



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
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PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

CAROLE JOHNSON
Acting Commissioner

NATASHA JOHNSON
Director

March 7, 2018

Eric Ratchford, Regional Director
Food and Nutrition Service
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
US Department of Agriculture-MARO
300 Corporate Boulevard
Robbinsville, NJ 08691-1598

Dear Mr. Ratchford:

Enclosed is a request to allow New Jersey to expand the waiver of the ABAWD provision for additional counties for the remainder of the calendar year.

New Jersey is already approved to waive Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland Counties for calendar year 2018. Based upon an analysis of Labor Market Data, New Jersey would like to add Burlington, Camden, Essex, Gloucester, Mercer, Passaic, Salem, Sussex, Union and Warren counties to the ABAWD waiver.

If you have any questions, please contact Larry Braasch, Assistant Director, NJ SNAP/EBT, at (609) 588-2405.

Sincerely,



Natasha Johnson
Director

Enclosure

STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):** 970028
2. **Type of request:** Amendment
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:** New Jersey
6. **Region:** MARO
7. **Regulatory requirements:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, provides that no able-bodied adult without dependents (ABAWD) shall be 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 ABAWD work requirement. Section 6(o) also provides that, upon the request of the State agency, the Secretary may waive the applicability of the 3-month ABAWD time limit 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 alternative procedures:** The State of New Jersey is requesting to exempt able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) in 13 counties from SNAP time limits at 7 CFR 273.24. This request would modify the state's current waiver by adding 10 eligible counties to the waiver.
9. **Justification for request:**
Under SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 273.24(f)(2), areas may support a claim of insufficient jobs by submitting evidence that an area has an average unemployment rate for a 24-month time period that exceeds the national average for the same 24-month period by 20 percent. 7 CFR 273.24(f)(6) provides that States may define areas to be waived.

The State of New Jersey seeks a waiver for a regional group of 5 counties based on the region's aggregate average unemployment rate for the 24-month period of February 2015 through January 2017. The national average unemployment rate for this 24-month period was 5.0 percent; 20 percent above this was 6.0 percent. The region's average unemployment rate for this period was also 6.0 percent.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data February 2015 through January 2017		
Counties	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total
Essex County	569,534	8,938,227
Passaic County	387,258	5,955,618
Sussex County	91,280	1,828,227
Union County	368,590	6,679,914
Warren County	66,785	1,366,603
Combined Area Total	1,483,447	24,768,589
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.0%	
20% Above National Average Threshold	6.0%	

The State of New Jersey seeks a waiver for another regional group of 8 counties based on the region's aggregate average unemployment rate for the 24-month period of February 2015 through January 2017. The national average unemployment rate for this 24-month period was 5.0 percent; 20 percent above this was 6.0 percent. The region's average unemployment rate for this period was also 6.0 percent. This region includes the 3 counties of Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland that have already been approved in the state's existing waiver.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data February 2015 through January 2017		
Counties	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total
Atlantic County, NJ	250,818	3,015,549
Burlington County, NJ	267,822	5,585,025
Camden County, NJ	359,480	6,128,318
Cape May County, NJ	118,021	1,146,077
Cumberland County, NJ	129,942	1,619,970
Gloucester County, NJ	196,333	3,597,580
Mercer County, NJ	219,348	4,777,810
Salem County, NJ	49,819	738,897
Combined Area Total	1,591,583	26,609,226
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.0%	
20% Above National Average Threshold	6.0%	

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 affected portion (if applicable):

The caseload for these areas, as of December 2017, represent 61.87% 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.

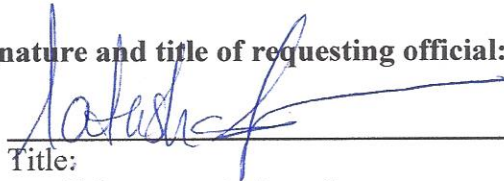
13. Proposed quality control review procedures:

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

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

New Jersey Department of Human Services
Division of Family Development
Natasha Johnson
Director

15. Signature and title of requesting official:


Title:

Email for transmission of response:

16. Date of request:

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

Larry Braasch
Assistant Division Director
Larry.braasch@dhs.state.nj.us
(609) 588-2405

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