (SOMERSET COUNTY BOARD OF SOC. SVCS.)

Petitioner appeals from Respondent Agency's reduction of her Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits. The Agency reduced Petitioner's SNAP benefits because she failed to comply with the work activity requirement. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On October 2, 2018, the Honorable Sarah G. Crowley, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents.

On October 23, 2018, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the record reflects that Petitioner applied for SNAP benefits in July 2018, and was given notice to attend a work training program on August 1, 2018. See Initial Decision at 2. However, Petitioner never reported to the work program, nor otherwise contacted the Agency to explain why she was unable to attend. *Ibid.* As a result, on August 20, 2018, the Agency notified Petitioner that her SNAP benefits would be reduced, effective September 1, 2018, for failing to comply with the work activity requirement. *Ibid.*; see also Exhibit R-1 at 13-23. The Agency scheduled another work training appointment for Petitioner to begin on October 1, 2018, but Petitioner failed again to attend. See Initial Decision at 2. The ALJ found that Petitioner's reason for not complying with her work activity was inexcusable, and concluded that Petitioner was unable to provide good cause for her failure to attend the mandatory work activity, and therefore affirmed the Agency's reduction of Petitioner's SNAP benefits. *Id.* at 3; see also Exhibit R-1 at 13-23, and N.J.A.C. 10:87-10.4(a), -10.16(a)(1), -10:18(a). I agree.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were filed by either party.

As the Director of the Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I have considered the record in this matter and the ALJ's Initial Decision and I concur with the ALJ's decision and hereby adopt the Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law in this matter.

By way of comment, as Petitioner has received continued benefits pending the outcome of this fair hearing, the pro-rata reduction of Petitioner's SNAP benefits shall begin on the date of issuance of this Final Agency Decision, and continue for one month, or until Petitioner comes into compliance, whichever is later. See N.J.A.C. 10:87-10.16(a)(1) (emphasis added).



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

Officially approved final version.

Natasha Johnson
Director

OCT 26 2018

