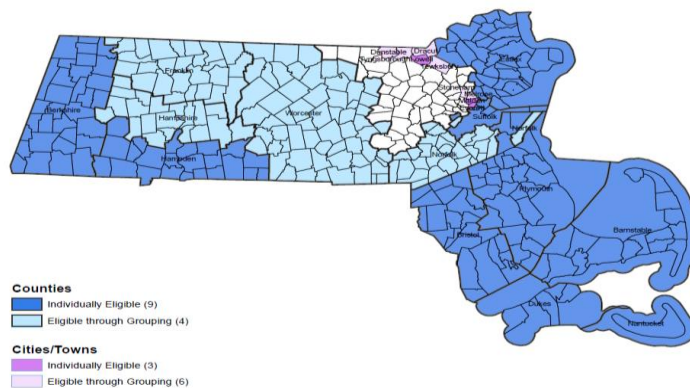


ABLE-BODIED ADULTS WITHOUT DEPENDENTS (ABAWD) WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Type of request:** Initial
2. **Statutory citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended
3. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
4. **State:** Massachusetts
5. **Region:** NERO
6. **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.
7. **Description of alternative procedures:**

The State of Massachusetts is requesting to exempt able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) in 13 counties and 9 towns and cities from SNAP time limits at 7 CFR 273.24.

13 Counties and 9 Cities/Towns in Massachusetts Are Eligible to Be Waived in 2023



8. **Justification for request:**
Under SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 273.24(f)(2), areas may qualify for an ABAWD time limit waiver if they have insufficient jobs. To support this claim, states may submit evidence that an area has an average unemployment rate for a 24-month period that is at least 20 percent above the national average for the same 24-month period. 7 CFR 273.24(f)(6) provides that States may define areas to be waived.

The State of Massachusetts seeks a waiver for 13 counties based on its average unemployment rate for the 24-month period of May 2020 through April 2022. The national average unemployment rate for this 24-month period was 6.2 percent; 20 percent above this was 7.5 percent.

	MAY 2020 - APR 2022	MAY 2020 - APR 2022	MAY 2020 - APR 2022
	Total labor force	Total number of unemployed	Average Unemployment Rate
Regional Grouping of Counties			
Barnstable County, MA	2,676,652	215,950	8.1
Berkshire County, MA	1,485,929	115,299	7.8
Bristol County, MA	7,202,666	578,816	8.0
Dukes County, MA	225,984	17,587	7.8
Essex County, MA	10,183,981	795,351	7.8
Franklin County, MA	966,138	58,552	6.1
Hampden County, MA	5,438,228	473,955	8.7
Hampshire County, MA	2,137,871	123,385	5.8
Nantucket County/town, MA	182,163	16,315	9.0
Norfolk County, MA	9,389,811	609,772	6.5
Plymouth County, MA	6,818,959	510,551	7.5
Suffolk County, MA	10,937,259	834,853	7.6
Worcester County, MA	10,666,832	755,363	7.1
Total for Region	68,312,473	5,105,749	7.5
National Unemployment			6.2
Threshold - 20% Above the National Average			7.5

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Dept. of Labor
Underlying data are available at www.bls.gov/lau/

The State seeks a waiver for an eligible region of 5 contiguous cities and towns based on its average unemployment rate that is 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of May 2020 through April 2022. The average unemployment rate for this region was 7.5 percent.

	MAY 2020 - APR 2022 Total labor force	MAY 2020 - APR 2022 Total number of unemployed	MAY 2020 - APR 2022 Average Unemployment Rate
Regional Grouping of Towns and Cities			
Dracut town, MA	440,409	29,676	6.7
Dunstable town, MA	45,899	2,057	4.5
Lowell city, MA	1,379,163	116,190	8.4
Tewksbury town, MA	422,492	26,576	6.3
Tyngsborough town, MA	175,190	10,462	6.0
Total for Region	2,463,153	184,961	7.5
National Unemployment			6.2
Threshold - 20% Above the National Average			7.5

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Dept. of Labor

Underlying data are available at www.bls.gov/lau/

The State also seeks a waiver for an eligible region of 4 contiguous cities and towns based on its average unemployment rate that is 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of May 2020 through April 2022. The average unemployment rate for this region was 7.5 percent.

	MAY 2020 - APR 2022	MAY 2020 - APR 2022	MAY 2020 - APR 2022
	Total labor force	Total number of unemployed	Average Unemployment Rate
Regional Grouping of Towns and Cities			
Everett city, MA	647,617	52,794	8.2
Malden city, MA	826,313	70,410	8.5
Melrose city, MA	392,407	21,900	5.6
Stoneham town, MA	338,153	20,249	6.0
Total for Region	2,204,490	165,353	7.5
National Unemployment Threshold - 20% Above the National Average	3,871,529	241,869	6.2
			7.5

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Dept. of Labor
Underlying data are available at www.bls.gov/lau/

9. 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.

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

The total caseload for these areas, as of 5/13/2023, represent 92% of the total SNAP caseload for the state. The total potential ABAWD caseload for these areas, as of 5/13/2023, represent 8%* of the total SNAP caseload for the state. There are no quality control procedures involved.

*This number includes only SNAP recipients aged 18-49, not known to be subject to TANF work requirements or otherwise exempt.

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

The State is requesting a one-year waiver, from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

12. Proposed quality control review procedures:

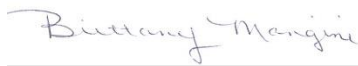
There are no special quality control procedures needed in conjunction with this waiver.

13. Name, title, email, and signature of requesting official:

Name: Brittany Mangini

Title: Associate Commissioner of Food Security and Nutrition Programs

Email: Brittany.mangini@mass.gov

Signature: 

14. Date of request: May 22, 2023

15. State agency staff contact:

Name: Frances Ransom Canning

Title: Assistant Director for SNAP Compliance

Email: frances.ransom-canning@mass.gov

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