



Food and
Nutrition
Service

Park Office
Center

3101 Park
Center Drive
Alexandria
VA 22302

OCT 27 2016

Lauren Arms Ledwith
SNAP Director
Department of Transitional Assistance
600 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02111

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

Dear Ms. Arms Ledwith:

This is in response to the Massachusetts State agency's request to waive the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents in 62 areas from January 1, 2017, through June 30, 2017.

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 areas for the requested 6-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 Kevin Pasquaretta at Kevin.Pasquaretta@fns.usda.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sasha Gersten-Paal".

Sasha Gersten-Paal
Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Enclosure

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 2150057
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:** Massachusetts
6. **Region:** Northeast
7. **Requirement:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, provides 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) also provides 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 in 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 areas from January 1, 2017 through June 30, 2017.

The State agency has requested one county/town based upon the area's individual unemployment rates exceeding 10 percent for the recent 3-month period of January 2016 to March 2016, as shown in the table below.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data			
January 2016 – March 2016*			
County	Unemployment	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
Nantucket County/Town	1,769	16,427	10.8%

In addition, the State has requested three counties, one metropolitan area, one metropolitan division, 44 towns, 11 cities, and one reservation area based upon the areas reaching 20 percent above the national average for a recent 24-month period.

Of these, the State has requested consideration of one county, two towns, and one reservation individually, and it has grouped the rest of the areas for consideration into the following combined areas: one group of two counties, one group of one metropolitan area and one metropolitan division, and six separate groups of towns and cities. The State used the same 24-month period - May 2014 through April 2016 – for all of these areas. During this time period the national average unemployment rate was 5.45 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 6.5 percent. As detailed in the following tables, the aggregate unemployment rates for the requested areas reached or exceeded 6.5 percent during the selected time period.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data May 2014 – April 2016*			
County	Unemployment	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
Dukes County	15,523	224,269	6.9%

Town	Unemployment	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
Monroe Town	156	1,868	8.4%

Town	Unemployment	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
Rowe Town	263	3,814	6.9%

County Group	Unemployment	Labor Force
Berkshire County	90,253	1,577,865
Hampden County	367,044	5,312,774
Combined Area Total	457,297	6,890,639
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.6%	

Metropolitan Area Group	Unemployment	Labor Force
New Bedford Metropolitan NECTA	151,407	2,015,612
Taunton-Middleborough- Norton NECTA Division	109,490	1,971,212
Combined Area Total	260,897	3,986,824
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.5%	

Town/City Group 1	Unemployment	Labor Force
Athol town	9,378	135,956
Brookfield town	2,479	44,404
Dudley town	8,516	153,787
Fitchburg city	32,915	463,325
Gardner city	15,628	229,066
Orange town	5,691	84,842
Petersham town	773	15,989
Phillipston town	1,277	22,666
Royalston town	968	17,113
Southbridge Town city	15,301	193,442
Sturbridge town	5,958	120,259
Templeton town	5,615	103,039
Ware town	8,066	125,456
Warren town	3,753	58,096
Webster town	13,922	206,582
Wendell town	666	11,010
Westminster town	4,770	104,042
Winchendon town	7,635	131,564
Combined Area Total	143,311	2,220,638
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.5%	
Town/City Group 2	Unemployment	Labor Force
Dracut town	20,279	413,678
Lawrence city	82,784	851,655
Lowell city	85,745	1,297,300
Methuen town city	35,202	634,442
North Andover town	16,288	371,742
Tewksbury town	18,247	392,533
Tyngsborough town	7,616	160,733
Combined Area Total	266,161	4,122,083
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.5%	

Town/City Group 3	Unemployment	Labor Force
Abington town	11,807	212,578
Brockton city	80,535	1,130,709
Holbrook town	8,804	145,557
Stoughton town	19,437	378,531
Combined Area Total	120,583	1,867,375
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.5%	
Town/City Group 4	Unemployment	Labor Force
Gloucester city	24,909	370,982
Rockport town	4,861	84,593
Combined Area Total	29,770	455,575
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.5%	
Town/City Group 5	Unemployment	Labor Force
Attleboro city	29,534	574,678
Fall River city	85,157	951,438
Rehoboth town	7,320	162,828
Seekonk town	9,006	192,006
Somerset town	12,254	219,001
Swansea town	11,875	222,121
Westport town	12,689	197,368
Combined Area Total	167,835	2,519,440
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.7%	
Town/City Group 6	Unemployment	Labor Force
Barnstable town city	31,635	565,902
Bourne town	14,766	250,031
Brewster town	6,406	122,799
Chatham town	3,977	69,547
Dennis town	11,550	158,966

Eastham town	4,436	62,270
Falmouth town	22,372	368,691
Harwich town	9,183	145,505
Mashpee town	10,737	184,673
Orleans town	3,347	67,929
Provincetown town	10,734	53,894
Truro town	3,975	30,508
Wareham town	18,579	298,078
Wellfleet town	4,340	40,358
Yarmouth town	19,592	287,495
Combined Area Total	175,629	2,706,646
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.5%	

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on October 14 and 18, 2016

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data / Census Bureau Data*	
Reservation Area	Unemployment Rate: May 2014 – April 2016
Wampanoag-Aquinnah Trust Land	8.8%

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> and <http://factfinder.census.gov> on Oct. 19, 2016.

- 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 areas 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, 2017, through June 30, 2017.

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: OCT 27 2016

15. Date of State agency's request: September 23, 2016

16. Date of regional office transmittal of request: September 26, 2016

17. State agency contact:
Miriam Kaufmann
(617) 348-5561
Miriam.Kaufmann@state.ma.us

18. FNS regional contact:
Kevin Pasquaretta
(617) 565-5402
Kevin.Pasquaretta@fns.usda.gov