



**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Division of Family Development  
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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 5556-15 H.Z.

AGENCY DKT. NO. GA544669 (MIDDLESEX COUNTY BD. OF SOC. SVCS.)

Petitioner appeals from Respondent Agency's denial of Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits because Petitioner failed to comply with her service plan. Because Petitioner appealed, this matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On May 11, 2015, the Honorable Leland S. McGee, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a hearing, took testimony, and admitted documents. On May 11, 2015, the ALJ issued his Initial Decision affirming the Agency determination.

No exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As the Director of the Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I have reviewed the record in this matter and the ALJ's Initial Decision, and having made an independent evaluation of the record, I hereby ADOPT the Initial Decision and AFFIRM the Agency's determination.

The purpose of EA is to meet the needs of public assistance recipients, such as imminent homelessness, so that the recipient can participate in work related activities without disruption in order to continue on the path to self-sufficiency. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.1(a). In order to maintain eligibility for EA, the recipient must take reasonable steps to resolve the emergent situation. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.6(a). Reasonable steps include the recipient participating in the creation of, and compliance with, a service plan. *Ibid.* If a recipient fails to comply with the service plan, then the recipient is ineligible for EA benefits for a period of six months. *Ibid.*

In the present matter, Petitioner is the recipient of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits of \$210.00 per month and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP"), f/k/a the Food Stamp Program, benefits of \$194.00 per month. See Initial Decision at 2. On February 19, 2015, Petitioner applied to the Agency for EA in the form of Temporary Rental Assistance ("TRA"). See Exhibit R-1. On that date, Petitioner signed an EA service plan stating, among other things, that she would secure affordable housing by March 19, 2015; complete 10 housing contacts per week and keep Housing Search Logs; and mail the logs to the Agency every Friday. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-2. Subsequently, the Agency determined that Petitioner failed to comply with the Service Plan requirements. See Initial Decision at 2. As a result, the Agency denied Petitioner's EA application. *Ibid.*; see also Exhibits R-11 and R-12.

At the hearing, the ALJ found that Petitioner failed to comply with her service plan because she did not secure affordable housing by March 19, 2015 and did not provide the Agency with her required Housing Search Logs. See Initial Decision at 3. Further, the ALJ found that Petitioner did not prove by sufficient competent, credible evidence that the Agency improperly denied her EA application. *Ibid.* Therefore, the ALJ concluded, and I agree, that the Agency's denial of Petitioner's EA application was appropriate. Accordingly, Petitioner is now subject to a six-month period of ineligibility for EA beginning March 31, 2015, the effective date of the Agency's denial. See N.J.A.C. 10:90-6.6(a).

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

*Signed Copy on File*  
at DFD, BARA

JUN 02 2015

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Natasha Johnson  
Director