

Waiver Request – Minnesota

1. **Waiver serial number:** # 980014
2. **Type of request:** Extension and Modification
3. **Primary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
4. **Secondary regulation citation:** None
5. **State:** Minnesota
6. **Region:** MWRO
7. **Regulatory Requirements:** 7 CFR 273.24 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 comply with the requirements of a work program for 20 hours or more per week; did not participate in and comply with requirements of a program under section 20 or a comparable program established by the State; or received benefits because they were exempt from these requirements.

7 CFR 273.24(f) 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 of over 10 percent, or does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for the individuals.

8. **Description of proposed alternative procedures:** The Minnesota State Agency is requesting an extension of its Waiver # 980014. Under the State's current waiver, recipients residing in 24 counties listed below are exempt from the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24 based on being part of a sub-region of an Economic Development Region (EDR) where the unemployment rate is greater than 20 percent above the national average. The counties (listed by EDR) currently approved in Waiver # 980014 are:

Economic Development Regions (EDR) & Counties	EDR Average Unemployment Rate (NSA) July 2006 – June 2008
Part of EDR # 1 – Northwest Kittson, Marshall, Pennington, Red Lake, and Roseau	6.375 %
EDR # 2 – Headwaters Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard, Lake of the Wood, and Mahnomen	6.502 %
Part of EDR # 3 – Northeast Aitkin, Carlton, Itasca, and Koochiching	6.558 %

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- continued from page 1 -	EDR Average Unemployment Rate (NSA) July 2006 – June 2008
Economic Development Regions (EDR) & Counties	
EDR # 5 -- North Central Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd, and Wadena	6.114 %
EDR # 7E -- East Central Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, and Pine	5.833 %

These counties continue to be part of a sub-region of an EDR where the unemployment rate is more than 20 percent above the national not seasonally adjusted (nsa) unemployment rate of 4.739 percent for the previous two years (July 2006 through June 2008), which is 5.686 percent.

In addition, modification is requested to the list of counties covered by this waiver. The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development has provided unemployment rate data which indicates that 4 counties currently not covered by the waiver have an unemployment rate of more than 20 percent above the national not seasonally adjusted (nsa) unemployment rate of 4.739 percent for the previous two years, which is 5.686 percent. Minnesota seeks to add these 4 counties not currently covered by the waiver. These counties are:

Individual Counties	Average Unemployment Rate (NSA) July 2006 – June 2008
Becker	5.834 %
Grant	6.044 %
Le Sueur	6.279 %
Meeker	5.869 %

Further exemption consideration is requested for the following counties based on their respective location within Minnesota's Economic Development Region (EDR) # 1 – Northwest, and EDR #3 – Northeast, where the overall unemployment rate of the region exceeds 5.686 percent. These counties are (listed by EDR):

Individual County	EDR Avg. Unemployment Rate (NSA) July 2006 – June 2008
Part of EDR # 1 -- Northwest Norman	6.375 %
Part of EDR # 3 -- Northeast Cook	6.467 %

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9. **Justification for Request:** A map is attached which provides a visual depiction of all of the counties that Minnesota is seeking to have approved for FFY 2009 under Waiver #980014.

An electronic copy of the waiver request letter, waiver request, map and supporting documents used to determine which counties meet or exceed the national not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate will be sent to Angela Bryan with FNS for her review.

10. **Anticipated Impact on Households and State Agency Operations:** No change is anticipated because the individuals will be exempt.
11. **Affected Caseload:** Item #8 contains the information about the counties that will be impacted for FFY 2009 with this waiver extension and modification.
12. **Anticipated Implementation Date and Time Period for which Waiver is needed:** This waiver is requested for the twelve month period from October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009.
13. **Signature and Title of Requesting Official:**



Ann Sessoms

Director

Transition to Economic Stability



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

July 31, 2008

Mr. Tim English, Regional Director, FSP
USDA, Food and Nutrition Service
77 West Jackson Blvd., 20th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604-3511

Dear Mr. English:

This letter seeks an extension and modification of Minnesota's current waiver exempting individuals from 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.

In August of 2007, Minnesota received approval of **Waiver # 980014** which exempts residents of the following 24 counties from the Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) provisions based on their location within Minnesota's Economic Development Regions where the overall unemployment rate of the region met or exceeded 20 percent of the national not seasonally adjusted rate of 4.676 percent which was 5.61 percent:

Aitkin, Beltrami, Carlton, Cass, Chisago, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Isanti, Itasca, Kanabec, Kittson, Koochiching, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomon, Marshall, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Pennington, Pine, Red Lake, Roseau, Todd, and Wadena.

This waiver expires on September 30, 2008.

We seek an extension and modification of **Waiver # 980014** so that this waiver remains in effect for the period of October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009.

In addition we seek to modify the list of counties covered by this waiver. The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development has provided unemployment rate data which indicates that an additional 4 counties, listed below, currently not covered by the waiver, have an unemployment rate of more than 20 percent above the national not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 4.739 percent for the previous two years which is 5.686 percent. Minnesota seeks to add these 4 counties not currently covered by the waiver. These counties are:

Becker, Grant, Le Sueur, and Meeker.

Further exemption consideration is requested for the following county based on their respective location within sub-region of Economic Development Region (EDR) #1, and EDR #3, where the overall unemployment rate of the region exceeds 5.686 percent. These counties are (respectively):

Norman, Cook.

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Mr. Tim English
July 31, 2008
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A map providing a visual depiction of counties in this request and supporting documentation are included for your review. All unemployment material used to support this request was taken from the BLS website.

Upon approval of this request, the Minnesota Department of Human Services will notify the counties of their standing.

If you have any questions about this request please contact Dale Simonson at (651) 431-4009 or Steve Erbes at (651) 259-7539.

Sincerely,



Ann Sessoms
Director
Transition to Economic Stability

Enclosures