

March 13, 1998

970186 and 970187

SUBJECT: FSP - Alaska - Request to Waive Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act,
as Amended by Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work
Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996

TO: Dennis Stewart, Regional Director
Food Stamp Program
Western Region

This is in response to the Alaska State Agency's March 10, 1998, requests to modify and extend its waivers of Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. This section limits the receipt of food stamp benefits to 3 months within a 3-year period for able-bodied adults who are not working (or participating in a work program) 20 hours or more each week or participating in workfare. Our response is attached.

If you have any questions, please contact Hayes Brown of my staff at 703-305-2805.

Judith M. Seymour

for Arthur T. Foley
Director
Program Development Division

Attachment

cc: Joseph Pinto
John Knaus
Maurice Tracy
Joe Shea
Bob Dalrymple - OAE
Mike Depiro - OAE
Civil Rights
All Regions (except WRO)

FCS:FSP:PDD:CPB:HayesBrown:DRAFT:3/16/98:final:3/18/98:va

DIR: I:CPB:970186 & 970187 ext memo/response

Waiver Response

1. **Waiver serial number:** 970186 and 970187
2. **Type of request:** Modifications and Extensions
3. **Primary regulation citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996, P. L. 104-193.
4. **Secondary regulation citation:**
5. **State:** Alaska
6. **Region:** WRO
7. **Regulatory Requirements:** Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the PRWORA, provides that no individual shall be eligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program as a member of any household if, during the preceding 36-month period, the individual received food stamp benefits for not less than 3 months (consecutive or otherwise), during which the individual did not work 20 hours or more per week, averaged monthly; did not participate in and comply with the requirements of a work program for 20 hours or more per week; or did not participate in and comply with requirements of a program under Section 20 or a comparable program established by the State.

Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the PRWORA, also provides that, upon the request of a State agency, the Secretary may waive the applicability of the above provision 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 proposed alternative procedures:** The Alaska State Agency requests to exempt for periods of 3-9 months individuals residing in 16 census areas from the work requirement provision of Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the PRWORA, on the basis that there is an unemployment rate of over 10 percent in those areas.

The State Agency also requests to exempt for periods of 4-9 months individuals residing in 4 census areas, on the basis of insufficient jobs. The State agency has defined areas with “insufficient jobs” to mean geographic areas that have been designated by the Federal Government as Labor Surplus Areas (LSAs).

9. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** We are approving a modification and extension of waiver no. 970186, based on unemployment rates that exceed 10 percent, and a modification and extension of waiver no. 970187, based on insufficient jobs, for individuals residing in the following areas:

970186 (10% Unemployment) <i>expires 3/31/99</i>		970187 (Insufficient Jobs) <i>expires 3/31/99</i>	
Census Track	Exempt Period	Census Track	Exempt Period
Bristol Bay	Oct - April	Bethel	Oct - June
Denali	Oct - April	Dillingham	Dec - April
SE Fairbanks	Oct - June	Fairbanks NSB	Jan - April
Haines	Nov - April	Skagway/Hoonah/Angoon	Dec - April
Kenai	Oct - April		
Ketchikan	Dec - March		
Kodiak Island	Nov - Jan		
Matanuska/Susitna	Nov - April		
Nome	Oct - June		
NW Arctic	Oct - June		
Prince of Wales	Nov - June		
Valdez/Cordova	Oct - April		
Wade Hampton	Oct - June		
Wrangell/Petersburg	Dec - April		
Yakutat	Nov - April		
Yukon/Koyukuk	Oct - June		

10. **Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** These waivers are approved pursuant to Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the PRWORA, which allows the Secretary to waive the applicability of the work requirement provision in Section 6(o) 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 an insufficient number of jobs.

11. **Conditions and reasons:**

12. **Information required for extension:** Please submit supporting unemployment data that relies on standard BLS data and/or methods and data indicating a lack of sufficient jobs.

13. **Expiration date:** Waiver nos. 970186 and 970187 are approved for a period of 1 year and expire on March 31, 1999.

14. Limitation on regional office approval of like requests: These waivers are limited to the Alaska State Agency.

15. Quality Control Procedures: N/A

16. Date of national office action:

17. Date of State agency's request: March 10, 1998

18. Date of regional office transmittal of response to State agency:

19. Actual implementation date: