



DAW - for C/B
file

JUN 15 2000

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food and Consumer
Service

Mid-Atlantic Region

Mercer Corporate Park
300 Corporate Boulevard
Robbinsville, N.J. 08691-1598



Date:

Reply to Attention of:

Subject:

Virginia Waiver Request - Section 824 of PRWORA

To:

Arthur T. Foley
Director
Program Development Division

Attached is a request from Virginia to extend Waiver 970283 which exempts certain areas from the work requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents. The current waiver expires on June 30, 2000.

The State agency has excluded the currently waived localities of Bath, Highland, Nottaway, Pittsylvania, Washington and Wythe from the request, but is seeking to extend the exemption to Henry County and Martinsville City. Martinsville City is in Henry County.

According to the attachments, with the exception of Henry County, all localities for which the waiver extension has been requested are designated Labor Surplus Areas. Data provided by the Virginia Employment Commission on May 30, 2000 indicates that the combined unemployment rate for Henry County and Martinsville City exceeded 10% from November 1999 through March 2000. The unemployment rate for Henry County ranged from 9.4% to 11.7% during this same period. However, it was 9.5% as of March 2000.

We are unable to offer a recommendation regarding the State agency's request to extend the waiver to Henry County. However, we believe sufficient documentation has been submitted to allow approval of the other areas.



Arthur Foley

Please do not hesitate to contact this office if you have any questions.


JOSEPH WEINGART
Regional Director
Food Stamp Program

Attachments

Waiver Request

1. **Waiver serial number:** 970283
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 Act (PRWORA) of 1996, P. L. 104-193.
4. **Secondary regulation citation:**
5. **State:** Virginia
6. **Region:** Mid-Atlantic
7. **Regulatory requirements:** Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by PRWORA, provides that a household member may not receive food stamp benefits beyond a three-month period within a 36-month period unless the member is employed or participating in work programs or workfare. There are exceptions allowed by the Act to the time-limited benefits.

Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act also provides that the Secretary may waive the applicability of the work requirement for any areas with unemployment rates of 10 percent or higher or one with a surplus of available laborers if such a request is made by a state agency.

8. **Proposed alternative procedures:** The Virginia State Agency is requesting an extension of its original waiver for food stamp recipients who resided in areas that do not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for individuals subject to Section 824 of PRWORA.

This waiver would allow an exemption from the requirement for groups of individuals who reside in areas designated as Labor Surplus Areas by the U. S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration or areas with unemployment rates of ten percent or greater.

The current waiver includes the Counties of Accomack, Bath, Buchanan, Dickenson, Essex, Giles, Halifax, Highland, Lee, Nottoway, Pittsylvania, Prince Edward, Russell, Smyth, Surry, Tazewell, Washington, Wise, and Wythe, and the Cities of Danville, Norton, and Williamsburg.

We are requesting the extension of the waiver from the work requirement for the following localities for the period beginning July 1, 2000: Accomack, Buchanan, Dickenson, Essex, Giles, Halifax, Henry, Lee, Prince Edward, Russell, Smyth, Surry,

Tazewell, Wise, and the Cities of Danville, Martinsville, Norton, and Williamsburg. Supporting documentation from the Virginia Employment Commission is attached.

Other localities meet the labor surplus designation however officials in these areas believe there is sufficient employment opportunities available and have chosen to apply the work requirement and time-limited benefits.

We are including the Henry/Martinsville area based on more current statistics than used for the rest of the state. This area has sustained significant job losses recently and there are no immediate prospects for replacement of these jobs. Unemployment benefits for many residents will soon be exhausted. Supporting documentation for the County of Henry and the city of Martinsville is also attached.

9. **Implementation date:** We are asking that this waiver will be effective July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2000.
10. **Quality control procedures:** There are no special quality control procedures needed in conjunction with this waiver.
11. **Signature and title of requesting official:**
Patricia Duva
Food Stamp Program Manager
12. **Date of request:** June 12, 2000