



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

February 8, 2019

Mr. Eric Ratchford, Regional Director
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
USDA Mid-Atlantic Region
300 Corporate Boulevard
Robbinsville, NJ 08691-1598

Dear Mr. Ratchford:

Attached please find the waiver request that would allow able-bodied adults without dependents in 55 counties and cities in Virginia to be exempt from the time limits of 7 CFR 273.24. Virginia's current waiver expires April 30, 2019.

The supporting data for the waiver request is also attached. Please contact Claudia Jackson, SNAP Manager, at (804) 726-7346, or by e-mail at claudia.jackson@dss.virginia.gov for additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Toni Blue Washington".

Toni Blue Washington, Director
Division of Benefit Programs

Attachment

TBW:cbj

e-cc: Claudia Jackson

State Waiver Request

1. **Waiver Serial Number:** 2140016
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 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 273.24
5. **State:** Virginia
6. **Region:** MARO
7. **Regulatory requirements:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, provides that able-bodied adults without dependents will be eligible to participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as a member of any household if they received program benefits for more than three months during a 36-month period in which the individuals were subject to but did not comply with work requirements. Compliance here also includes allowable exemptions as identified in Section 6(o).

Section 6(o) also provides the State agency may request that the Secretary waive applicability of the three-month limit for any group of individuals in the State if the Secretary determines that the area has an unemployment rate over 10 percent or does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for the individuals.

8. **Description of alternative procedures:** Virginia requests to exempt able-bodied adults without dependents in 55 counties and cities from the SNAP time limits of 7 CFR 273.24.
9. **Justification for request:** SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 273.24(f)(2) allow that States may claim insufficient jobs for an area by submitting evidence that an average unemployment rate for a 24-month period exceeds the national average by 20 percent for the same 24-month period.

Virginia seeks a waiver for a regional group of 54 counties and cities in the Southern Region of the state based on the region's aggregate average unemployment rate for the period March 2016 through February 2018. Most of the localities in the southern part of the state have contiguous borders while some are not contiguous. These areas contribute to the overall economic health of the region however.

The national average unemployment rate for the 24-month period was 4.5 percent; 20 percent above the rate is 5.4 percent. The region's average unemployment rate for the period March 2016 through February 2018 was also 5.4 percent.

This waiver request is based on the data that follows:

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data March 2016 – February 2018		
Southern Region	Labor Force Total	Unemployed Total
Accomack County	381,181	18,442
Alleghany County	164,792	8,132
Bath County	59,209	2,042
Bland County	65,501	3,112
Bristol City	179,039	8,551
Brunswick County	145,829	8,265
Buchanan County	161,813	14,206
Buckingham County	152,540	8,218
Carroll County	311,540	15,048
Charles City County	90,001	4,196
Charlotte County	126,075	6,115
Covington City	57,036	3,457
Craig County	56,154	2,517
Cumberland County	110,989	4,842
Danville City	458,536	27,644
Dickenson County	107,021	8,915
Dinwiddie County	324,576	15,038
Emporia City	54,273	3,158
Franklin City	83,986	4,795
Galax City	69,230	3,214
Grayson County	171,582	7,900
Greensville County	101,956	4,872
Halifax County	356,495	19,450
Hampton City	1,545,010	82,039
Henry County	536,992	27,968
Highland County	30,417	1,012
Hopewell City	236,755	14,781
Lancaster County	123,061	6,795
Lee County	199,406	12,014
Lunenburg County	125,171	5,587
Martinsville City	124,685	8,523
Mecklenburg County	294,382	15,936
Northampton County	134,077	7,935
Northumberland County	129,312	7,035
Norton City	39,292	2,368
Patrick County	183,612	8,705
Petersburg City	319,471	23,961
Pittsylvania County	709,733	32,694

Portsmouth City	1,063,617	60,438
Prince Edward County	246,023	12,607
Prince George County	361,354	16,587
Pulaski County	389,537	21,519
Richmond County	93,538	3,494
Russell County	267,041	15,602
Scott County	225,677	9,889
Smyth County	319,909	17,704
Surry County	88,386	4,215
Sussex County	94,336	5,709
Tazewell County	380,682	24,926
Washington County	645,211	27,538
Westmoreland County	215,898	9,981
Williamsburg City	162,505	8,706
Wise County	312,831	23,223
Wythe County	327,426	17,591
Total for Region	13,714,701	739,211
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	5.4%	
20% Above National Average Threshold	5.4%	

Virginia also seeks a waiver for Page County based on its average unemployment rate for the period March 2016 through February 2018. As noted above, the national rate for the selected period was 4.5 percent and 5.4 percent as the 20 percent threshold. The average unemployment rate for March 2016 through February 2018 was 5.4 percent.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data March 2016 – February 2018			
	Labor Force Total	Unemployed Total	Unemployment Rate
Page County	279,029	14,950	5.4%
20% Above National Average Threshold	5.4%		

A map is attached to illustrate the affected localities.

10. **Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:** The areas identified in this request mirror the waived areas that will expire April 30, 2019. This extension request allows consistency for affected households and the State agency operations. The affected areas experience unemployment that 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 represent 31.6 percent of the state's caseload as of January 31, 2019. There are no quality control procedures involved.

12. **Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:** Virginia is requesting a waiver for the period May 1, 2019 through April 30, 2020.
13. **Proposed quality control review procedures:** There are no special quality control procedures needed in conjunction with this request.
14. **State agency submitting waiver request and State contact person:**
State agency: Virginia
State contact person: Claudia Jackson
15. **Signature and title of requesting official:**


Director, Division of Benefit Programs
toni.washington@dss.virginia.gov
16. **Date of request:** February 7, 2019
17. **State agency staff contact (name/email/telephone):**
Claudia Jackson
claudia.jackson@dss.virginia.gov
804.726.7346
18. **Regional office contact person (to be completed by FNS regional office)**