

CHAPTER 273

AN ACT concerning eligibility for emergency assistance and amending P.L.1997, c.14.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. Section 8 of P.L.1997, c.14 (C.44:10-51) is amended to read as follows:

C.44:10-51 Provision of emergency assistance.

8. a. Emergency assistance shall be provided only to recipients of Work First New Jersey and persons receiving Supplemental Security Income pursuant to P.L.1973, c.256 (C.44:7-85 et seq.) in emergent situations. The standards for eligibility shall be established by the commissioner by regulation, except that emergency assistance shall be granted to an individual or family in which the individual or family is in a state of homelessness or imminent homelessness that, according to a signed attestation by the applicant, is the result of imminent or demonstrated domestic violence that may imperil the health and safety of the individual or family. Emergency assistance shall be provided for up to 12 cumulative months; except that:

(1) the commissioner may provide for an extension of emergency assistance for up to six additional months to a family with dependent children, if the commissioner determines that a case of extreme hardship exists. The commissioner shall review each such case on a monthly basis during the six-month period and shall continue the emergency assistance only if the commissioner determines, based upon the monthly review, that the extreme hardship continues to exist. If the extreme hardship continues to exist at the end of the six-month period, the commissioner may provide an additional six months of emergency assistance to no more than 10% of those families with dependent children which are receiving temporary rental assistance under the emergency assistance component of the program, based upon the most current data available; and

(2) the commissioner may provide for an extension of emergency assistance for up to six additional months to no more than 10% of single adults and couples without dependent children who are receiving temporary rental assistance under the emergency assistance component of the program, if the commissioner determines that a case of extreme hardship exists. The commissioner shall review each such case on a monthly basis during the six-month period and shall continue the emergency assistance only if the commissioner determines, based upon the monthly review, that the extreme hardship continues to exist.

Any form of emergency assistance provided pursuant to this section shall count toward the maximum period of emergency assistance allowed.

b. A person receiving emergency assistance shall contribute from the person's income toward the payment of all emergency shelter arrangements, including temporary housing and temporary rental assistance, in accordance with regulations adopted by the commissioner. As a condition of receipt of emergency assistance, a person shall be required to take all reasonable steps to end the person's dependency on emergency assistance and take all other actions required by the commissioner.

c. The commissioner shall adopt regulations to establish classifications for hotel or motel per diem rates in accordance with the level of enhanced services provided at a participating hotel or motel.

d. The provisions of this section shall apply to a person who receives general public assistance pursuant to P.L.1947, c.156 (C.44:8-107 et seq.) after the effective date of this act and is subsequently transferred directly into the Work First New Jersey program.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved January 8, 2018.