



Food and
Nutrition
Service

Park Office
Center

3101 Park
Center Drive
Alexandria
VA 22302

DEC 12 2017

Brittany Mangini
SNAP Director
Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance
600 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02111

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

Dear Ms. Mangini:

This is in response to the Massachusetts State agency's request to waive the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD) in 62 jurisdictions from January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018.

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 Massachusetts to waive the time limit in the 62 jurisdictions for the requested 12-month period. The approval amends and extends waiver number 2150057.

The attached waiver response includes the approved areas, the supporting evidence used, and the conditions of approval. If you have any questions please contact Robin Magee at Robin.Magee@fns.usda.gov.

FNS is reviewing its policies regarding ABAWD time limit 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,

Sasha Gersten-Paal
Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Attachment

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 2150057
2. **Type of request:** Extension and amendment
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:** Massachusetts
6. **Region:** Northeast
7. **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 Massachusetts State agency has requested to waive the ABAWD time limit in 62 jurisdictions from January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018. The State agency has combined certain jurisdictions for consideration as combined areas based upon them being contiguous or sharing the same State defined labor market areas, while considering other jurisdictions individually. The State agency has supported its request based upon the areas having average unemployment rates 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of January 2015 through December 2016. During this time period the national average unemployment rate was 5.1 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 6.1 percent. As detailed in the following tables, the unemployment rate for each individual or combined area was at least 6.1 percent during the selected time period.

The State agency has supported its request for three individual towns based upon each individual area having an average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for a recent 24-month period. As detailed in the following table, the aggregate unemployment rates for the individual areas reached at least 6.1 percent during the selected time period.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2015 through December 2016*			
Individual Areas	Unemployed	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
1. Gosnold town	93	1,229	7.6%
2. Hinsdale town	1,589	25,523	6.2%
3. Southbridge Town city	12,866	192,151	6.7%

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on October 24, 2017

The State agency has grouped contiguous 14 towns for consideration as a combined area and has supported its request based upon the combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for a recent 24-month period.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2015 through December 2016*		
Combined Area	Unemployed	Labor Force
1. Acushnet town	7,718	146,126
2. Berkley town	4,106	86,192
3. Dartmouth town	20,732	445,264
4. Fairhaven town	11,905	226,261
5. Fall River city	71,453	943,513
6. Freetown town	5,803	124,987
7. Mattapoisett town	3,216	75,311
8. Middleborough town	14,246	306,915
9. New Bedford city	84,365	1,118,635
10. Raynham town	7,676	172,333
11. Rochester town	3,127	76,049
12. Somerset town	10,242	218,279
13. Swansea town	9,838	224,409
14. Westport town	10,886	197,289
Total	265,313	4,361,563
Combined Unemployment Rate	6.1%	

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on October 24, 2017

The State agency has grouped 18 contiguous towns for consideration as a combined area and has supported its request based upon the combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for a recent 24-month period.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2015 through December 2016*		
Combined Area	Unemployed	Labor Force
1. Agawam Town city	16,367	379,044
2. Brimfield town	2,118	52,409
3. Chicopee city	37,618	665,540
4. Granville town	940	21,390
5. Holland town	1,679	38,042
6. Holyoke city	26,709	389,976
7. Ludlow town	14,561	259,345
8. Monson town	4,874	115,081
9. Montgomery town	482	12,190
10. Palmer Town city	8,536	147,337
11. Russell town	952	23,745
12. Southwick town	5,597	131,912
13. Springfield city	121,189	1,514,664
14. Tolland town	269	6,746
15. Wales town	1,141	23,460
16. West Springfield Town city	16,642	347,371
17. Westfield city	25,077	503,575
18. Wilbraham town	6,720	180,921
Total	291,471	4,812,748
Combined Unemployment Rate	6.1%	

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on October 24, 2017

The State agency has grouped nine contiguous towns for consideration as a combined area and has supported its request based upon the combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for a recent 24-month period.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2015 through December 2016*		
Combined Area	Unemployed	Labor Force
1. Adams town	5,954	101,734
2. Cheshire town	2,248	45,940
3. Clarksburg town	1,061	20,941
4. Florida town	501	9,865
5. Monroe town	136	1,889
6. New Ashford town	215	3,375
7. North Adams city	9,920	145,933
8. Rowe town	202	3,761
9. Savoy town	503	9,337
Total	20,740	342,775
Combined Unemployment Rate	6.1%	

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on October 24, 2017

The State agency has grouped three contiguous towns for consideration as a combined area and has supported its request based upon the combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for a recent 24-month period.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2015 through December 2016*		
Combined Area	Unemployed	Labor Force
1. Lawrence city	69,581	859,186
2. Methuen town city	29,816	636,182
3. North Andover town	13,699	371,974
Total	113,096	1,867,342
Combined Unemployment Rate	6.1%	

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on October 24, 2017

The State agency has grouped 10 towns for consideration as a combined area and has supported its request based upon the combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for a recent 24-month period. The 10 towns have been grouped based on eight sharing the same State defined labor market and another two (Provincetown and Truro town) being contiguous to the labor market area.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2015 through December 2016*		
Barnstable Town, MA Metropolitan New England City and Town Areas (NECTA)	Unemployed	Labor Force
1. Bourne town	12,382	249,477
2. Dennis town	9,875	157,883
3. Eastham town	3,774	61,912
4. Falmouth town	19,122	366,562
5. Harwich town	8,005	145,399
6. Provincetown town	9,152	52,321
7. Truro town	3,526	30,010
8. Wareham town	15,758	297,177
9. Wellfleet town	3,825	39,746
10. Yarmouth town	16,518	284,212
Total	101,937	1,684,699
Combined Unemployment Rate	6.1%	

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on October 24, 2017

The State agency has grouped five towns for consideration as a combined area and has supported its request based upon the combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for a recent 24-month period. The five towns have been grouped based on sharing the same State defined labor market.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2015 through December 2016*		
Vineyard Haven MA Micropolitan NECTA	Unemployed	Labor Force
1. Aquinnah town	192	5,097
2. Chilmark town	463	11,377
3. Edgartown town	4,172	57,274
4. Oak Bluffs town	3,455	61,009
5. Tisbury town	3,368	52,868
Total	11,650	187,625
Combined Unemployment Rate	6.2%	

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on October 24, 2017

- 9. Action and reason for approval or denial:** The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is approving the Massachusetts State agency's request to waive the ABAWD time limit in the 62 jurisdictions because the areas meet the requirements for approval provided at 7 CFR 273.24(f) and relevant FNS guidance.

- 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 and supporting documentation.
- 12. Implementation date and expiration date:** The waiver is effective January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018.
- 13. Limitation, if any, on regional office approval of like requests:** The waiver is limited to the Massachusetts State agency.
- 14. Date of national office action:** DEC 12 2017
- 15. Date of State agency's request:** September 18, 2017
- 16. Date of regional office transmittal of request:** October 24, 2017
- 17. State agency contact:**
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- 18. FNS regional contacts:**
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