



United States Department of Agriculture

Food and
Nutrition
Service

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Center

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Alexandria
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Date: August 22, 2019

Sammy Guillory
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services
627 North 4th Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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

Dear Mr. Guillory:

This is in response to the Louisiana State agency's March 14, 2019, request to waive the SNAP time limit for able-bodied adults throughout the State from September 1, 2019, through August 31, 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 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:** 2160020
2. **Request Type:** Extension
3. **Statutory Citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
4. **Regulatory Citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
5. **State:** Louisiana
6. **Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Region:** Southwest
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 Louisiana State agency requested to waive the ABAWD time limit throughout the State from September 1, 2019, through August 31, 2020. The State agency supported its request based upon the State having an 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. As detailed in the following table, the State's combined aggregate unemployment rate for the selected time period was 5.0 percent.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2017 – December 2018*		
	Unemployed	Labor Force
Louisiana	2,524,769	50,485,579
Unemployment Rate: 5.0%		
* Extracted from http://www.bls.gov on July 18, 2019		

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:** September 1, 2019
12. **Expiration Date:** August 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: Kim Matherne
Phone Number: (225) 219-2428
Email: Kim.Matherne.DCFS@la.gov
15. **FNS Regional Office Contact Information:**
Name: Arianne Steed
Phone Number: (214) 290-9868
Email: Arianne.Steed@usda.gov