



United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service

Western Region

CPB
Carl
pw 2/14/02

Reply to
Attn of:

FS 10-6-OR Waiver #2000039

FEB 07 2002

Subject:

FSP - Oregon - ABAWD Waiver Extension Request - Labor Surplus Areas and
High Unemployment

To:

Art Foley, Director
Program Development Division
Food Stamp Program

Attached is Oregon's request to extend waiver 2000039. This waiver exempts the State's Labor Surplus Areas from the provisions of Section 6(o)(2) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. There are 19 whole counties, three partial counties and one city in Oregon currently designated Labor Surplus Areas.

In addition to the Labor Surplus Areas, Oregon would like to expand this waiver to exempt the remaining unwaived areas of the State as areas of high unemployment. During each of the past 24 months Oregon's monthly unemployment rate has been greater than the national average. Further comparison of these figures to national figures shows that Oregon's average unemployment rate during this time period was at least 20% above the national average.

The State is requesting an extension of this waiver for a one year period, through April 30, 2003. We recommend approval of the extension and expansion.

If you have any questions, please contact Donna Clifton at (415) 705-1320 extension 308.

DENNIS STEWART
Regional Director
Food Stamp Program
Western Region

Attachment



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, M.D., Governor

Department Of Human Services *Children, Adults and Families*

Human Services Building
500 Summer Street NE, E48
Salem, OR 97301-1066

503-945-5600

Fax 503-373-7032

TTY 503-945-5895



January 29, 2002

Dennis Stewart
Regional Director
USDA, FNS
Western Region
550 Kearny Street, Room 400
San Francisco, CA 94108-2518

Dear Mr. ^{Dennis}Stewart:

On April 5, 2001, the Food and Nutrition Service approved the renewal of a labor surplus waiver that allowed Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) who live in labor-surplus areas and labor insufficient areas to be exempt from the three-month time limit for food stamps. The waiver period was for May 1, 2001 through April 30, 2002.

The U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration recently identified 19 counties, three partial counties and one city in Oregon as labor-surplus areas. They are: Baker, Coos, Crook, Curry, Douglas, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Jefferson, Josephine, Klamath, Lake, Lincoln, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Wallowa, Wasco, and Wheeler. The three partial counties identified as LSAs are: Deschutes (less city of Bend), Jackson (less city of Medford), and Linn (less city of Albany). The city is: Albany (in Linn county). We wish to include these labor surplus areas in an ABAWD time limit waiver for May 2002 through April 2003.

In addition to these labor surplus areas, we are requesting to waive the three-month time limit for ABAWDs for the entire State of Oregon. The state has experienced an averaged unemployment rate of at least 20 percent higher than the national average over a 24-month period. During this 24-month period, Oregon has consistently had an unemployment rate that is higher than the national average. The most recent statistics show that Oregon has the highest unemployment rate in

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An Equal Opportunity Employer

Proposed alternative procedures:

Oregon is proposing to extend the waiver granted on April 5, 2001 for another year using new labor surplus and state unemployment rate information. This waiver extension will allow the State to exempt individuals living in labor surplus areas (LSAs) from the three-month time limit for ABAWDs. It will also exempt those individuals living in labor insufficient areas from the three-month time limit for ABAWDs.

The waiver would apply effective May 1, 2002 through April 30, 2003. These individuals will continue to be subject to Employment and Training requirements. However, they will no longer be required to work 20 hours a week or participate in workfare to remain eligible for food stamp benefits beyond three months.

The renewed waiver includes all of the counties identified by the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) as LSAs. It also includes the balance of the state due to labor insufficiency. The unemployment rate for the State of Oregon is at least 20% higher than the national average. Therefore, Oregon is asking that this waiver include the entire state.

Justification for request: The ETA identifies labor surplus areas each year. On December 31, 2001, ETA identified 19 Oregon counties, parts of three counties and one city as LSA. The 19 Oregon counties are: Baker, Coos, Crook, Curry, Douglas, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Jefferson, Josephine, Klamath, Lake, Lincoln, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Wallowa, Wasco, and Wheeler. The three partial counties identified as LSAs are: Deschutes (less city of Bend), Jackson (less city of Medford), and Linn (less city of Albany). The city is: Albany (in Linn county).

In addition to these LSA areas, Oregon has identified that the entire state is experiencing an unemployment rate that is more than 20% higher than the national average. The remaining counties are: Benton, Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Deschutes (including the city of Bend), Gilliam, Jackson (including the city of Medford), Lane, Marion, Multnomah, Polk, Sherman, Tillamook, Union, Washington and Yamhill counties.

Per the regulations in 7 CFR 273.24(f)(2)(ii), Oregon is supporting this claim of high unemployment rate using BLS

data for the state over a 24-month period where the average unemployment rate is 20 percent above the national average for the same 24-month period. We are using the 24-month period of December 1999 through November 2001.

The 24-month average of the national unemployment rate for December 1999 through November 2001 was 4.320 percent. Twenty percent above 4.3 is 5.18. Using the most recent information published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate for the State of Oregon for this same period of time exceeds 5.18 percent. The average unemployment rate for Oregon during the period December 1999 through November 2001 is 5.279 percent.

Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:

ABAWDs residing in Oregon will be required to comply with the requirements to register for work, accept a job if offered, and participate in the employment and training program. They will continue to be offered the work components offered to ABAWDs. However, the ABAWDs residing in Oregon will not be subject to the three-month time limit.

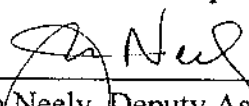
Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:

Oregon requests this waiver be extended for a year to the entire state from May 1, 2002 through April 30, 2003.

Proposed quality control review procedures:

There are no special quality control procedures needed in conjunction with this waiver request.

Signature and title of requesting official:



Jim Neely, Deputy Assistant Director
Department of Human Services
Children, Adults and Families

Date of Request: January 29, 2002