



Economic Stability
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John Bel Edwards, Governor
Marketa Garner Walters, Secretary

February 14, 2020

Mr. Dwight Crudup, Director
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Southwest Regional Office
Food and Nutrition Service
1100 Commerce St., Room 522
Dallas, Texas 75242

RE: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – Waiver for Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) – 7CFR 273.24

Dear Mr. Crudup:

In accordance with 7 CFR 273.24 as amended by the Food and Nutrition Service's Final Rule (84 FR 66782), the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is requesting an amendment of its current ABAWD time limit waiver for 14 Labor Market Areas.

The State of Louisiana seeks a waiver for 14 Labor Market Areas based on each Labor Market Area having an average unemployment rate at least 6 percent and at least 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of July 2017 through June 2019. The national average unemployment rate for this 24-month period was 3.9 percent and 20 percent above this was 4.7 percent.

With support from the Governor of Louisiana, the State is requesting a one-year waiver, from April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021, for these 14 parishes. Louisiana's current statewide waiver will remain in effect through March 31, 2020. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Kim Matherne at (225) 219-2428 or by email at Kim.Matherne.DCFS@la.gov.

Sincerely,

Sammy Guillory, Deputy Assistant Secretary
Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services
Division of Family Support



STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):** 2160020
2. **Type of request:** Amendment
3. **Statutory citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
4. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.24 as amended by the Food and Nutrition Service's Final Rule "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Requirements for Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents," published on December 5, 2019 (84 FR 66782).
5. **State:** Louisiana
6. **Region:** Southwest
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 Louisiana is requesting to exempt able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) in 14 Labor Market Areas (LMAs) from SNAP time limits at 7 CFR 273.24 as amended by the Food and Nutrition Service's Final Rule (84 FR 66782). Louisiana's current statewide waiver will remain in effect through March 31, 2020.
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, but in no case may the 24-month average unemployment rate of the requested area be less than 6 percent. 7 CFR 273.24(f)(4) provides that a Labor Market Area (LMA), the intrastate part of an interstate LMA, a reservation area, or a U.S. Territory are considered to be areas for the purposes of waivers.

The State of Louisiana seeks a waiver for 14 Labor Market Areas based on each Labor Market Area having an average unemployment rate at least 6 percent and at least 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of July 2017 through June 2019. The national average unemployment rate for this 24-month period was 3.9 percent; 20 percent above this was 4.7 percent.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data July 2017 through June 2019			
Labor Market Areas	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total	Unemployment Rate
Assumption Parish, LA	13,832	213,808	6.5
Bastrop, LA Micropolitan Statistical Area	18,977	244,230	7.8
Catahoula Parish, LA	5,327	80,717	6.6
East Carroll Parish, LA	4,758	47,150	10.1
Fort Polk South, LA Micropolitan Statistical Area	24,136	384,608	6.3
Franklin Parish, LA	12,138	174,761	6.9
Madison Parish, LA	6,884	87,004	7.9
Morgan City, LA Micropolitan Statistical Area	30,901	481,117	6.4
Natchez, MS-LA Micropolitan Statistical Area	28,756	435,104	6.6
Opelousas, LA Micropolitan Statistical Area	46,662	765,733	6.1
Richland Parish, LA	11,866	198,976	6.0
Tensas Parish, LA	2,685	34,894	7.7
West Carroll Parish, LA	8,552	93,222	9.2
Winn Parish, LA	7,189	118,121	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 there are not a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for able-bodied adults without dependents.
- 11. Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affected portion (if applicable):** The caseload for these areas, as of December 31, 2019, represent 10% 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 April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021.
- 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:

Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services

Kim Matherne

Sammy Guillory

15. Signature and title of requesting official:



Sammy Guillory, Deputy Assistant Secretary

Email for transmission of response: Sammy.Guillory.DCFS@LA.GOV

16. Date of request: February 14, 2020

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

Kim Matherne/ Kim.Matherne.DCFS@LA.GOV / 225-219-2428

Sammy Guillory/ Sammy.Guillory.DCFS@LA.GOV / 225-342-3961

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