

Know Your Welfare Rights!

APPLYING



ARE YOU APPLYING FOR WELFARE?

If you are trying to get welfare, food stamps, Medicaid or other assistance, the welfare office MUST:

- Help you fill out a **written application for welfare benefits on the *same day* you ask for help.** [This is the law: N.J.A.C 10:90-1.2(a) and (f)10.]
- Help you fill out a **written application for food stamps on the *same day* you ask for help,** even if you are not applying for welfare. [This is the law: N.J.A.C. 10:90-1.2(a) and (f)8 and (f)10.]
- Help you fill out a **written application for Medicaid on the *same day* you ask for help,** even if you are not applying for welfare. [This is the law: N.J.A.C. 10:90-1.2(a) and (f)10.]
- **Give you cash assistance or other emergency help that you need on the *same day* you apply if you are *in immediate need* of help** because you have no food, shelter, utilities, or clothing. [This is the law: N.J.A.C. 10:90-1.2(f)2 and 10:90-1.3.]
- ***Immediately* take your application for other kinds of emergency help if you are homeless, or about to lose your housing.** This **Emergency Assistance** (also called EA) can be a motel room, a shelter, or a **rent subsidy** (TRA) to help you keep or find an apartment. You can also get EA to help you pay utility bills, obtain food, make mortgage payments, or get clothes or furniture. **If you are eligible, you must be given EA right away.** EA can last up to 12 months. In some cases you can get an extension beyond 12 months. [This is the law: NJAC 10:90-6.1(b).]
- Give you ***special help* if you are a victim of domestic violence, rape, or incest.** You may be temporarily excused from some of the work requirements, time limits, and other welfare obligations until you get your life together. [This is the law: N.J.A.C. 10:90-1.2 (f)2 and 10:90-1.1 (f).]
- Give you a right to challenge the welfare office's decision (**appeal to a judge**) if you are denied any of these things and you think you should get them. [This is the law: N.J.A.C.10:90-9.3(a).]

If your caseworker says that you don't have these rights, show him or her the citation to the regulations listed on this page. The citations are listed at the end of each paragraph above.

If you have any questions about your rights, or think you were treated unfairly by the welfare office, call LSNJ-LAW™, Legal Services of New Jersey's statewide, toll-free legal hotline, at:

1-888-LSNJ-LAW
(1-888-576-5529)