



AUG 31 1998

**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Food and Consumer
Service

Northeast Region

10 Causeway Street, Room 501
Boston, MA 02222



Date:

Reply to Attention of:

NEFS-100

Subject:

Maine Request to Waive Section 6(o) of
the Food Stamp Act As Amended by
Section 824 of PRWORA

To:

Art Foley, Director
Program Development Division

Attached is a request from Maine to extend waiver 970315, allowing residents in a number of designated areas to be exempt from the work requirements of Section 824 of PRWORA based on insufficient jobs.

The State has provided data which indicates that the average unemployment rate in these areas for the 24-month period beginning July 1996 through June 1998 exceeded 20 percent of the national average during the same period. Therefore, we recommend approval of the waiver extension.

If you have any questions on this waiver request, please contact Susan Mahan at (617) 565-6415.

Robert L. Canavan
for Robert L. Canavan, Director
Food Stamp Program
Northeast Region

Attachment





STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
11 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0011

ANGUS S. KING, JR.
GOVERNOR

KEVIN W. CONCANNON
COMMISSIONER

August 20, 1998

Robert L. Canavan
Food Stamp Director
Food & Nutrition Services
NERO
10 Causeway Street
Boston, MA 02222

Dear Mr. Canavan:

Please find the enclosed request of extension for waiver #970315. This waiver allowed residents of designated areas in Maine to be exempt from time limited accessibility to the food stamp program as described at Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act.

The unemployment rates for these areas exceed the national average rate by more than 20 per cent.

Thank you for any assistance you may provide. If you have any questions, please contact Rick Morrow at (207) 287-5093.

Sincerely,

Judy H.M. Williams, Director
Bureau of Family Independence



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AUG 26 1998

WAIVER REQUEST OUTLINE

1. Waiver serial number (if request is extension):
970315

2. Type of request:
Extension

3. Primary regulation citation, if any:
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, if any:

5. State: Maine

6. Region: NERO

7. **Regulatory requirements:**

Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (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 (consecutive or otherwise), during which the individual did not work 20 hours or more per week, averaged monthly; did not participate in and comply with the requirements of a work program for 20 hours or more per week; or did not 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:

The State of Maine is requesting to waive the requirements of Section 824 of the PRWORA on the basis of insufficient jobs for the residents of Augusta, Gardiner, Hallowell, Waterville, Dexter-Pittsfield, Lincoln-Howland, Outer Bangor, Millinocket-East Millinocket, Patten-Island Falls, and Sanford.

9. Justification for request:

The national average unemployment rate for the period of July, 1996 through June, 1998 was 4.9. The average unemployment rate for the areas covered in this waiver exceeds 1.20 percent of the national average except for the City of Hallowell. We request that Hallowell remain included in the waiver due to its close proximity between Augusta and Gardiner.

10. Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:

This waiver will provide consistency for households and State agency operations in areas where unemployment remains higher than the national average.

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

The caseload for these areas represent 16% of the caseload for the state. There are no quality control procedures involved.

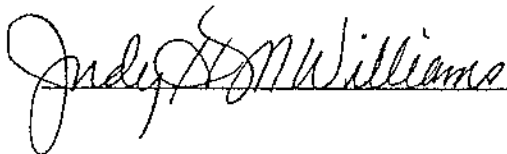
12. Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:

This waiver currently has two separate expiration dates depending on the areas. The areas of Augusta, Hallowell, and Gardiner expire on September 30, 1998. The other areas' expiration date is August 31, 1998. We request a one-year extension,

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:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Judy H.M. Williams", is written over a horizontal line.

Judy H.M. Williams, Director
Bureau of Family Independence

15. Date of request:
August 20, 1998

PM/Int