



Food and
Nutrition
Service

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Date: December 6, 2019

Deidre S. Gifford, MD, MPH
Commissioner
State of Connecticut Department of Social Services
55 Farmington Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06105

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

Dear Commissioner Gifford:

This is in response to the Connecticut State agency's September 3, 2019 request to waive the SNAP time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) in 110 towns and cities from January 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020. Although the State requested a 12-month waiver, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is approving the waiver for 3 months due to new regulatory requirements governing the approval of ABAWD waiver requests at 7 CFR 273.24(f). The attached waiver response includes the approved areas, the supporting evidence used, and the conditions of approval.

FNS has finalized [regulations](#) that strengthen the standards by which areas can qualify for these waivers so that the statutory ABAWD work requirement is applied more broadly. All waivers must be approvable under the new regulatory standards by April 1, 2020. Therefore, if the State agency wishes to waive the SNAP time limit for ABAWDs in any areas beyond March 31, 2020, it must submit a new waiver request. FNS will evaluate any such requests under the new regulatory requirements at 7 CFR 273.24(f). Please contact your FNS Regional Office with any questions.

FNS notes that the State agency requested to waive the time limit in a combined area that includes 1 town with a population below 1,000. The State agency supported its request for this town using State-produced data, rather than U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data. As of January 2018, BLS no longer publishes Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) for towns and cities in 6 New England states with 2010 Census populations below 1,000. However, the Connecticut Department of Labor (DOL) continues to produce labor force and unemployment estimates for these small towns.

Consistent with SNAP regulations, to support waiver requests based on unemployment rates or labor force data, States must submit data that relies on standard Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data or methods. Because BLS-published data are no longer available for towns with populations below 1,000 in Connecticut, FNS acknowledges the need for the State agency to utilize an alternative data source for these small towns. Additionally, FNS acknowledges that Connecticut DOL is a BLS-cooperating agency that utilizes BLS methodology to produce labor force and unemployment data for its towns and cities. For these reasons, FNS is permitting the Connecticut State agency to utilize data published by the State DOL to support its request to waive the time limit in a combined areas that includes a town with a population below 1,000. State DOL data was provided only for the town for which BLS no

longer publishes LAUS data. FNS still requires State agencies to utilize data from BLS to support ABAWD waiver requests, when such data are available.

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.

Sincerely,

Miles Patrie

Miles Patrie
Acting Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) Waiver Response

1. **Serial Number:** 2150020
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:** Connecticut
6. **Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Region:** Northeast
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 State of Connecticut requested to waive the ABAWD time limit in a total of 110 contiguous cities and towns from January 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020. The State agency grouped the cities and towns 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 January 2017 through December 2018. During this time period the national average unemployment rate was 4.1 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 4.9 percent. The combined area's aggregate average unemployment rate was 4.9 percent during the same period.

Table 1: Combined Area 1 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2017 through December 2018)

Cities and Towns
1. Andover town
2. Ansonia city/town
3. Ashford town
4. Barkhamsted town
5. Beacon Falls town
6. Bethany town
7. Bethlehem town
8. Bloomfield town
9. Bozrah town

Cities and Towns
10. Branford town
11. Bridgeport city/town
12. Bridgewater town
13. Bristol city/town
14. Brooklyn town
15. Canterbury town
16. Chaplin town
17. Clinton town
18. Colchester town
19. Colebrook town
20. Columbia town
21. Coventry town
22. Cromwell town
23. Derby city/town
24. East Haddam town
25. East Hampton town
26. East Hartford town
27. East Haven town
28. East Lyme town
29. East Windsor town
30. Eastford town
31. Ellington town
32. Enfield town
33. Franklin town
34. Goshen town
35. Griswold town
36. Groton town
37. Hamden town
38. Hampton town
39. Hartford city/town
40. Hartland town
41. Harwinton town
42. Kent town
43. Killingly town
44. Lebanon town
45. Ledyard town
46. Lisbon town
47. Manchester town
48. Mansfield town
49. Meriden city/town
50. Middlebury town
51. Middlefield town
52. Middletown city/town
53. Milford (consolidated) city/town

Cities and Towns
54. Monroe town
55. Montville town
56. Morris town
57. Naugatuck borough/town
58. New Britain city/town
59. New Fairfield town
60. New Hartford town
61. New Haven city/town
62. New London city/town
63. New Milford town
64. Newington town
65. Norfolk town
66. North Canaan town
67. North Haven town
68. North Stonington town
69. Norwich city/town
70. Old Lyme town
71. Old Saybrook town
72. Oxford town
73. Plainfield town
74. Plainville town
75. Plymouth town
76. Portland town
77. Preston town
78. Prospect town
79. Putnam town
80. Salem town
81. Scotland town
82. Seymour town
83. Shelton city/town
84. Somers town
85. Southbury town
86. Southington town
87. Sprague town
88. Stafford town
89. Sterling town
90. Stratford town
91. Thomaston town
92. Thompson town
93. Torrington city/town
94. Union Town
95. Vernon town
96. Voluntown town
97. Wallingford town

Cities and Towns
98. Warren town
99. Waterbury city/town
100. Waterford town
101. Watertown town
102. West Haven city/town
103. Westbrook town
104. Wethersfield town
105. Winchester town
106. Windham town
107. Windsor Locks town
108. Windsor town
109. Wolcott town
110. Woodstock town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 4.9%
Data extracted from http://www.bls.gov and https://www1.ctdol.state.ct.us on November 4, 2019

- 9. FNS Action and Justification:** FNS is approving the State agency to waive the ABAWD time limit from January 1, 2020 to March 31, 2020. 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:** January 1, 2020
- 12. Expiration Date:** March 31, 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: Daniel Giacomi
Phone Number: (860) 424-5080
Email: Daniel.Giacomi@ct.gov
- 15. FNS Regional Office Contact Information:**
Name: Megan Kallio
Phone Number: (617)-565-6382
Email: Megan.Kallio@usda.gov