

STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):** 2150041

2. **Type of request:** Extension and modification

3. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.24

4. **State:** Alaska

5. **Region:** WRO

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, 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; participate in and comply with the requirements of a work program for 20 hours or more per week; or participate in and comply with requirements of a program under Section 20 or a comparable program established by the State.

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 above provision for any group of individuals in the State if the FNS 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.

7. **Description of alternative procedures:**

The State of Alaska is requesting a statewide waiver from SNAP time limits at 7 CFR 273.24.

8. **Justification for request:**

This request to exempt residents residing in the entire State from the time limit in 7 CFR 273.24 due to having insufficient jobs is based on the State having an unemployment rate at least 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of April 2014 – March 2016. 7 CFR 273.24 (f)(2)(ii) states that, “To support a claim of lack of sufficient jobs, a State may submit evidence that an area (...) has a 24-month average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the same 24-month period. This 24-month period may not be any earlier than the same 24-month period the ETA uses to designate LSAs for the current fiscal year.”

Alaska’s average unemployment rate for the period of April 2014 – March 2016 was 6.6 percent. The national average for this time period was 5.5 percent; 20 percent above that was 6.6 percent. The time period that the Department of Labor uses to

determine Labor Surplus Areas for Fiscal Year 2016 is January 2013-December 2014, the same time period used to support this waiver request.

	Labor Force Totals, April 2014-March 2016	Unemployment Totals, April 2014-March 2016	Average Unemployment Rate, April 2014-March 2016
Alaska	8,739,832	579,135	6.6
20% Above the National Average Threshold	6.6		

9. Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:

This waiver will provide consistency for state operations and benefit SNAP households. This waiver will help low-income Alaskans while the State of Alaska works to recover from its recent fiscal crisis caused by oil revenue shortfalls.

- A statewide waiver will ease the hardship for low-income Alaskans caused by limiting food assistance when there are not enough jobs available for everyone searching for work.
- Applications for SNAP benefits are simplified for state agency staff. This waiver allows for front-line agency staff to treat applications from all regions of Alaska the same in regards to work requirements and ABAWD time limitations. We anticipate this will result in quicker application processing times, higher accuracy rates, and increased client satisfaction.
- This waiver allows for Alaska to build its Employment & Training program with volunteer participants and to build upon those successes for the future when Alaska's unemployment rate improves and ABAWD participation will become mandatory.

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

This waiver affects the entire state.

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

The State is requesting a one-year waiver, from June 1, 2016 through May 31, 2017.

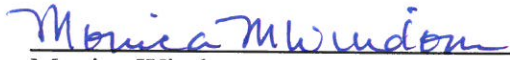
12. Proposed quality control review procedures:

There are no special quality control procedures involved.

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

Monica Windom
Chief of Policy & Program Development
State of Alaska
Department of Health & Social Services
Division of Public Assistance

13. Signature and title of requesting official:



Monica Windom

Chief of Policy & Program Development

14. Date of request:

5/24/2016

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

Monica Windom

Chief of Policy & Program Development

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