



United States Department of Agriculture

Food and
Nutrition
Service

1320 Braddock Place
Alexandria, VA
22314

June 21, 2023

Brittany Mangini
Associate Commissioner for Food Security and Nutrition Programs
Department of Transitional Assistance
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
600 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02111

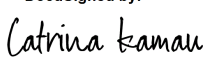
RE: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – Massachusetts
Request to Waive Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents Time Limit –
Initial – Approval

Dear Associate Commissioner Mangini:

This is in response to the Massachusetts Office of Health and Human Service's May 22, 2023, request to waive the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs). The attached waiver response includes the approved areas, the supporting evidence used, and the conditions of approval.

The Food and Nutrition Service (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 the waiver when it expires and reintroduce the time limit. Please contact your Regional Office representative with any questions.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Catrina L. Kamau
Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Enclosure

Enclosure

**ABLE-BODIED ADULTS WITHOUT DEPENDENTS (ABAWD)
WAIVER RESPONSE**

- 1. Request Type:** Initial
- 2. Statutory Citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
- 3. Regulatory Citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
- 4. State:** Massachusetts
- 5. Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Region:** Northeast
- 6. 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.
- 7. Requested Area(s) and Support:** The State agency requested to waive the ABAWD time limit in a combined area of 13 counties, five contiguous cities and towns, and 4 contiguous cities and towns from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. The State agency supported its request based upon a combined area of 13 counties having an average unemployment rate of 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of May 2020 through April 2022. During this period, the national average unemployment rate was 6.2 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 7.5 percent. The average unemployment rate for the counties was 7.5 percent respectively during the 24-month period (Table 1).

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Table 1: Combined Area 1 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, May 2020 – April 2022)

Counties
1. Barnstable County
2. Berkshire County
3. Bristol County
4. Dukes County
5. Essex County
6. Franklin County
7. Hampden County
8. Hampshire County
9. Nantucket County/town
10. Norfolk County
11. Plymouth County
12. Suffolk County
13. Worcester County
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 7.5%
Data extracted from http://www.bls.gov on June 5, 2023.

The State agency supported its request based upon five cities and towns as one combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of May 2020 through April 2022. During this period, the national average unemployment rate was 6.2 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 7.5 percent. The average unemployment rate for the combined area was 7.5 percent during the 24-month period. (Table 2)

Table 2: Combined Area 2 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, May 2020 – April 2022)

Counties
1. Dracut Town
2. Dunstable Town
3. Lowell City
4. Tewksbury Town
5. Tyngsborough Town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 7.5%
Data extracted from http://www.bls.gov on June 5, 2023.

The State agency supported its request based upon four cities and towns as one combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of May 2020 through April 2022. During this period, the national average unemployment rate was 6.2 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 7.5 percent. The average unemployment rate for the combined area was 7.5 percent during the 24-month period. (Table 3)

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Table 3: Combined Area 3 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, May 2020 – April 2022)

Counties
1. Dracut Town
2. Dunstable Town
3. Lowell City
4. Tewksbury Town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 7.5%
Data extracted from http://www.bls.gov on June 5, 2023.

8. FNS Action and Justification: FNS is approving the State agency's request to waive the ABAWD time limit. The State agency's request meets the requirements for approval provided at 7 CFR 273.24(f) and relevant FNS guidance.

9. Authority: The waiver is approved pursuant to section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and 7 CFR 273.24(f).

10. Implementation Date: July 1, 2023

11. Expiration Date: June 30, 2024

12. Information Required to Submit a Modification, Extension, or New Waiver:

To receive a modification, extension, or submit a new waiver to replace the current waiver, 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.

13. State Agency Contact Information:

Name: Frances Ransom Canning
Email: frances.ransom-canning@mass.gov

14. FNS Regional Office Contact Information:

Name: Leidy Mateus
Email: Leidy.Mateus@usda.gov