



Food and
Nutrition
Service

SEP 06 2017

Park Office
Center

3101 Park
Center Drive
Alexandria
VA 22302

Nichollette Smith-Bligen
Acting Executive Director
Family Investment Administration
Maryland Department of Human Services
311 W. Saratoga Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-3500

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

Dear Ms. Smith-Bligen:

This is in response to the Maryland State agency's request to waive the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents in 13 counties 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 Maryland to waive the time limit for the jurisdictions requested 12-month period. The approval amends and extends waiver number 2150044. The attached waiver response includes the approved areas, the supporting evidence used, and the conditions of approval. If you have any questions, please contact Denise Valdez at denise.valdez@fns.usda.gov.

Sincerely,

Sasha Gersten-Paal
Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Attachment

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Wavier serial number:** 2150044
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:** Maryland
6. **Region:** Mid-Atlantic
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 Maryland State agency has requested to waive the ABAWD time limit in 13 counties from January 1, 2018, through December, 31, 2018. The State agency has supported its request based upon each combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of April 2015 through March 2017. During this time period the national average unemployment rate was 4.95 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 5.9 percent. As detailed in the following tables, aggregate unemployment rates for the selected time period in the requested areas reached or exceeded 5.9 percent.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data April 2015 – March 2017*		
Eastern Shore Region	Unemployment	Labor Force
Caroline County	20,673	423,502
Cecil County	67,674	1,264,308
Dorchester County	24,169	381,947
Kent County	12,240	250,869
Queen Anne's County	25,890	644,211
Somerset County	16,527	222,668
Talbot County	20,283	467,995
Wicomico County	75,787	1,214,834
Worcester County	57,621	611,445
Combined Area Total	320,783	5,481,779
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	5.9%	

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data April 2015 – March 2017*		
Western Region	Unemployment	Labor Force
Allegany County	49,436	776,606
Garrett County	21,624	375,256
Combined Area Total	71,060	1,151,862
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.2%	

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data April 2015 – March 2017*		
Baltimore Region	Unemployment	Labor Force
Baltimore City	473,530	7,082,027
Harford County	142,825	3,287,464
Combined Area Total	616,355	10,369,491
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	5.9%	

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on August 29, 2017.

9. Action and reason for approval or denial: The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is approving the Maryland State agency's request to waive the ABAWD time limit in the 13 counties because the counties 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 as 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 Maryland State agency.

14. Date of National Office action: SEP 06 2017

15. Date of State agency's request: July 11, 2017

16. Date of Regional Office transmittal of request: July 20, 2017

17. State agency contact:

Kim Lightfoot
kim.lightfoot@maryland.gov
(410) 767-7028

18. FNS Regional contact:

Denise Valdez
denise.valdez@fns.usda.gov
(609) 259-5180