



**United States Department of Agriculture**  
Food and Nutrition Service

Northeast Region

*Jeannie*  
*4/3/03*  
*SM*  
*970051*

Date:

Subject: ABAWD Waiver Request, RI

Art Foley, Director  
To: Program Development Division

Attached is an April 2, 2003, request from the Rhode Island Department of Human Services, to waive the work requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) living in Labor Surplus Areas. They have attached the supporting documentation.

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

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

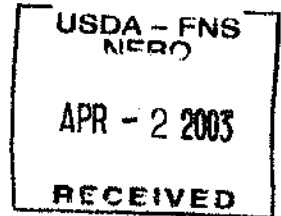
Attachment

*cc letter to Fran*

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
Office of the Director



March 28, 2003

Ms. Frances E. Zorn  
Regional Administrator  
United States Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service  
Northeast Region  
10 Causeway Street  
Boston, MA 02222

Dear Ms. Zorn:

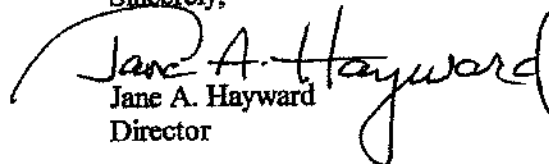
Rhode Island is requesting to modify and extend waiver number 970051 that exempts certain individuals from the requirements of the "Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents" (ABAWDS) regulations.

This modify and extend request applies to five Rhode Island municipalities that have recently been designated as Labor Surplus Areas (LSA) by the United States Department of Labor and experienced an unemployment rate more than twenty percent above the national average for calendar years 2000-2001. We wish to implement this modification and extension of the waiver on May 1, 2003.

Enclosed for your review are the waiver request, documents relating to the LSA designations, unemployment rates in Rhode Island for calendar years 2000-2001 and the number of individuals subject to ABAWD regulations in Rhode Island listed by city and town.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. If you have any questions, or a need for additional information, please call Mr. Robert J. McDonough at (401) 462-2423.

Sincerely,

  
Jane A. Hayward  
Director

## WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number:** 970051
2. **Type of Request:** Extend and Modify
3. **Primary Regulation Citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996, P.L. 104-193.
4. **Secondary Regulation Citation:** Not Applicable
5. **State:** Rhode Island
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 three (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 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 over 10 percent, or does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for the individuals.

8. **Proposed Alternative Procedures:** Rhode Island is requesting to exempt from the work requirement of Section 6(o) of the Act, individuals residing in areas that have an insufficient number of jobs based on their designation as Labor Surplus Areas (LSA) by the Employment and Training Administration of the Department of Labor. Rhode Island is also requesting to exempt individuals from the work requirement who reside in areas that experienced an unemployment rate of more than 20 percent above the national average for calendar years 2000 and 2001.

Under the proposed modification and extension, individuals residing in Central Falls, Providence and New Shoreham would be exempt due to its LSA designation. Residents of Pawtucket and Woonsocket would also be exempt because these municipalities experienced an unemployment rate of more than 20 percent above the national average for calendar years 2000 and 2001.

Approval of this waiver would allow individuals who reside in areas where there are insufficient jobs the opportunity to participate in the Food Stamp Program without being required to meet unrealistic program work requirements. It would also ease the burden for individuals trying to comply with work requirements, which are unreasonable, given the local economic environment. Finally, it would provide for more efficient operation of the Food Stamp Program by allowing the State agency to focus its efforts and resources regarding work requirements on those households most likely to benefit.

9. **Justification for Request:** To justify this extension request, Rhode Island is submitting documentation from the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training, the United States Department of Labor and information collected by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.
10. **Anticipated Impact on Households and State Agency Operations:** The granting of this extension request would allow eligible individuals in affected areas to continue to receive benefits as the state implements employment and training activities to service this population.
11. **Caseload Information:** There are currently 2,208 individuals that are considered Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents receiving food stamp benefits in Rhode Island. This waiver request, effecting four of Rhode Island cities and towns, would exempt 1,892 individuals or 86%.

12. **Anticipated Implementation Date:** Rhode Island is requesting to implement this extension May 1, 2003 and is requesting this extension through ~~December 31, 2003.~~  
*April 30, 2004*
13. **Quality Control Procedures:** Not applicable
14. **Signature and Title of Requesting Official:**  
  
Robert J. McDonough  
Administrator
15. **Date of Request:** March 25, 2003