

ASSEMBLY, No. 883

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 1996 SESSION

By Assemblyman BLEE

1 AN ACT concerning emergency assistance benefits and supplementing
2 chapter 7 of Title 44 of the Revised Statutes.

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

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7 1. a. An applicant for emergency assistance benefits established
8 pursuant to N.J.A.C.10:83-1.1 et seq., who also receives supplemental
9 security income (SSI) assistance pursuant to the federal Social
10 Security Act, Pub.L.92-603 (42 U.S.C. §1381 et seq.) shall be
11 required, as a condition of eligibility for emergency assistance benefits
12 for shelter or for shelter and food, to contribute a percentage of his
13 monthly SSI benefit pursuant to subsections b. or c. of this section.

14 b. A recipient of SSI who receives emergency assistance benefits
15 for shelter shall be required to contribute 30% of his SSI monthly
16 benefit toward his debt relating to housing expenses, including but not
17 limited to, debt incurred from utility bills and unpaid rent, and to make
18 necessary payments to establish a permanent living arrangement,
19 including but not limited to, expenses for a security deposit, advance
20 rent, moving, and furniture.

21 c. A recipient of SSI who receives emergency assistance benefits
22 for shelter and food shall be required to contribute 80% of his SSI
23 monthly benefit toward his debt relating to housing expenses,
24 including but not limited to, debt incurred from utility bills and unpaid
25 rent, and to make necessary payments to establish a permanent living
26 arrangement, including but not limited to, expenses for a security
27 deposit, advance rent, moving, and furniture.

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29 2. If a recipient of SSI who is also receiving emergency assistance
30 benefits requires a security deposit in order to move into a permanent
31 living arrangement, that deposit shall be held in an escrow account by
32 the county welfare agency. Upon termination of that living
33 arrangement, the money held and accrued in the escrow account shall
34 be returned to the county welfare agency and shall not be considered
35 a payment for the final month of rent. Any claim against a security
36 deposit shall be limited to the funds in the escrow account and shall be
37 verified by the county welfare agency. A finding by the county welfare

1 agency that the claim against the security deposit is a valid claim shall
2 be considered good cause to render the SSI recipient ineligible for
3 future emergency assistance benefits, unless the recipient reimburses
4 the county welfare agency in full for the claim.

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6 3. The Commissioner of Human Services, pursuant to the
7 Administrative Procedure Act, P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.)
8 shall adopt rules and regulations to effectuate the purposes of this act.

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10 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

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13 STATEMENT

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15 This bill requires supplemental security income (SSI) recipients who
16 apply for emergency assistance benefits, established pursuant to
17 N.J.A.C. 10:83-1.1 et seq. for shelter only or for food and shelter, to
18 contribute a percentage of their SSI benefit toward debt and to make
19 payments necessary for expenses associated with establishing a
20 permanent living arrangement.

21 Specifically, the bill requires an SSI recipient who receives
22 emergency assistance benefits for shelter to contribute 30% of his SSI
23 benefit toward his debt relating to housing expenses, including but not
24 limited to, debt incurred from utility bills and unpaid rent, and to make
25 necessary payments to establish a permanent living arrangement,
26 including but not limited to, expenses for a security deposit, advance
27 rent, moving, and furniture. In the case of SSI recipients receiving
28 emergency assistance benefits for shelter and food, 80% of their SSI
29 benefit is to be contributed.

30 The bill further provides that if a permanent living arrangement for
31 a recipient of SSI benefits who is also receiving emergency assistance
32 benefits requires a security deposit, that deposit shall be held in an
33 escrow account by the county welfare agency. Upon termination of
34 that living arrangement, the money held and accrued in the escrow
35 account shall be returned to the county welfare agency and shall not
36 be considered a payment for the final month of rent. Any claim against
37 a security deposit shall be limited to the funds in the escrow account
38 and shall be verified by the county welfare agency. A finding by the
39 county welfare agency that the claim is valid, shall be considered good
40 cause to render the recipient ineligible for future emergency assistance
41 benefits, unless full reimbursement of the claim is made.

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45 Conditions SSI recipients' eligibility for emergency assistance benefits
46 under certain conditions.