

STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):**
2. **Type of request:** Initial
3. **Statutory citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
4. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.24, January 17, 2001 rule (66 FR 4438)
5. **State:** Hawaii
6. **Region:** WRO
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 Hawaii is requesting a waiver to exempt residents residing in the entire state from the SNAP time limit at 7 CFR 273.24 under the 2001 rule.
9. **Justification for request:**
Under SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 273.24(f)(2), the State may support a claim of insufficient jobs by submitting data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) or a BLS-cooperating agency that shows an area has a recent 12-month average unemployment rate over 10 percent.

Hawaii's seasonally adjusted average unemployment rate from April 2020 through March 2021 is 13.7 percent, a 552 percent increase over March 2020¹. Hawaii continues to be significantly impacted economically by the federal public health emergency due to the mandatory self-quarantine that the State of Hawaii has instituted for persons entering the State. Hawaii also has the highest unemployment rate in the nation². We believe that the exceptional circumstances brought on by the federal public health emergency warrant swift action by USDA.

¹ See Databases, Tables & Calculators by Subject, Bureau of Labor Statistics, https://data.bls.gov/timeseries/LASST150000000000003?amp%253bdata_tool=XGtable&output_view=data&include_graphs=true

² Current Unemployment Rates for States and Historical Highs/Lows, Bureau of Labor Statistics, April 16, 2021, <https://www.bls.gov/web/laus/lausth1.htm>

10. Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:

This waiver will provide consistency for households and State agency operations.

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

This waiver affects the entire state.

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

The State is requesting a twelve-month waiver from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

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:

Hawaii Department of Human Services/Benefit, Employment and Support Services Division/SNAP Office/SNAP Employment & Training/Eligibility Program Specialist/Dana Balansag

15. Signature and title of requesting official:



Title: Assistant Division Administrator

Email for transmission of response: SNakasone2@dhs.hawaii.gov

16. Date of request: June 22, 2021

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

Dana Balansag/dbalansag@dhs.hawaii.gov/808-586-7050

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