



United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service

Western Region

MAR 24 1999

Reply to
Attn of: FS-10-6-Waiver #970153

Subject: FSP - Request to extend Waiver #970153 providing exemptions for individuals residing on 26 Indian Reservations from the work requirement provisions at Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of PRWORA.

To: Arthur T. Foley, Director
Program Development Division
Food Stamp Program

Attached for your consideration is a March 12, 1999 request from the Washington Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to extend waiver #970153 from the work requirement provisions at Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. The State is requesting this extension for a period of three months or until the State agency receives the Indian Service Populations and Labor Force Status report from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) which was to have been released May 1998. The current waiver expires March 31, 1999.

The Washington DSHS believes, and we concur, that for American Indian reservations, insufficient jobs is based on a comparison of employment-to-population ratios which are below the State average. The BIA data is the best, and often the only credible, data available to use for calculating these ratios.

The State has assured our office that it will submit its waiver extension request for one year when the State agency receives the BIA data and can make the necessary calculations for a more complete waiver extension request package.

We recommend a 3-month extension of waiver #970153 to permit time for the Washington State agency to obtain current data from the BIA in order to submit a more complete waiver extension request.

Please contact Chanel DeLaney at (415) 705-1320, x308 if you have any questions.

for *Michael Jacob*
DENNIS STEWART
Regional Director
Food Stamp Program
Western Region

Attachment

cc: Seattle FO

WA Desk, POS, FSP, WRO



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

March 12, 1999

Dennis Stewart, Program Director
Food Stamp Program
Western Region, Food and Nutrition Service
United States Department of Agriculture
550 Kearny Street, Room 400
San Francisco, California 94108-2518

Dear Mr. Stewart:

The State of Washington is requesting an extension of the American Indian Reservation waiver #970153 to the Food Stamp Act of 1997 Section 6 (o)(2) as amended through the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA). The current waiver expires March 31, 1999. We are requesting the extension for a period of three months or until we have received the data and made the calculations necessary to submit the waiver.

We are still awaiting the official release of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Report on Indian Service Populations and Labor Force Status which was due to have been released in May of 1998, as referenced in your letter of March 13, 1998. For American Indian reservations, insufficient jobs is based on a comparison of employment-to-population ratios which are below the state average. The BIA data is the best, and often the only credible, data available to use for these calculations.

We have been pursuing the BIA data and have been in contact with the BIA regional office in Portland. At this point we are concerned that we will not receive the data in time to process it and submit the tribal waivers before our current waivers expire on March 31, 1999. We request an extension for 3 months only to avoid having to repeat this request if the data is further delayed. We will submit our waivers as soon as we receive the data and calculate the ratios.

In addition, we did contact the national office of the Bureau for Labor Statistics. Unfortunately, they do not produce either routine or monthly labor force estimates for tribal reservations; they only issued guidance on the topic. They did reiterate that comparing the employment-to-population ratios of tribal reservations to the rest of the state was the approved Bureau of Labor Statistics methodology for determining insufficient jobs. This methodology would require the BIA employment and population data in order to calculate the ratios.

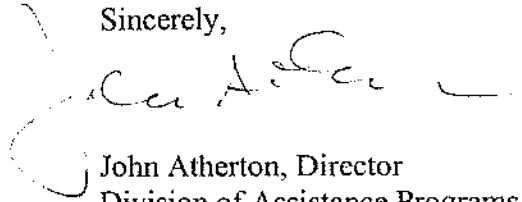
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Dennis Stewart, Program Director
March 12, 1999
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Thank you for Chanel Delaney's prompt responses to our calls and emails and for your continued cooperation on this issue. We look forward to your consideration of this waiver extension. If you have any questions, please call James Kainber at (360) 413-3207.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John Atherton", is written over a faint, circular, dotted line that serves as a placeholder for a stamp or seal.

John Atherton, Director
Division of Assistance Programs

cc: Liz Begert Dunbar
James Kelly
James Wilson
James Kainber
Patricia Richards
Maura Donoghue
Mary Monahan