



Food and
Nutrition
Service

Park
Office
Center

3101 Park
Center
Drive

Alexandria
VA, 22302

Date: September 4, 2019

Danielle Dunaway
Deputy Division Director, Employment and Benefits Division
Office of Economic Security
Colorado Department of Human Services
1575 Sherman Street
Denver, Colorado 80203

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

Dear Ms. Dunaway:

This is in response to the Colorado State agency's July 24, 2019, request to waive the SNAP time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents in 9 areas from 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 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:** 2150042
2. **Request Type:** Extension and Amendment
3. **Statutory Citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
4. **Regulatory Citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
5. **State:** Colorado
6. **Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Region:** Mountain Plains
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 Colorado State agency requested to waive the ABAWD time limit in seven counties, one city, and one reservation from October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020. The State agency grouped seven counties for consideration as a combined area. The State agency supported its request based upon these areas having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of May 2017 through April 2019. During this time period the national average unemployment rate was 4.0 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 4.8 percent. As detailed in the following tables, the aggregate unemployment rates for the requested areas were 4.8 percent or greater during the selected time period.

Table 1: Combined Area 1 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data May 2017 through April 2019)

Counties
1. Conejos County
2. Costilla County
3. Fremont County
4. Hinsdale County
5. Huerfano County
6. Rio Grande County
7. Saguache County

Counties
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 4.8%
Data extracted from http://www.bls.gov on July 30, 2019

Table 2: Individual Areas

Area	Unemployment Rate
1. Northglenn City, Weld County part	5.4%
2. Ute Mountain Reservation	5.0%
Data extracted from http://www.bls.gov on July 30, 2019. Ute Mountain Reservation was estimated using Census Bureau data in addition to BLS data, consistent with FNS guidance.	

- 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: Danielle Dunaway
 Phone Number: 303-866-2788
 Email: Danielle.dunaway@state.co.us
- 15. FNS Regional Office Contact Information:**
 Name: Philip Fraley
 Phone Number: 303-844-0341
 Email: Philip.fraley@usda.gov