



State of New Jersey

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 10432-15 W.D.

AGENCY DKT. NO. GA588237 (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 he allegedly failed to provide it with requested verification documentation. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On August 26, 2015, the Honorable Thomas R. Betancourt, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ"), held a plenary hearing, took testimony and admitted documents.

On August 27, 2015, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision, affirming the Agency's determination. Here, the record shows that Petitioner did not comply with the Agency's request to provide it with the verification documents it required to properly evaluate his WFNJ/GA application. See Initial Decision at 3. The Agency issued a Notice of Verification to Petitioner, dated March 16, 2015, that delineated the documentation that Petitioner was to provide to it by March 27, 2015. See Exhibit R-4. Notwithstanding Petitioner's failure to provide the Agency with the verification documentation by March 27, 2015, the Agency once again notified Petitioner it required the verification documents in order to complete its evaluation of his WFNJ/GA application, giving him until May 7, 2015, to provide them. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-2 at 1. The Agency issued a notification letter denying Petitioner's WFNJ/GA application on May 15, 2015, because he failed to provide the required verification documents. See Initial Decision at 2; see also Exhibit R-1 at 1-2.

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In the matter, Petitioner testified that he was not aware that the Agency was seeking documents. See Initial Decision at 3. However, Petitioner contradicted himself by also testifying that he did, in fact, receive from the Agency the exhibits marked into evidence and identified as Exhibits R-1, R-2 and R-3. Ibid. The ALJ noted that the only document that Petitioner provided to the Agency, albeit late, was a letter from the relative with whom Petitioner lives that was determined by the ALJ to be inadequate to address the Agency's information request. See Initial Decision at 3; see also Exhibits P-1 and R-3. The ALJ concluded that the Agency's action denying Petitioner's WFNJ/GA application was appropriate and should be affirmed. See Initial Decision at 3.

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 AFFIRMED.

Signed Copy on File
at DFD, BARA

SEP 18 2015

Natasha Johnson
Director