



Food and
Nutrition
Service

Park Office
Center

3101 Park
Center Drive
Alexandria
VA 22302

Ms. Pamela Higa
SNAP Administrator
Department of Human Services
Benefit, Employment & Support Services Division
1010 Richards Street, Suite 512
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

NOV 29 2017

RE: SNAP – Hawaii Request to Waive Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents
Time Limit – Partial Approval

Dear Ms. Higa:

This is in response to the Hawaii State agency's requests to waive the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents on the Island of Molokai.

The State agency submitted two requests. The first request, submitted on September 11, 2017, requested to waive the time limit for the Island of Molokai for 1 year from December 1, 2017, through November 30, 2018. This 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 Hawaii to waive the time limit for the Island of Molokai for the requested 12-month period.

The State's second request, submitted on October 17, 2017, requested to waive the time limit for the Island of Molokai for 2 years from December 1, 2017, through November 30, 2019. FNS is denying the 2-year waiver request.

The approval amends and extends waiver number 2150080. The attached waiver response includes the approved areas, the supporting evidence used, and the conditions of approval. If you have any questions, please contact Jacqueline Bourne at Jacqueline.Bourne@fns.usda.gov.

FNS is reviewing its policies regarding ABAWD waivers. 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,

Lizbeth Silberman
Director
Program Development Division

Enclosure

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Wavier serial number:** 2150080
2. **Type of request:** Amendment and extension
3. **Statutory citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended
4. **Regulatory Citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
5. **State:** Hawaii
6. **Region:** Western
7. **Regulatory Requirement:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, and 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 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. **Proposed alternative procedures:** The Hawaii State agency has requested to waive the ABAWD time limit on the Island of Molokai from December 1, 2017, through November 30, 2018. The State agency has supported its request based upon the Island having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 36-month period of May 2015 through April 2017. During this time period the national average unemployment rate was 4.9 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 5.9 percent. As detailed in the following table, the Island's aggregate unemployment rate for the selected time period was 7.8 percent.

Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations/ Bureau of Labor Statistics Data May 2015 – April 2017*		
Area	Unemployment	Labor Force
Island of Molokai	4,700	60,250
Unemployment Rate	7.8%	

*Data extracted from <http://www.hiwi.org/gsipub/index.asp?docid=417> and <http://www.bls.gov> on October 30, 2017.

- 9. Action and reason for approval or denial:** The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is approving the Hawaii State agency's request to waive the ABAWD time limit on the Island of Molokai for 1 year because the area meets the requirements for approval provided at 7 CFR 273.24(f) and relevant FNS guidance.

FNS is not approving the State's request to waive the ABAWD time limit on the Island of Molokai for 2 years.

- 10. Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** The waiver is approved pursuant to section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended and 7 CFR 273.24(f).

- 11. Information required for an 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 as supporting documentation.

- 12. Implementation date and expiration date:** The waiver is effective December 1, 2017, through November 30, 2018.

- 13. Limitation, if any, on Regional Office approval of like requests:** The waiver is limited to the Hawaii State agency.

- 14. Date of National Office action:** NOV 29 2017

- 15. Date of State agency's request:** September 11, 2017

- 16. Date of Regional Office transmittal of request:** September 12, 2017

- 17. State agency contact:**

Pamela Higa
(808) 586-5722
PHiga@dhs.hawaii.gov

- 18. FNS regional contact:**

Jacqueline Bourne
(415) 293-3717
Jacqueline.Bourne@fns.usda.gov