



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 7357-15 R.B.

AGENCY DKT. NO. GA487154 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's denial of Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") benefits. The Agency denied Petitioner WFNJ/GA benefits because, purportedly, he failed to provide it with requested documentation. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On May 26, 2015, the Honorable Caridad F. Rigo, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents.

On May 26, 2015, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, reversing the Agency's determination. The record shows that Petitioner completed his WFNJ 28-day work activity on March 5, 2015, required for receipt of WFNJ/GA benefits. See Initial Decision at 2-3. Additionally, the record indicates that the Agency denied Petitioner WFNJ/GA benefits on May 18, 2015, because, purportedly, he failed to provide it with verification that he had enrolled in college, as requested. *Id.* at 2. Here, the ALJ found that Petitioner complied with his work activity in a timely manner; he credibly testified that he never received the Agency's request for verification of his enrollment in college, even after going into the office almost every other day to inquire about his benefits; and he never enrolled in college, only telling his caseworker that he planned on enrolling some time in the future. Accordingly, the ALJ reversed the Agency's denial of WFNJ/GA benefits, and directed the Agency to provide Petitioner with WFNJ/GA benefits retroactive to March 5, 2015, the date he completed his WFNJ 28-day work requirement.

No Exceptions to this 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.

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

JUN 05 2015

Signed Copy on File
at DFD, BARA

Natasha Johnson
Director