

STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):** 2150021
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:** Washington
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 Washington is requesting to exempt able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) in 38 counties and 1 reservation located in a non-exempt county 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 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 Washington seeks a waiver for a regional group of 38 contiguous counties based on the region's aggregate average unemployment rate for the 24-month period of November 2018 through October 2020. The average national unemployment rate for this period was 5.6 percent; 20 percent above this was 6.7 percent. The region's aggregate average unemployment rate for this period was 6.7 percent.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data November 2018 through October 2020		
Contiguous Counties	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total
Adams County	14,903	231,328
Asotin County	11,835	247,402
Benton County	164,564	2,511,883
Chelan County	70,064	1,080,036
Clallam County	58,198	704,200
Clark County	379,650	5,836,169
Columbia County	2,728	43,306
Cowlitz County	87,561	1,164,395
Douglas County	36,297	523,020
Ferry County	6,945	60,256
Franklin County	78,414	1,044,929
Garfield County	1,449	21,080
Grant County	88,794	1,133,129
Grays Harbor County	64,409	707,814
Island County	57,183	871,790
Jefferson County	23,220	316,040
Kitsap County	187,449	3,132,812
Kittitas County	38,800	551,293
Klickitat County	16,865	244,571
Lewis County	65,258	845,346
Lincoln County	6,845	117,381
Mason County	48,622	615,785
Okanogan County	37,987	473,185
Pacific County	17,949	206,234
Pend Oreille County	11,056	120,697
Pierce County	777,685	10,754,094
San Juan County	11,582	201,422
Skagit County	112,910	1,521,722
Skamania County	9,584	133,464
Snohomish County	569,834	10,537,011
Spokane County	425,245	6,136,751
Stevens County	37,003	452,219
Thurston County	222,980	3,473,729
Wahkiakum County	2,601	33,087
Walla Walla County	42,289	727,601
Whatcom County	193,666	2,807,331

Whitman County	27,792	567,123
Yakima County	263,616	3,190,583
Combined Area Total	4,273,832	63,340,218
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.7%	
20% Above National Average Threshold	6.7%	

The State of Washington seeks a waiver for Muckleshoot Reservation based on having an average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for a recent 24-month period. The reservation unemployment rate was calculated by applying 2015-2019 5-year American Community Survey (ACS) share ratios to county-level Bureau of Labor Statistics data for November 2018 through October 2020.

American Community Survey and Bureau of Labor Statistics Data November 2018 through October 2020			
Reservations	Unemployed	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
King County (part); Washington (part); Muckleshoot Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land, WA	5,413	50,743	10.7%
Pierce County (part); Washington (part); Muckleshoot Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land, WA	136	425	32.0%
Muckleshoot Reservation	5,550	51,168	10.8%

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 waived areas, as of 12/29/2020, 69,093¹ clients, represent 7.5% 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, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

13. Proposed quality control review procedures:

¹ ESA-EMAPS Report #5222 using the ACES Data Warehouse as of the December 2020 load

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

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

Community Services Division, Economic Services Administration, Department of Social and Health Services, Washington State.

Spring Benson, Basic Food Employment & Training Administrator

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15. Signature and title of requesting official:



Title: Director of Community Services Division

Email for transmission of response: babette.roberts@dshs.wa.gov

16. Date of request: 12/30/2020

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

Spring Benson, spring.benson@dshs.wa.gov, 360-522-0179

Corinna Adams, corinna.adams@dshs.wa.gov, 360-789-9583

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