

STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):

2020121

2. Type of request:

Initial

3. Regulatory citation:

7 CFR 273.24

4. State:

Louisiana

5. Region:

SWRO

6. Regulatory requirements:

Under 7 CFR 273.24(b), individuals are not eligible to participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as a member of any household if the individual received program benefits for more than three months during any three-year period in which the individual was subject to, but did not comply with, the SNAP work requirements. Regulations at 273.24(a) provide that fulfilling the work requirement means: working 20 hours or more per week, averaged monthly; participating in and complying with the requirements of a work program or a workfare program for at least 20 hours per week; or any combination of working and participating in a work program for a total of 20 hours per week.

Under 7 CFR 273.24(f), upon the request of a State agency, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) may waive the applicability of the time limit described above for any group of individuals in the State if FNS makes a determination that the area in which the individuals reside does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for the individuals.

7. Description of alternative procedures:

This request to exempt residents residing in the entire State from the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24 due to having insufficient jobs is based on the State qualifying for extended unemployment benefits within the past 12 months.

8. Justification for request:

Louisiana is requesting a waiver to exempt residents residing in the entire State from the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24 due to having insufficient jobs based on the U.S. Department of Labor data that the State qualifies for extended unemployment benefits. 26 USC 3304 (Public Law 102-318) allows States the option of providing an additional alternative trigger for the extended benefits program, based on the State's seasonally adjusted total unemployment rate (TUR) for the most recent three months reaching at least: (1) 6.5 percent; and (2) 110 percent of such TUR for the corresponding three-month periods ending in either or both of the two preceding calendar years.

The Department of Labor's Trigger Notice No. 2015-3¹ shows the State's three-month average total unemployment rate (TUR) was: (1) 6.5 percent, and (2) 116 percent of the three-month average for the corresponding period in the first preceding year, making the State eligible for extended unemployment benefits.

Federal Register / Volume 66, Number 11, dated January 17, 2001, states that "in the event a State agency submits a request to us in an untimely fashion due to circumstances beyond its control, we reserve the right to make a retroactive approval". Based on this provision and on the fact that Louisiana meets one of the allowable waiver criteria for December 2015, we are requesting the waiver back to December 1, 2015.

9. 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.

10. Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affection portion (if applicable):

As of November 2015, Louisiana's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) caseload was 376,706 households representing 848,684 recipients. The state error rate for FFY 2014 was 1.55 percent. The total number of ABAWDs statewide is approximately 56,760.

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

The State is requesting a one-year waiver from December 1, 2015 through November 30, 2016.

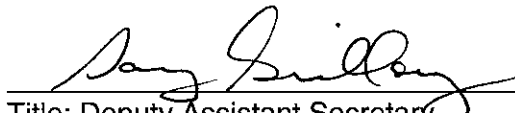
12. Proposed quality control review procedures:

There is no special quality control procedures needed in conjunction with this waiver.

13. State agency submitting waiver request and State contact person:

Sammy Guillory
Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services

14. Signature and title of requesting official:


Title: Deputy Assistant Secretary
Email for transmission of response: Sammy.Guillory.DCFS@La.Gov

15. Date of request: January 13, 2016

¹ Extended Benefits Trigger Notices can be found at http://ows.doleta.gov/unemploy/claims_arch.asp. Trigger notice 2015-3 was issued the week of February 1, 2015.

16. State agency staff contact (name/email/telephone):

Kim Matherne / Kim.Matherne@la.gov / 225-219-2428

17. Regional office contact person (*to be completed by FNS regional office*):