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Message

Attached is a copy of a request from the South Carolina State agency to extend the current waivers (970044 and 970112) of Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act. As regards waiver 970044, to qualify for the waiver a county's unemployment rate must exceed 10%. Using data supplied by the State agency, I recomputed the unemployment rate for Chester and Lee Counties as these were stated to be exactly 10%. Actually, the unemployment rates are 10.09% and 10.02%, respectively. All the counties having unemployment rates exceeding 10% are also designated as LSA's. In regard to waiver 970112, the counties requested on the basis of insufficient number of jobs are all designated as LSAs. Accordingly, we recommend approval of these waiver extensions.

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703 305 2486 Judy Seymour
FOOD DISTRIBUTION

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FSP

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

James T. Clark, State Director, P.O. Box 1520, Columbia, S.C. 29202-1520

January 26, 1998

Mr. Virgil L. Conrad, Regional Administrator
Southeast Region
USDA, Food and Nutrition Service
61 Forsyth Street S.W., Room 8T36
Atlanta, GA 30303

REC'D - FOOD STAMP PROGRAM
FEB 02 1998
QUALITY CONTROL SECTION

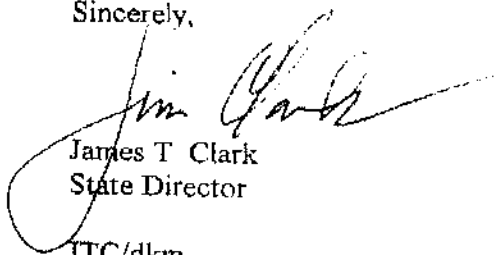
Re: Waiver Numbers 970044 and 970112

Dear Mr. Conrad

We are enclosing South Carolina's request for an extension of our waivers of Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996, P.L. 104-193.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Laurel Metzger, Director, Division of Policy and Planning, Office of Family Independence, at (803) 737-6010.

Sincerely,


James T. Clark
State Director

JTC/dkm

Enclosure

WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver serial number:** 970044 and 970112
2. **Type of request:** Extension
3. **Primary regulation citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996, P.L. 104-193
4. **Secondary regulation citation:** None
5. **State:** South Carolina
6. **Region:** Southeast Region
7. **Regulatory requirements:** Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of PRWORA, P.L. 104-193 provides that no individual shall be eligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program as a member of any household if, during the preceding 36 month period, the individual received food stamp benefits for not less than 3 months during which the individual did not:
 - a. Work 20 hours or more per week, averaged monthly;
 - b. Participate in and comply with the requirements of a work program for 20 hours or more per week, or
 - c. Participate in and comply with requirements of a program under section 20 or a comparable program established by the State.

Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the PRWORA, also provides that, upon the request of a State agency, the Secretary may waive the applicability of the above provision for any group of individuals in the State if the Secretary makes a determination that the area in which the individuals reside has an unemployment rate of over 10 percent, or does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for the individuals

8. **Proposed alternative procedures:** South Carolina is requesting a waiver to exempt individuals who reside in 6 counties from the work requirement provision of Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the PRWORA, as these counties had an annual average unemployment rate over 10 percent for the period of October 1996 through September 1997. South Carolina is also requesting in this waiver to exempt individuals who live in 17 additional counties and one city from the work requirement provision of Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the PRWORA as these areas have been identified as Labor Surplus Areas (LSA) by the Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (ETA). This brings our total exempted population to 23 counties and one city.

9. **Justification for request:** Statistics secured from Employment Security Commission, a cooperating agency with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, show the following areas with average unemployment rate of 10% or more for Fiscal Year 1997:

<u>County</u>	<u>Average Unemployment Rate for FY 97</u>
Chester	10%
Georgetown	11%
Lee	10%
Marion	10.6%
Marlboro	12.8%
Williamsburg	17.2%

Statistics from the U S Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration show the following areas as labor surplus areas: Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, Chesterfield, Clarendon, Colleton, Darlington, Dillon, Edgefield, Fairfield, Florence (includes city and balance of Florence County), Hampton, McCormick, Orangeburg, and Union counties, and the city of North Charleston.

10. **Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:** The extension of this waiver will allow individuals who reside in areas with unemployment rates of 10 percent or more the opportunity to participate in the Food Stamp Program without being required to meet unrealistic work requirements. In addition, South Carolina will be able to exempt areas in which there are not enough jobs for groups of individuals who may be affected by the new time limits in the Food Stamp Program.
11. **Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affected portion:** An estimated number of 7,731 individuals will be exempted due to unemployment rates of 10 percent or more or residence in labor surplus areas.
12. **Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:** These waivers are requested for a one-year time period to begin January 1, 1998.
13. **Proposed quality control review procedures:** There are no special quality control procedures needed in conjunction with this waiver.
14. **Signature and title of requesting official:**

James T. Clark, State Director

15. **Date of request:**