



Food and
Nutrition
Service

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Date: September 4, 2019

Matthew Stangley
Chief of Policy and Program Development
Division of Public Assistance
Alaska Department of Health and Social Services
PO Box 110640
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0640

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – Alaska Request to Waive Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents Time Limit – Approval

Dear Mr. Stangley:

This is in response to the Alaska State agency's August 12, 2019, request to waive the SNAP time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents in 17 areas from October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020.

Alaska is currently approved to waive the time limit statewide through December 31, 2019. The State agency has now requested a new 12-month waiver covering only 17 boroughs and census areas, effective October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020.

The State agency's request meets the requirements for approval provided at 7 CFR 273.24(f) and relevant Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) guidance. Therefore, FNS is approving the State to waive the time limit for a 12-month period as requested. The approval amends and extends waiver number 2150041 and replaces the December 21, 2018, approval of the same number. The attached waiver response includes the approved areas, the supporting evidence used, and the conditions of approval. Please contact your FNS Regional Office with any questions.

As you may be aware, FNS has proposed regulations that would strengthen the standards by which areas can qualify for these waivers so that the statutory ABAWD work requirement is applied more broadly. The rule, once finalized, could change the qualifying areas and approval period for this waiver.

FNS also reminds the State agency that it must measure the 3-year period and track ABAWDs on a continuous basis, even in areas under a waiver. The State must continue tracking so that the State will be ready to transition off-of the waiver when it expires and reintroduce the time limit.

Moving forward, FNS will be taking actions to support the Administration's priority to provide able-bodied Americans a path to self-sufficiency. This goal requires that we establish a clear and mutual commitment to moving SNAP participants to meaningful employment.

Sincerely,

Sasha Gersten-Paal
Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) Waiver Response

1. **Serial Number:** 2150041
2. **Request Type:** Extension and Modification
3. **Statutory Citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
4. **Regulatory Citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
5. **State:** Alaska
6. **Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Region:** Western
7. **Requirement:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and regulations at 7 CFR 273.24 provide that no individual 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) and 7 CFR 273.24 also provide 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. **Requested Area(s) and Support:** The Alaska State agency requested to waive the ABAWD time limit in a total of 17 areas from October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020. The State agency supported its request based upon these areas having individual unemployment rates 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of June 2017 through May 2019. During this time period the national average unemployment rate was 4.0 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 4.8 percent. The unemployment rate each requested area was at least 4.8 percent during the same time period (areas listed below in Table 1).

Table 1: Individual Areas (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data June 2017 through May 2019)

Boroughs and Census Areas	Unemployment Rate
1. Bethel Census Area	13.1%
2. Bristol Bay Borough	6.4%
3. Denali Borough	8.2%
4. Haines Borough	9.4%
5. Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	12.6%
6. Kusilvak Census Area	19.9%
7. Lake and Peninsula Borough	11.6%
8. Nome Census Area	11.7%

Boroughs and Census Areas	Unemployment Rate
9. Northwest Arctic Borough	14.7%
10. Petersburg Borough	9.0%
11. Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	11.0%
12. Skagway Municipality	10.0%
13. Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	9.7%
14. Valdez-Cordova Census Area	7.6%
15. Wrangell Borough/city	7.4%
16. Yakutat Borough/city	8.7%
17. Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	15.9%
Data extracted from http://www.bls.gov on August 13, 2019	

- 9. FNS Action and Justification:** FNS is approving the State agency to waive the ABAWD time limit as requested. The State agency's request meets the requirements for approval provided at 7 CFR 273.24(f) and relevant FNS guidance.
- 10. Authority:** The waiver is approved pursuant to section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and 7 CFR 273.24(f).
- 11. Implementation Date:** October 1, 2019
- 12. Expiration Date:** September 30, 2020
- 13. Information Required for Amendment or Extension:** To receive an amendment or extension the State agency must provide FNS with a formal request supported by data or other information as described in 7 CFR 273.24(f). Any request based upon unemployment rates must include data spreadsheets and supporting documentation.
- 14. State Agency Contact Information:**
 Name: Matthew Stangle
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 Email: matthew.stangle@alaska.gov
- Name: Reuben Lumbab
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- 15. FNS Regional Office Contact Information:**
 Name: Shahdy Monemzadeh
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