

STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):** 2150057
2. **Type of request:** Extension
3. **Statutory citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended
4. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
5. **State:** Massachusetts
6. **Region:** NERO
7. **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 3 months during any 3 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.
8. **Description of alternative procedures:**

The State of Massachusetts is requesting to exempt able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) in 62 towns and cities from SNAP time limits at 7 CFR 273.24.
9. **Justification for request:**

Under SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 273.24(f)(2), areas may qualify for an ABAWD time limit waiver if they have insufficient jobs. To support this claim, states may submit evidence that an area has an average unemployment rate for a 24-month time period that is at least 20 percent above the national average for the same 24-month period. 7 CFR 273.24(f)(6) provides that States may define areas to be waived.

The State of Massachusetts seeks a waiver for three individual towns based on their average unemployment rates that are 20 percent above the national average for the

24-month period of January 2015 through December 2016. The national average unemployment rate for this 24-month period was 5.1 percent; 20 percent above this was 6.1 percent.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2015 through December 2016			
Individual towns and cities	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total	Unemployment Rate
Gosnold town, MA	93	1,229	7.6%
Hinsdale town, MA	1,589	25,523	6.2%
Southbridge Town city, MA	12,866	192,151	6.7%
20% Above National Average Threshold	6.1%		

The State seeks a waiver for an eligible region of 14 contiguous cities and towns based on its average unemployment rate that is 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of January 2015 through December 2016. The average unemployment rate for this region was 6.1 percent.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2015 through December 2016		
Contiguous towns and cities	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total
Acushnet town, MA	7,718	146,126
Berkley town, MA	4,106	86,192
Dartmouth town, MA	20,732	445,264
Fairhaven town, MA	11,905	226,261
Fall River city, MA	71,453	943,513
Freetown town, MA	5,803	124,987
Mattapoissett town, MA	3,216	75,311
Middleborough town, MA	14,246	306,915
New Bedford city, MA	84,365	1,118,635
Raynham town, MA	7,676	172,333
Rochester town, MA	3,127	76,049
Somerset town, MA	10,242	218,279
Swansea town, MA	9,838	224,409
Westport town, MA	10,886	197,289
Combined Area Total	265,313	4,361,563
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.1%	

20% Above National Average Threshold	6.1%
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The State also seeks a waiver for an eligible region of 18 contiguous cities and towns based on its average unemployment rate that is 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of January 2015 through December 2016. The average unemployment rate for this region was 6.1 percent.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2015 through December 2016		
Contiguous towns and cities	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total
Agawam Town city, MA	16,367	379,044
Brimfield town, MA	2,118	52,409
Chicopee city, MA	37,618	665,540
Granville town, MA	940	21,390
Holland town, MA	1,679	38,042
Holyoke city, MA	26,709	389,976
Ludlow town, MA	14,561	259,345
Monson town, MA	4,874	115,081
Montgomery town, MA	482	12,190
Palmer Town city, MA	8,536	147,337
Russell town, MA	952	23,745
Southwick town, MA	5,597	131,912
Springfield city, MA	121,189	1,514,664
Tolland town, MA	269	6,746
Wales town, MA	1,141	23,460
West Springfield Town city, MA	16,642	347,371
Westfield city, MA	25,077	503,575
Wilbraham town, MA	6,720	180,921
Combined Area Total	291,471	4,812,748
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.1%	
20% Above National Average Threshold	6.1%	

The State seeks a waiver for an eligible region of 9 contiguous cities and towns based on its average unemployment rate that is 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of January 2015 through December 2016. The average unemployment rate for this region was 6.1 percent.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2015 through December 2016		
Contiguous towns and cities	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total
Adams town, MA	5,954	101,734
Cheshire town, MA	2,248	45,940
Clarksburg town, MA	1,061	20,941
Florida town, MA	501	9,865
Monroe town, MA	136	1,889
New Ashford town, MA	215	3,375
North Adams city, MA	9,920	145,933
Rowe town, MA	202	3,761
Savoy town, MA	503	9,337
Combined Area Total	20,740	342,775
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.1%	
20% Above National Average Threshold	6.1%	

The State seeks a waiver for an eligible region of 3 contiguous cities and towns based on its average unemployment rate that is 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of January 2015 through December 2016. The average unemployment rate for this region was 6.1 percent.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2015 through December 2016		
Contiguous towns and cities	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total
Lawrence city, MA	69,581	859,186
Methuen town city, MA	29,816	636,182
North Andover town, MA	13,699	371,974
Combined Area Total	113,096	1,867,342
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.1%	
20% Above National Average Threshold	6.1%	

The State also seeks a waiver for an eligible region of 10 non-contiguous towns based on its average unemployment rate for the 24-month period of January 2015 through December 2016. The average unemployment rate for this region was 6.1

percent, 20 percent above the national average unemployment rate for the same period. The towns are located in the Barnstable Town, MA Metropolitan New England City and Town Area (NECTA) labor market area.¹

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2015 through December 2016		
Non-contiguous towns in Barnstable Town, MA Metropolitan NECTA	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total
Bourne town, MA	12,382	249,477
Dennis town, MA	9,875	157,883
Eastham town, MA	3,774	61,912
Falmouth town, MA	19,122	366,562
Harwich town, MA	8,005	145,399
Provincetown town, MA	9,152	52,321
Truro town, MA	3,526	30,010
Wareham town, MA	15,758	297,177
Wellfleet town, MA	3,825	39,746
Yarmouth town, MA	16,518	284,212
Combined Area Total	101,937	1,684,699
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.1%	
20% Above National Average Threshold	6.1%	

The State also seeks a waiver for an eligible region of 5 non-contiguous towns based on its average unemployment rate for the 24-month period of January 2015 through December 2016. The average unemployment rate for this region was 6.2 percent. The towns are located in the Vineyard Haven MA Micropolitan NECTA labor market area.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2015 through December 2016		
Non-contiguous towns in Vineyard Haven MA Micropolitan NECTA	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total
Aquinnah town, MA	192	5,097
Chilmark town, MA	463	11,377
Edgartown town, MA	4,172	57,274

¹ Information on the composition of the Massachusetts NECTAs is available at http://lmi2.detma.org/lmi/2010%20NECTA%20and%20Labor%20Areas_townlist.asp.

Oak Bluffs town, MA	3,455	61,009
Tisbury town, MA	3,368	52,868
Combined Area Total	11,650	187,625
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.2%	
20% Above National Average Threshold	6.1%	

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, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affection portion (if applicable):

The caseload for these areas, as of 8/31/17, represent **11.68%** of the caseload for the state. There are no quality control procedures involved.

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

The State is requesting a one-year waiver, from January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018.

13. Proposed quality control review procedures:

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

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

State Agency: Department of Transitional Assistance

Contact Person: Miriam Kaufmann, SNAP Assistant Director, Employment and Training Services

15. Signature and title of requesting official:



Title:

Email for transmission of response:

16. Date of request: 9/18/2017

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

Miriam Kaufmann, SNAP Assistant Director, Employment and Training Services/
Miriam.kaufmann@state.ma.us / (617) 348-5561

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