



United States Department of Agriculture

Food and Nutrition Service

Northeast Region

Date: 10/14/2004

Subject: ABAWD Waiver Extension Request

To: Art Foley
Program Development Division

Attached is a request from the Maine Department of Human Services to modify and extend their waiver of Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996.

If you have any questions on this information, please contact Susan Mahan at (617) 565-6382.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Mary A. Ferris".

Mary A. Ferris, Chief
State Program Improvement
Food Stamp Program
Northeast Region

Attachment

WAIVER REQUEST OUTLINE

1. **Waiver serial number (if request is extension):** 970140
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 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 of 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 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 the following counties: Aroostook, Franklin, Hancock, Oxford, Piscataquis, Somerset, and Washington as well as the Ellsworth/Bar Harbor Labor Market Area. Hancock county, as a whole, is being added with this extension request. Some municipalities in Hancock county are not part of the Ellsworth/Bar Harbor LMA. In addition, we request that the following LMAs be added to this waiver request: Waterville Labor Market Area (municipalities of Albion, Benton, Clinton, Oakland, Unity Township, Waterville, Winslow, Burnham, Freedom, Troy, Thorndike, Unity, Fairfield and Smithfield) and the Bucksport Labor Market Area (municipalities in Hancock county but including Prospect and Stockton Springs in Waldo county). We are also requesting that certain municipalities in the following counties be waived: Androscoggin county (municipalities of Leeds, Livermore, Livermore Falls and Mechanic Falls), Cumberland county (municipality of Harrison), Kennebec county (municipalities of Litchfield, Readfield, Vassalboro, and Vienna), Lincoln county (municipality of Whitefield), Sagadahoc county (municipalities of Bowdoin and Richmond), Waldo county (municipalities of Brooks, Frankfort, Isleboro, Liberty, Monroe, and Palermo) and York county (municipalities of Limerick and Parsonsfield).

The above request is based on unemployment rates during the 24-month period spanning the two most recent calendar years which were used by USDA for LSA designation in October 2000 for federal fiscal year 2001 (January 1, 1998 through December 31, 1999).

The threshold number representing 20% more than the national unemployment rate for this period is 5.2%. This was calculated by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities using the same methodology used by USDA in the previous year for this same purpose. The above named counties and municipalities have met this threshold for that time period.

We have two municipalities that did not meet this threshold using this methodology, but due to a closing of a factory in April 2000, left nearly 400 people in the area out of work. These municipalities are Monmouth and Winthrop, both in Kennebec county. Using data for the most recently completed federal fiscal years for which data is available-October 1998 through September 2000-both of these municipalities have unemployment rates of 5.2%. This is in excess of the national unemployment rate which was 5% for this same period.

9. Justification for request: The threshold number representing 20% more than the national unemployment rate for the period of January 1, 1998 through December 31, 1999 is 5.2%. The average unemployment rate for the areas covered in the bulk of this waiver extension exceeds this threshold.

The threshold number representing 20% more than the national unemployment rate for the federal fiscal years' period of October 1998 through September 2000 is 5%. The average unemployment rate for the municipalities of Monmouth and Winthrop exceeds this threshold.

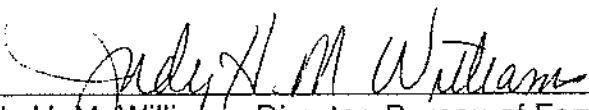
10. Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations: This waiver will provide consistency for households and State agency operations in areas where unemployment remains higher than the national average.

11. Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affected portion: The caseload for these areas represent 38 percent 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 has an expiration date of March 31, 2001. 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:



Judy H. M. Williams, Director, Bureau of Family Independence
Department of Human Services

15. Date of request: January 5, 2001