

Waiver Request

1. **Waiver serial number:**
2. **Type of request:** Extension
3. **Primary regulation citation:** §7 CFR 273.24
4. **Secondary regulation citation:** Not applicable
5. **State:** Virginia
6. **Region:** Mid-Atlantic
7. **Regulatory requirements:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations at §7 CFR 273.24 provide that household members may not receive benefits beyond a three-month period within a 36-month period unless the members participate in a work activity for a minimum of 20 hours per week. There are exceptions allowed to the time-limited benefits.

Regulations at §7 CFR 273.24(f) also provide that the Secretary may waive the work requirement for any area that has an unemployment rate of 10 percent or higher, an area designated as a "labor surplus area," (LSA), or an area that has a 24-month unemployment rate that exceeds the national average by 20 percent.

8. **Proposed alternative procedures:** Virginia requests a waiver to waive the work requirement for SNAP recipients who reside in areas that has an unemployment rate of 20 percent above the national average.

We would like to exempt SNAP participants in certain areas in Virginia based on unemployment rate data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Virginia calculated a recent 24-month unemployment rate average for each locality utilizing the period of December 2020 – November 2022.

The attached spreadsheet provides the BIS and unemployment information for the selected localities along with a map to demonstrate the regional grouping.

Locality	Average unemployment rate, December 2020-November 2022
Buchanan County	6.0
Danville City	5.8
Franklin City	5.9
Martinsville City	6.5
Portsmouth City	5.8
Regional Grouping	Average unemployment rate, December 2020-November 2022
Brunswick County	5.6
Dinwiddie County	4.0
Emporia City	6.7
Greensville County	4.2
Hopewell	6.5
Nottoway County	3.3
Petersburg City	9.1
Prince George	4.1
Sussex County	5.8
Regional Grouping Average	5.5

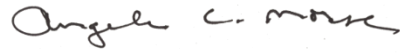
Virginia has identified fourteen localities (individually and regional grouped) based on labor force data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, for the 24-month period of December 2020 to November 2022. Martinsville City Department of Social Service administers programs for both Martinsville City and Henry County. Although the averaged unemployment rate for Henry County is below the threshold, we believe it would be too administratively cumbersome and error-prone for one area of the office to be exempt while the other is not exempt. Therefore, Virginia requests to include Henry County as an exempted locality as well, bringing the total number of localities to fifteen.

9. **Justification for request:** The fifteen counties and independent cities listed above, represent thirteen local social services agencies. These localities have a 24-month averaged unemployment that is greater than the threshold. A spreadsheet used in the calculations will be submitted electronically.
10. **Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:** This waiver will provide consistency for households and agency operations in areas where unemployment remains higher than the national average.
11. **Anticipated Implementation date:** We ask for this waiver to be effective from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.
12. **Quality control procedures:** There are no special procedures for quality control needed in conjunction with this waiver.

13. Date of request: March 20, 2023

14. Regional Office contact person: Anita Diggs

15. Signature and title of requesting official:



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