



FEB 10 2016

Food and
Nutrition
Service

Park Office
Center

3101 Park
Center Drive
Alexandria
VA 22302

Laura Green Zeilinger

Director

Government of the District of Columbia Department of Human Services

64 New York Avenue, N.E., 6th Floor

Washington, D.C. 20002

RE: SNAP – District of Columbia Request to Waive Able-Bodied Adults
without Dependents Time Limit – Extension – Approval

Dear Ms. Zeilinger:

This is in response to the District of Columbia Department of Human Services' request to extend waiver number 2150043, which would allow the District of Columbia to continue to exempt able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD) throughout the District from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) time limit at 7 CFR 273.24 through December 31, 2017. The District of Columbia agency has already requested and received Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) approval for a 12-month waiver extension covering calendar year 2016. Now the District has requested a 24-month waiver extension based upon having an average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for a recent 36-month period. Following longstanding FNS policy, areas may qualify for a 24-month waiver based upon having an average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for a recent 36-month period.

The data provided by the District agency demonstrates that the District of Columbia had an unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 36-month period of November 2012 through October 2015. Therefore, FNS is approving the District of Columbia request to extend its ABAWD time limit waiver for 24 months, effective January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2017. The detailed waiver response is attached.

Please contact Sally Jacober-Brown at Sally.Jacob-Brown@fns.usda.gov or at (609) 259-5132 with any questions.

Sincerely,

Sasha Gersten-Paal

Chief

Certification Policy Branch

Program Development Division

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 2150043
2. **Type of request:** Extension
3. **Primary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
4. **State:** District of Columbia
5. **Region:** Mid-Atlantic
6. **Regulatory requirement:** Federal regulations at 7 CFR 273.24 provide that no able-bodied adult without dependents (ABAWD) 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 36-month period in which the individual was subject to, but did not comply with the ABAWD work requirement. Regulations at 7 CFR 273.24(a) provide that fulfilling the work requirement means: working 20 hours or more per week, averaged monthly; participating in and complying with the requirements of a work program at least 20 hours per week; any combination of working and participating in a work program for a total of 20 hours per week; or participating in and complying with a workfare program.

Regulations at 7 CFR 273.24(f) also provide 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.

7. **Description of proposed alternative procedures:** The District of Columbia has requested to waive the ABAWD time limit at 7 CFR 273.24 throughout the District for the 24-month period of January 1, 2016, through December 31, 2017. The agency has supported its request based upon the District of Columbia having an average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 36-month period of November 2012 through October 2015. During this 36-month period the national average unemployment rate was 6.4 percent; 20 percent above this is 7.7 percent. As detailed in the following table, the District of Columbia's unemployment rate for the selected 36-month period was 7.9 percent.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Data November 2012 – October 2015		
	Labor Force Total	Unemployment Total
District of Columbia	13,613,620	1,073,339
Unemployment Rate	7.9%	
20% Above National Average Unemployment Rate Threshold	7.7%	

*Extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on February 1, 2016

8. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is approving the District of Columbia request to waive the ABAWD time limit because the District meets the requirements for approval provided at 7 CFR 273.24(f) and relevant FNS guidance. The District of Columbia qualifies for a 24-month waiver based upon having an average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 36-month period of November 2012 through October 2015.
9. **Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** The waiver is approved pursuant to 7 CFR 273.24(f).
10. **Conditions and reasons:** None
11. **Information required for extension:** To receive an extension the District must provide FNS with a formal waiver request supported by data or other information as described in 7 CFR 273.24(f). If the District requests an extension based upon unemployment rates, it must provide FNS with all supporting documentation, including data spreadsheets.
12. **Implementation and expiration date:** The waiver extension is effective from January 1, 2016, through December 31, 2017.
13. **Limitation, if any, on regional office approval of the requests:** The waiver is limited to the District of Columbia.
14. **Date of national office action:** FEB 10 2016

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15. Date of State agency's request: December 19, 2015

16. Date of regional office transmittal of request: December 20, 2015

17. State agency contact:

Anthea Seymour

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(202) 698-3900

18. FNS regional contact:

Sally Jacober-Brown

Sally.Jacob-Brown@fns.usda.gov

(609) 259-5132