TEXAS HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

THOMAS M. SUEHS
EXECUTIVE COMMISSIONER

May 18, 2010

Mr. Dwight Crudup
Regional Director
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
1100 Commerce Street, Room 522
Dallas, TX 75242

RE: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Request for Extension of Waiver (#970057)

Dear Mr. Crudup:

The Health and Human Services Commission requests an extension of the existing waiver of section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act as amended by section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRWORA) of 1996 (P.L. 104-193), for the following 22 Texas counties: Cameron, Cass, Dimmit, Duval, Hidalgo, Jasper, Liberty, Marion, Matagorda, Maverick, Milam, Morris, Newton, Orange, Presidio, Reeves, Sabine, San Augustine, Starr, Willacy, Zapata, and Zavala.

The current waiver expires September 30, 2010. These 22 counties qualify as high unemployment areas under criteria specified in 7 CFR 273.24(f)(i), which allows the Secretary to approve state requests for exemption from work requirements for individuals residing in areas with unemployment rates exceeding 10 percent. We request that this extension be for a one-year period beginning October 1, 2010, so as to coincide with the federal fiscal year.

Attached are documents from The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics website at http://www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm#data outlining the most recent data used to determine the applicable county unemployment rate. It is our understanding that Food and Nutrition Services will consider this waiver using the employment data from this time period and source. The method used is in compliance with the United States Department of Agriculture memo FSP-SO-2004-14 dated May 7, 2004. Details are contained in the attached standard-format waiver request. In order to complete computer programming for these changes we need your response by July 1, 2010.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information. Eric McDaniel, Director for Texas Works Policy, serves as the lead staff on this matter and can be reached at (512) 206-4564 or by e-mail at Eric.McDaniel @hhsc.state.tx.us.

Sincerely,

Todd Byrnes
Associate Commissioner for Family Services

TB:em

Attachments

cc: Eric McDaniel, 203-9

WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver serial number (if request is extension):** 970057

2. **Type of request :** Extension

3. **Primary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 273.24(f)

4. **Secondary regulation citation:** N/A

5. **State:** Texas

6. **Region:** SWRO

7. **Regulation Requirements:** 7 CFR 273.24 provides that no individual shall be eligible to participate in SNAP as a member of any household if, during the preceding 36 month period, the individual received SNAP benefits for not less than 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 work program for 20 hours or more per week; or did not participate in and comply with the requirements of a program under section 20 or a comparable program established by the State.

   It also provides that, upon 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. **Proposed alternative procedures:** Texas proposes to exempt from this requirement individuals who reside in counties that have an unemployment rate in excess of 10 percent. Historical unemployment figures were obtained from the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics web-site at http://www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm#data (Attachment A) indicate that the 22 counties listed on Attachment A had unemployment rates exceeding 10 percent from February 1, 2009 through January 31, 2010. Each year the State plans to revise the list of waiver counties with an annual effective date of October 1. Approval to request a waiver for additional counties may be requested by the State if circumstances warrant during the year.

9. **Justification for request:** This waiver is requested under 7 CFR 273.24(f). Approval of this waiver would allow individuals who reside in areas where unemployment rates are over 10 percent the opportunity to participate in SNAP without being required to meet unrealistic program work requirements.

10. **Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:** Approval of this waiver would mitigate the adverse effects experienced by households in economically depressed areas by allowing them to continue receiving basic nutritional sustenance through SNAP. In such areas, these households would otherwise be faced with losing such basic support due to circumstances beyond their control since complying with work requirements in such local economic environments may not be a reasonable expectation.

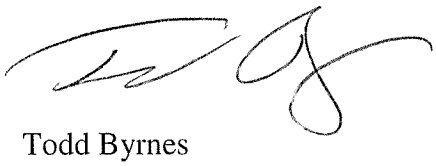
11. **Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affected portion:** In January 2010, a total of 3,468,576 individuals (1,342,561 households) received SNAP statewide. The 5051 SNAP recipients in the 22 counties who would be exempted by this waiver comprise 0.15 percent of the State's total recipients. The 4,612 households that would be exempted comprise 0.34 percent of the State's SNAP households. (The statistics in this section include statewide SNAP individuals and households, not estimates for TIERS.) Attachment B provides caseload data on the affected population for these counties.

    There are no applicable quality control error rates to report for this waiver request.

12. **Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:** The waiver is requested for a one-year period commencing October 1, 2010.

13. **Proposed quality control review procedures:** No special procedures will be necessitated by this waiver.

14. **Signature and title of requesting official:**



Todd Byrnes
Associate Commissioner
Office of Family Services

15. **Date of request:** May 18, 2010

Attachment A

Cameron			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	148746	14176
2009	Mar	148522	13893
2009	Apr	150147	13007
2009	May	150317	13929
2009	Jun	153246	16103
2009	Jul	153933	16046
2009	Aug	152128	15655
2009	Sep	153020	15777
2009	Oct	152061	15338
2009	Nov	153536	15791
2009	Dec	153828	16578
2010	Jan	155964	18004
Total		1825448	184297

184297/1825448 = .1009 x 100 = 10.09 10.1% unemployment

Cass			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	13126	1319
2009	Mar	13382	1537
2009	Apr	13407	1482
2009	May	13524	1588
2009	Jun	13685	1703
2009	Jul	13674	1724
2009	Aug	13605	1671
2009	Sep	13487	1628
2009	Oct	13487	1573
2009	Nov	13423	1520
2009	Dec	13340	1513
2010	Jan	13488	1672
Total		161628	18930

18930/161628 = .1171 x 100 = 11.71 11.7% unemployment

Dimmit			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	4073	400
2009	Mar	4098	386
2009	Apr	4152	376
2009	May	4271	422
2009	Jun	4328	482
2009	Jul	4325	509
2009	Aug	4297	483
2009	Sep	4337	460
2009	Oct	4082	431
2009	Nov	4374	428
2009	Dec	4345	432
2010	Jan	4319	465
Total		51001	5274

5274/51001 = .1034 x 100 = 10.34 10.3% unemployment

Duval			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	5192	450
2009	Mar	5222	486
2009	Apr	5295	533
2009	May	5327	598
2009	Jun	5420	660
2009	Jul	5391	680
2009	Aug	5384	672
2009	Sep	5410	686
2009	Oct	5403	665
2009	Nov	5385	633
2009	Dec	5346	641
2010	Jan	5287	667
Total		64062	7371

7371/64062 = .1150 x 100 = 11.50 11.5% unemployment

Hidalgo			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	290862	28923
2009	Mar	290972	28623
2009	Apr	293752	27336
2009	May	295351	28796
2009	Jun	298623	33591
2009	Jul	296776	34016
2009	Aug	297712	33449
2009	Sep	297867	33334
2009	Oct	299803	32345
2009	Nov	303445	33590
2009	Dec	304464	35126
2010	Jan	307991	37484
Total		3577618	386613

386613/3577618 = .1080 x 100 = 10.80 10.8% unemployment

Jasper			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	15721	1379
2009	Mar	15839	1416
2009	Apr	15827	1363
2009	May	15954	1521
2009	Jun	16203	1714
2009	Jul	16093	1765
2009	Aug	16021	1746
2009	Sep	15977	1831
2009	Oct	16063	1833
2009	Nov	16232	1815
2009	Dec	16090	1848
2010	Jan	16259	1938
Total		192279	20169

20169/192279 = .1048 x 100 = 10.48 10.5% unemployment

Liberty			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	31540	2751
2009	Mar	31559	2774
2009	Apr	31596	2747
2009	May	31896	3109
2009	Jun	32346	3493
2009	Jul	32646	3587
2009	Aug	32345	3508
2009	Sep	32276	3477
2009	Oct	32408	3521
2009	Nov	32478	3493
2009	Dec	32467	3552
2010	Jan	32524	3732
Total		386081	39744

39744/386081 = .1029 x 100 = 10.29 10.3% unemployment

Marion			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	5059	414
2009	Mar	5125	441
2009	Apr	5109	496
2009	May	5138	547
2009	Jun	5216	616
2009	Jul	5195	621
2009	Aug	5170	613
2009	Sep	5160	600
2009	Oct	5178	579
2009	Nov	5180	570
2009	Dec	5191	606
2010	Jan	5203	621
Total		61924	6724

6724/61924 = .1085 x 100 = 10.85 10.9% unemployment

Matagorda			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	17271	1546
2009	Mar	17430	1555
2009	Apr	17570	1561
2009	May	17769	1772
2009	Jun	18297	2016
2009	Jul	17971	2045
2009	Aug	17971	2006
2009	Sep	17920	1910
2009	Oct	17709	1824
2009	Nov	17945	1934
2009	Dec	17975	2069
2010	Jan	18187	2209
Total		214015	22447

22447/214015 = .1048 x 100 = 10.48 10.5% unemployment

Maverick			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	22791	3700
2009	Mar	22655	3544
2009	Apr	22862	3353
2009	May	22752	3259
2009	Jun	23168	3455
2009	Jul	22853	3235
2009	Aug	22761	3047
2009	Sep	22955	2908
2009	Oct	23203	3035
2009	Nov	23755	3213
2009	Dec	23880	3475
2010	Jan	24619	4193
Total		278254	40417

40417/278254 = .1452 x 100 = 14.52 14.5% unemployment

Milam			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	11557	1343
2009	Mar	11451	1290
2009	Apr	11463	1234
2009	May	11574	1307
2009	Jun	11682	1379
2009	Jul	11578	1326
2009	Aug	11461	1248
2009	Sep	11437	1226
2009	Oct	11366	1221
2009	Nov	11407	1193
2009	Dec	11374	1266
2010	Jan	11293	1326
Total		137643	15359

15359/137643 = .1115 x 100 = 11.15 11.2% unemployment

Morris			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	6275	696
2009	Mar	6367	887
2009	Apr	6230	941
2009	May	6254	1014
2009	Jun	6281	1063
2009	Jul	6343	1109
2009	Aug	6291	1052
2009	Sep	6229	995
2009	Oct	6150	960
2009	Nov	6121	919
2009	Dec	6087	910
2010	Jan	6086	931
Total		74714	11477

11477/74714 = .1536 x 100 = 15.36 15.4% unemployment

Newton			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	5827	628
2009	Mar	5893	631
2009	Apr	5817	572
2009	May	5900	653
2009	Jun	6048	735
2009	Jul	5986	736
2009	Aug	5964	703
2009	Sep	5944	741
2009	Oct	5918	700
2009	Nov	6014	726
2009	Dec	5995	749
2010	Jan	5957	785
Total		71263	8359

8359/71263 = .1172 x 100 = 11.72 11.7% unemployment

Orange			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	42091	3718
2009	Mar	42191	3905
2009	Apr	41729	3619
2009	May	41780	4023
2009	Jun	42164	4431
2009	Jul	42389	4600
2009	Aug	41988	4582
2009	Sep	41938	4426
2009	Oct	41979	4397
2009	Nov	42050	4291
2009	Dec	41940	4375
2010	Jan	42249	4641
Total		504488	51008

51008/504488 = .1011 x 100 = 10.11 10.1% unemployment

Presidio			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	3447	537
2009	Mar	3503	561
2009	Apr	3514	520
2009	May	3719	592
2009	Jun	3846	671
2009	Jul	3846	699
2009	Aug	3865	694
2009	Sep	3717	622
2009	Oct	3676	623
2009	Nov	3705	642
2009	Dec	3749	686
2010	Jan	3770	708
Total		44357	7555

7555/44357 = .1703 x 100 = 17.03 17.0% unemployment

Reeves			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	4463	412
2009	Mar	4556	487
2009	Apr	4570	501
2009	May	4634	547
2009	Jun	4829	641
2009	Jul	4768	626
2009	Aug	4820	632
2009	Sep	4733	606
2009	Oct	4675	594
2009	Nov	4701	593
2009	Dec	4743	607
2010	Jan	4752	615
Total		56244	6861

6861/56244 = .1219 x 100 = 12.19 12.2% unemployment

Sabine			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	3469	470
2009	Mar	3479	471
2009	Apr	3560	474
2009	May	3597	524
2009	Jun	3677	568
2009	Jul	3658	576
2009	Aug	3651	553
2009	Sep	3638	553
2009	Oct	3571	560
2009	Nov	3603	561
2009	Dec	3637	619
2010	Jan	3635	656
Total		43175	6585

6585/43175 = .1525 x 100 = 15.25 15.3% unemployment

San Augustine			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	3510	314
2009	Mar	3534	332
2009	Apr	3598	339
2009	May	3613	362
2009	Jun	3727	401
2009	Jul	3651	398
2009	Aug	3653	387
2009	Sep	3584	373
2009	Oct	3600	393
2009	Nov	3619	401
2009	Dec	3602	407
2010	Jan	3592	454
Total		43283	4561

4561/43283 = .1053 x 100 = 10.53 10.5% unemployment

Starr			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	24179	3955
2009	Mar	24049	3909
2009	Apr	24297	3595
2009	May	24371	3687
2009	Jun	24761	4130
2009	Jul	24284	4211
2009	Aug	24514	4100
2009	Sep	24247	4013
2009	Oct	24572	4153
2009	Nov	25070	4465
2009	Dec	25559	4927
2010	Jan	26047	5314
Total		295950	50459

50459/295950 = .1704 x 100 = 17.04 17.0% unemployment

Willacy			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	8117	956
2009	Mar	8111	927
2009	Apr	8324	911
2009	May	8312	954
2009	Jun	8515	1112
2009	Jul	8312	1102
2009	Aug	8322	1081
2009	Sep	8281	1095
2009	Oct	8225	1032
2009	Nov	8385	1052
2009	Dec	8402	1111
2010	Jan	8518	1214
Total		99824	12547

12547/99824 = .1256 x 100 = 12.56 12.6% unemployment

Zapata			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	5415	450
2009	Mar	5419	493
2009	Apr	5355	490
2009	May	5271	535
2009	Jun	5368	649
2009	Jul	5353	666
2009	Aug	5320	677
2009	Sep	5344	678
2009	Oct	5452	647
2009	Nov	5417	632
2009	Dec	5440	650
2010	Jan	5530	686
Total		64684	7253

7253/64684 = .1121 x 100 = 11.21 11.2% unemployment

Zavala			
Year	Period	labor force	unemployment
2009	Feb	3770	621
2009	Mar	3892	542
2009	Apr	3922	512
2009	May	4008	500
2009	Jun	4074	588
2009	Jul	3941	654
2009	Aug	3850	652
2009	Sep	3840	592
2009	Oct	3789	560
2009	Nov	4041	602
2009	Dec	4010	619
2010	Jan	4029	680
Total		47166	7122

7122/47166 = .1509 x 100 = 15.09 15.1% unemployment

Attachment B

SNAP Hardship Counties in Texas
Total Number of SNAP
Childless 18-49 Yr Olds
January 2010

County	ABAWD Recipients	ABAWD Households
Cameron	920	873
Cass	192	163
Dimmit	55	54
Duval	15	11
Hidalgo	2,042	1,889
Jasper	150	142
Liberty	204	179
Marion	11	9
Matagorda	64	59
Maverick	270	228
Milam	0	0
Morris	47	43
Newton	25	21
Orange	300	269
Presidio	66	63
Reeves	36	34
Sabine	3	3
San Augustine	6	6
Starr	410	347
Willacy	95	90
Zapata	5	5
Zavala	135	124
Total	5,051	4,612

Total Counties 22