



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

1717 W. Jefferson - P.O. Box 6123 - Phoenix, AZ 85005

Jane Dee Hull
Governor

Dr. Linda J. Blessing
Director

FEB 19 1999

Dennis Stewart
Regional Director
Food Stamp Program
Western Region
550 Kearny Street
San Francisco, CA 94108

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Dear Mr. Stewart:

The State of Arizona seeks extensions to the current food stamp waivers which exempt certain individuals from provisions established by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. The Act limits the participation period for certain Able-Bodied Adults, and authorizes the U.S. Department of Agriculture to grant States waivers for individuals who reside in areas that have a high unemployment rate or which have been designated Labor Surplus Areas specifically identified by the Department of Labor.

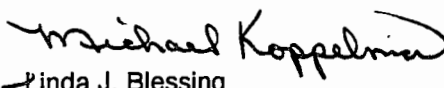
An extension of waiver #970148 is requested and includes a change for Coconino County. The city of Flagstaff will now be included in the waiver as it is considered a labor surplus area. The remaining counties included in the original request continue to be designated labor surplus areas for 1999 by the Department of Labor (DOL).

An extension of waiver #970149 is requested and includes several changes. The San Carlos Apache Reservation will be removed from the waiver as it is located in Gila County and Navajo County and both counties are considered labor surplus areas. The Salt River and Tohono O'Odham (San Xavier) Reservations will be removed from the waiver as they no longer have an unemployment rate over ten percent and are not part of a labor surplus county.

The State is requesting that these extensions from the work requirement provisions be approved as a result of unemployment rates above ten percent and labor surplus area designations. The 1999 DOL Labor Surplus Area list and the Arizona Local Area Statistics Special Unemployment Report for January - November 1998 includes cities, counties, and reservations meeting the exempt criteria.

Your prompt attention to this request is greatly appreciated. If you have questions or require additional information, please contact Vince Wood, Assistant Director, Department of Economic Security at (602) 542-3596.

Sincerely,


for Linda J. Blessing

Enclosures

Waiver Request

1. **Waiver serial number:**

970148

2. **Type of request:**

Modification and extension

3. **Primary regulation citation:**

Section 6 of the Food Stamp Act 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2015); HR 3734 "The Personal Responsibility and Reconciliation Act of 1996", Section 824, Work Requirement.

4. **Secondary regulation citation:**

Not applicable

5. **State:**

Arizona

6. **Region:**

Western Region

7. **Regulatory requirements:**

Work Requirement: - 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 three 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. Exception to the work requirements are that the individual is (A) under 18 or over 50 years of age; (B) medically certified as physically or mentally unfit for employment; (C) a parent or other member of a household with the responsibility for a dependent child; (D) otherwise exempt under subsection (d)(2), Section 6 of the Food Stamp Act; or (E) a pregnant woman.

8. **Proposed alternative procedures:**

The State of Arizona, Department of Economic Security requests a modification and extension of waiver # 970148 to exclude from the Work Requirements, individuals residing in labor surplus areas.

9. **Justification for request::**

The extension will continue to ensure equitable distribution of food stamp benefits in areas suffering from a high incidence of unemployment.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 mandates that all individuals shall be ineligible to participate in the food stamp program as a member of any household if, during the preceding 36 month period, they received food stamp benefits for three months or more during which the individuals did not work a minimum of 80 hours per month or 20 hours weekly (average monthly).

As of November 1998, the latest data released from the Department of Labor (DOL), identifies Apache, Cochise, Coconino, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Mohave (excluding Lake Havasu City), Navajo, Santa Cruz, and Yuma counties as labor surplus areas in 1999 that are eligible for federal waiver approvals.

NOTE: The city of Flagstaff will now be included in the waiver as it is considered a labor surplus area. The DOL Labor Surplus Area list is attached.

Approval of this waiver extension request will continue to exclude these counties as labor surplus areas, from the work requirement eligibility criteria.

10. **Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:**

- A. Client Benefits: Will not penalize individuals living in labor surplus areas who lack the same opportunity to find employment as others.
- B. Worker Benefits Monitoring and tracking of work compliance in labor surplus areas will not be required.

11. **Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affected portion:**

All individuals residing in Apache, Cochise, Coconino, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Mohave (excluding Lake Havasu City), Navajo, Santa Cruz, and Yuma counties will be exempt.

12. **Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:**

The waiver extension is requested for a period of one year upon approval from FNS. The proposed extension date is effective March 1, 1999.

13. **State Agency submitting Waiver Request:**

Arizona Department of Economic Security, Family Assistance Administration

Contact Person: Vince Wood, Assistant Director
Arizona Department of Economic Security
Division of Benefits & Medical Eligibility
1789 West Jefferson
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
(602) 542-3596

14. **Signature and title of requesting official:**


Signature

Deputy Director
Title

15. **Date of State Agency Request:**

Waiver Request

1. **Waiver serial number:**

970149

2. **Type of request:**

Modification and extension

3. **Primary regulation citation:**

Section 6 of the Food Stamp Act 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2015); HR 3734 "The Personal Responsibility and Reconciliation Act of 1996", Section 824, Work Requirement.

4. **Secondary regulation citation:**

Not applicable

5. **State:**

Arizona

6. **Region:**

Western Region

7. **Regulatory requirements:**

Work Requirement: - 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 three 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. Exception to the work requirements are that the individual is (A) under 18 or over 50 years of age; (B) medically certified as physically or mentally unfit for employment; (C) a parent or other member of a household with the responsibility for a dependent child; (D) otherwise exempt under subsection (d)(2), Section 6 of the Food Stamp Act; or (E) a pregnant woman.

8. **Proposed alternative procedures:**

The State of Arizona, Department of Economic Security requests a modification and extension of waiver #970149 to exclude from the work requirements, individuals residing in areas with unemployment in excess of ten percent that are not included in designated labor surplus areas.

9. **Justification for request:**

The extension will continue to ensure equitable distribution of food stamp benefits in areas suffering from a high incidence of unemployment.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 mandates that all individuals shall be ineligible to participate in the food stamp program as a member of any household if, during the preceding 36 month period, they received food stamp benefits for three months or more during which the individuals did not work a minimum of 80 hours per month or 20 hours weekly (averaged monthly).

As of November 30, 1998, the latest data released from the Department of Labor (DOL) indicates that the Gila River, Papago, and Pascua Yaqui Reservations have unemployment rates in excess of ten percent and are not included in labor surplus areas. **NOTE: The Papago Reservation will be added to the waiver. The San Carlos Apache Reservation will be removed from the waiver as it is included in a labor surplus area. The Salt River and Tohono O'Odham Reservations will be removed from the waiver as their unemployment rates do not exceed ten percent.** The DOL Special Unemployment Report for January - November 1998 is attached.

An extension of this waiver will exclude these Indian Reservations, from the work requirement eligibility criteria, as they have unemployment rates in excess of ten percent.

10. **Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:**

- | | | |
|----|------------------|---|
| A. | Client Benefits: | Will not penalize individuals living in areas with unemployment in excess of ten percent who do not have the same opportunity to find employment as others. |
| B. | Worker Benefits | Monitoring and tracking of work compliance in high unemployment areas will not be required. |

11. **Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affected portion:**

All individuals residing on the Gila River, Papago, and Pascua Yaqui Indian Reservations will be exempt. The unemployment rate, as of November 1998, is 18.7% for the Gila River Reservation, 13.7% for the Papago Reservation and 22.3% for the Pascua Yaqui Reservation.

12. **Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:**

The waiver extension is requested for a period of one year upon approval from FNS. The proposed extension date is effective March 1, 1999.

13. **State Agency submitting Waiver Request:**

Arizona Department of Economic Security, Family Assistance Administration

Contact Person: Vince Wood, Assistant Director
Arizona Department of Economic Security
Division of Benefits & Medical Eligibility
1789 West Jefferson
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
(602) 542-3596

14. **Signature and title of requesting official:**


Signature

Deputy Director
Title

15. **Date of State Agency Request:**