

Waiver Response

1. **Waiver serial number:** 970304
2. **Type of request:** Initial
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:** Connecticut
6. **Region:** NERO
7. **Regulatory Requirements:** Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), P.L. 104-193, 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; did not participate in and comply with requirements of a program under Section 20 or a comparable program established by the State; or received benefits because they were exempt from these requirements.

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 Connecticut State Agency is proposing to exempt from this requirement individuals residing in the following cities and towns which have been designated as Labor Surplus Areas (LSAs) by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) of the Department of Labor: Ansonia, Bridgeport, East Hartford, Killingly, Meriden, New Britain, New London, Plainfield, Putnam, Sterling, Voluntown, Waterbury, Winchester, and Windham.

Approval of this waiver would allow individuals who reside in those areas to participate in the Food Stamp Program without being required to meet unrealistic program work requirements. It would also ease the burden for individuals trying to comply with work requirements which are unreasonable given the local economic environment. Finally, it would provide for more efficient operation of the Food Stamp Program by allowing the State agency to focus its efforts and resources in regard to work requirements on those households most likely to benefit.

9. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** We are approving the State agency's request to exempt individuals residing in the cities and towns of Ansonia, Bridgeport, East Hartford, Killingly, Meriden, New Britain, New London, Plainfield, Putnam, Sterling, Voluntown, Waterbury, Winchester, and Windham. Approval is based on the designation of these areas as LSAs by the ETA.
10. **Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** The waiver is 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 over 10 percent or has insufficient jobs.
11. **Conditions and reasons:** N/A
12. **Information required for extension:** To receive an extension the State agency must provide data using BLS methodology indicating that there are insufficient jobs or that the unemployment rate of the affected areas is above 10 percent.
13. **Expiration date:** This waiver is effective retroactive to July 1, 1997, and expires on August 31, 1998.
14. **Limitation on regional office approval of like requests:** This waiver is limited to the Connecticut State agency.
15. **Quality Control Procedures:** N/A
16. **Date of national office action:**
17. **Date of State agency's request:** July 14, 1997
18. **Date of regional office transmittal of response to State agency:**
19. **Actual implementation date:**