



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona

Janet Napolitano
Governor

Tracy L. Wareing
Director

JAN 15 2009

Dennis Stewart, Regional Director
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Western Region
90 Seventh Street, Suite 10-100
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Mr. Stewart:

The Arizona Department of Economic Security (ADES) is requesting approval of an initial waiver request to exempt individuals from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) able-bodied time limited assistance provisions in 7 CFR 273.24. This waiver request is in order to exempt all individuals residing within the areas of Maricopa and Pima Counties that are not currently exempt under approved waiver 970148. This waiver request is in addition to the currently existing waiver.

SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 273.24(f) indicate that to support a claim of a lack of sufficient jobs, a State may submit evidence that it has been determined by the Department of Labor's (DOL) Unemployment Insurance Service as qualifying for extended benefits. The DOL has issued Trigger Notice number 2008-52 indicating that Arizona qualifies for extended benefits effective January 4, 2009.

Arizona's request includes all areas within Maricopa and Pima Counties that are not currently exempt from the time limits under the currently approved waiver 970148. We are requesting the waiver be approved for a one year period of time beginning March 1, 2009 and expiring February 28, 2010.

Your prompt attention to this request would be greatly appreciated. If you have any additional questions or require additional information, please contact Luese Washington, Policy Unit Manager, Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility at (602) 542-5472.

Sincerely,

Veronica A. Bossack
Assistant Director
Division of Benefits
and Medical Eligibility

Enclosures

Waiver Request

1. **Waiver serial number:**

N/A

2. **Type of request:**

Initial

3. **Primary regulation citation:**

7 CFR 273.24(f)

4. **Secondary regulation citation:**

Not applicable

5. **State:**

Arizona

6. **Region:**

Western Region

7. **Regulatory requirements:**

7 CFR 273.24 (b) restricts Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participation for able-bodied adults (ABAWD) to three full months during any three year period, unless the adult fulfills the employment or work program requirements, is exempt from these requirements as specified in 7 CFR 273.24 (c), regains eligibility as specified in 7 CFR 273.24 (d), or qualifies for an additional three month eligibility as specified in 7 CFR 273.24 (e).

7 CFR 273.24 (f) permits state agencies to request FNS to waive the time limit for a group of individuals residing in an area that does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for the individuals. To support a claim of lack of sufficient jobs a State may submit evidence that the Department of Labor's Unemployment Insurance Service has determined that the State qualifies for extended unemployment benefits. The State of Arizona qualifies for extended unemployment benefits effective January 4, 2009 as indicated by Trigger Notice number 2008-52.

8. **Proposed alternative procedures:**

The State of Arizona, Department of Economic Security (DES), requests approval of an initial waiver request. The initial waiver request will cover all areas within Maricopa and Pima Counties that are not exempt under the currently approved waiver 970148. This waiver would be for a one year period starting March 1, 2009 and expiring February 28, 2010.

9. **Justification for request:**

The approval of this waiver request will continue to ensure equitable distribution of SNAP benefits in areas experiencing a high incidence of unemployment. 7 CFR 273.24 (f) (6) allows states to define areas to be covered in the waiver.

In this waiver request, Arizona has included the balance of the State, areas within Maricopa and Pima Counties that are not exempt under currently approved waiver 970148.

Arizona is certified by the Department of Labor Unemployment Insurance Service as qualifying for extended unemployment benefits effective January 4, 2009.

10. **Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:**

- A. Client Benefits: Will not penalize Arizona residents living in higher unemployment areas who lack the same opportunity to obtain employment as individuals residing in lower unemployment areas.
- B. Worker Benefits: Monitoring and tracking of work compliance in Labor Surplus Areas and high unemployment areas will not be required.

11. **Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affected portion:**

All individuals residing in areas within Maricopa and Pima Counties that are not currently exempt under waiver 970148 will be exempt. The ABAWD related quality control error rate for cases within these ABAWD exempt areas will be positively affected, as this population has no mandatory work requirements to satisfy.

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

The waiver is requested in addition to the currently existing waiver 970148. The waiver is requested for a one year period of time beginning March 1, 2009 and expiring on February 28, 2010..

13. **State agency submitting waiver request:**

Arizona Department of Economic Security, Family Assistance Administration

Contact Person: Veronica Bossack, Assistant Director
Arizona Department of Economic Security
Division of Benefits & Medical Eligibility
1789 West Jefferson
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
(602) 542-3596

14. Signature and title of requesting official:

Monica A. Bossick Assistant Director
Signature Title

15. Date of State agency request: