



**State of Florida
Department of Children and Families**

Charlie Crist
Governor

Robert A. Butterworth
Secretary

June 17, 2008

Peggy Fouts
Food Stamp Program
United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
61 Forsyth Street, S.W., Suite 8T36
Atlanta, Georgia 30303



Dear Ms. Fouts:

The State of Florida is requesting approval of the enclosed waiver. This waiver allows the State Agency to exempt individuals residing in DeSoto, Glades, Hendry, Indian River, Okeechobee, St. Lucie, Flagler, and Madison Counties from participation in Food Stamp Employment and Training based on the aggregate unemployment rate of at least 20 percent above the national average for 24 months in these areas. Florida is requesting to implement the proposed procedures October 1, 2008.

If you have any questions concerning this waiver request, please call Eileen Schilling at (850) 414-5643 or Connie Mathers at (850) 921-5578.

Sincerely,

for 
Jennifer Lange
Director
ACCESS Florida

1317 Winewood Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700

Mission: Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and
Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

**2009 LABOR SURPLUS AREA (LSA)
WAIVER REQUEST**

1. **Waiver serial number:** 970134
2. **Type of request:** Modification and 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:** 7 CFR 273.24(b)1, (f)(1) and (3)
5. **State:** Florida
6. **Region:** Southeast
7. **Regulatory requirements:** (b) *General Rule*. Individuals are not eligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program as a member of any household if the individual received food stamp benefits for more than three countable months during any three-year period, except that individuals may be eligible for up to three additional countable months.

(1) *Countable months*. Countable months are months during which an individual receives food stamps for the full benefit month while not:

- (i) Exempt;
- (ii) Covered by a waiver under paragraph (f) of this section;
- (iii) Fulfilling the work requirement; or
- (iv) Receiving prorated benefits.

7 CFR 273.24(f) *Waivers* —(1) *General*. On the request of a State agency, FNS may waive the time limit for a group of individuals in the State if we determine that the area in which the individuals reside:

- (i) Has an unemployment rate of over 10 percent; or
- (ii) Does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for the individuals.

7 CFR 273.24(f)(3) *Waivers that are readily approvable*. FNS will approve State agency waivers where FNS confirms:

- (i) Data from the BLS or the BLS cooperating agency that shows an area has a most recent 12 month average unemployment rate over 10 percent;
- (ii) Evidence that the area has been designated a Labor Surplus Area by the ETA for the current fiscal year; or
- (iii) Data from the BLS or the BLS cooperating agency that an area has a 24-month average unemployment rate that exceeds the national average by 20 percent for any 24-month period no earlier than the same period the ETA uses to designate LSAs for the current fiscal year.

8. **Proposed procedures:** Florida is requesting to exempt individuals residing in a sub-region of the State consisting of six contiguous counties. This sub-region is eligible based on its aggregate average unemployment rate of at least 20 percent above the national average for the 24 months of May 2006 through April 2008. The national average unemployment rate plus 20 percent for this period was 5.6.

Central Florida Region:

Area	Unemployment Rate, MAY 2006 – APR 2008	Area	Unemployment Rate, MAY 2006 – APR 2008
DeSoto County	4.7	Indian River County	5.5
Glades County	4.7	Okeechobee County	5.1
Hendry County	7.3	St. Lucie County	5.6
		Total for sub-region	5.6

Hendry and St. Lucie Counties are eligible based on having average unemployment rates that are at least 20 percent above the national average for May 2006 through April 2008. DeSoto, Glades, Indian River, and Okeechobee Counties qualify for waivers based on the area's aggregate average unemployment rate, which is at least 20 percent above the national average for May 2006 through April 2008.

In addition, the State requests waivers for Flagler County and Madison County. These areas qualify based on their average unemployment rates for May 2006 through April 2008.

Area	Unemployment Rate, MAY 2006 – APR 2008
Flagler County	6.2
Madison County	6.1

9. Justification for request: The above areas have an average unemployment rate of at least 20 percent above the national average for May 2006 through April 2008. All of the raw data supporting these numbers is from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) website.

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, characteristic, and quality control error rate for affected portion: The ABAWD caseload for these areas, as of **June 9, 2009**, represents **5.21%** of the ABAWD caseload for the state. The food stamp caseload for these areas, as of **June 9, 2009**, represents **3.32%** of the statewide food stamp caseload. There are no quality control procedures involved.

12. Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver will apply: The State is requesting a one-year waiver from October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009.

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:

Jennifer Lange, Director
ACCESS Florida
Department of Children and Families

15. Date of request: