



United States Department of Agriculture

Food and
Nutrition
Service

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Date: August 22, 2019

Anthony Pelotte
Director, Office for Family Independence
Maine Department of Health and Human Services
11 State House Station
109 Capitol Street
Augusta, Maine 04333

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

Dear Mr. Pelotte:

This is in response to the Maine State agency's May 30, 2019, request to waive the SNAP time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents in 204 areas.

The State agency requested a 24-month waiver. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is not approving the two-year waiver request because ABAWD time limit waivers are only approved for 12-month periods. After careful review of the requested areas and supporting data, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is partially approving the State agency's request from September 30, 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 in these areas. The attached waiver response includes the approved areas, 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sasha Gersten-Paal". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Sasha" and last name "Paal" being more prominent than the middle name "Gersten".

Sasha Gersten-Paal
Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) Waiver Response

1. **Serial Number:** 2190025
2. **Request Type:** Initial
3. **Statutory Citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
4. **Regulatory Citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
5. **State:** Maine
6. **Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Region:** Northeast
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 Maine State agency has requested to waive the ABAWD time limit 204 areas for a 24-month period. The State agency has grouped certain towns and cities for consideration as 15 combined areas, while considering nine towns individually.

The State has supported its request for each combined area based upon each respective combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for a recent 24-month period.

The State agency selected January 2016 through December 2017 for 54 areas. These 54 areas include three labor market areas (LMAs), six individual towns, and 45 towns or cities that were grouped into combined areas. During this time period the national average unemployment rate was 4.6 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 5.5 percent. As detailed in the following tables, the unemployment rate for each individual or combined area was at least 5.5 percent during the selected time period.

In addition, the State agency selected November 2016 through October 2018 for 150 areas. These 150 areas include three individual towns and 147 towns or cities that were grouped into combined areas. During this time period the national average unemployment rate was 4.2 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 5.0 percent. As detailed in the following tables, the unemployment rate for each individual or combined area was at least 5.0 percent during the selected time period.

The State agency used both January 2016 through December 2017 data and November 2016 through October 2018 data to support its request for four combined areas. Only November 2016 through October 2018 data were used to support the State agency's request for seven combined areas.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data¹

Table 1: Individual Labor Market Areas (LMAs) (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Labor Market Areas	Unemployment
1. Calais LMA	6.2%
2. Lincoln LMA	7.6%
3. Millinocket LMA	7.9%

Table 2: Individuals Towns (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities	Unemployment
1. Brownfield town	5.7%
2. Enfield town	6.5%
3. Franklin town	6.4%
4. Gouldsboro town	5.9%
5. Howland town	6.9%
6. Milo town	5.6%

Table 3: Combined Area 1 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities
1. Anson town
2. Athens town
3. Bradford town

¹ Data for areas with populations over 1,000 extracted from <https://data.bls.gov> on July 11, 2019. Data for areas with populations under 1,000 obtained from BLS in June 2018.

Towns and Cities
4. Burnham town
5. Canaan town
6. Charleston town
7. Corinna town
8. Corinth town
9. Dixmont town
10. Etna town
11. Exeter town
12. Garland town
13. Hartland town
14. Hudson town
15. Madison town
16. Palmyra town
17. Pittsfield town
18. Plymouth town
19. Sangerville town
20. Solon town
21. St. Albans town
22. Stetson town
23. Troy town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 5.6%

Table 4: Combined Area 2 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities
1. Ashland town
2. Caribou city
3. Easton town
4. Fort Fairfield town
5. Fort Kent town
6. Limestone town
7. Mars Hill town
8. Van Buren town
9. Woodland town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 5.5%

Table 5: Combined Area 3 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities
1. Cherryfield town
2. East Machias town
3. Harrington town
4. Lubec town
5. Machias town
6. Milbridge town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 5.5%

Table 6: Combined Area 4 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, November 2016 through October 2018)

Towns and Cities
1. Chesterville town
2. Livermore Falls town
3. Phillips town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 5.2%

Table 7: Combined Area 5 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, November 2016 through October 2018)

Towns and Cities
1. Dixfield town
2. Mexico town
3. Rumford town
4. Woodstock town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 5.9%

Table 8: Individuals Towns (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities	Unemployment
1. Grand Isle town	5.9%
2. Stoneham town	6.8%
3. Sweden town	6.8%

Table 9: Combined Area 6 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities
1. Alton town
2. Amherst town
3. Argyle unorganized
4. Aurora town
5. Burlington town
6. Clifton town
7. East Central Penobscot unorganized
8. Lagrange town
9. Osborn town
10. Otis town
11. Passadumkeag town
12. Penobscot Indian Island Reservation
13. Southeast Piscataquis unorganized
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 5.6%

Table 10: Combined Area 7 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities
1. Jackson town
2. Liberty town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 5.8%

Table 11: Combined Area 8 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities
1. Abbot town
2. Atkinson town
3. Beaver Cove town
4. Blanchard unorganized
5. Bowerbank town
6. Cambridge town
7. Lake View plantation
8. Medford town
9. Monson town
10. Northwest Piscataquis unorganized
11. Parkman town
12. Ripley town
13. Sebec town
14. Shirley town
15. Willimantic town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 5.7%

Table 12: Combined Area 9 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities
1. Beddington town
2. Central Hancock unorganized
3. Eastbrook town
4. Great Pond town
5. Mariaville town
6. Sorrento town
7. Waltham town
8. Winter Harbor town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 5.8%

Table 13: Combined Area 10 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities
1. Central Somerset unorganized
2. Eustis town
3. Industry town
4. Kingfield town

Towns and Cities
5. New Portland town
6. New Vineyard town
7. Temple town
8. Vienna town
9. Weld town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 6.1%

Table 14: Combined Area 11 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities
1. Amity town
2. Bancroft town
3. Cary plantation
4. Crystal town
5. Danforth town
6. Dyer Brook town
7. Hammond town
8. Haynesville town
9. Hersey town
10. Island Falls town
11. Kingman unorganized
12. Linneus town
13. Ludlow town
14. Macwahoc plantation
15. Merrill town
16. Monticello town
17. Moro plantation
18. Mount Chase town
19. New Limerick town
20. Oakfield town
21. Orient town
22. Reed plantation
23. Sherman town
24. Smyrna town
25. Stacyville town
26. Weston town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 7.0%

Table 15: Combined Area 12 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities
1. Beals town
2. Columbia Falls town
3. Columbia town
4. Cutler town
5. Deblois town
6. Dennysville town
7. East Central Washington unorganized
8. Jonesboro town
9. Northfield town
10. Roque Bluffs town
11. Wesley town
12. Whiting town
13. Whitneyville town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 5.6%

Table 16: Combined Area 13 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities
1. Detroit town
2. Harmony town
3. Kingsbury plantation
4. Wellington town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 6.1%

Table 17: Combined Area 14 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities
1. Allagash town
2. Blaine town
3. Bridgewater town
4. Castle Hill town
5. Caswell town
6. Central Aroostook unorganized
7. Chapman town
8. Connor unorganized
9. Cyr plantation
10. Eagle Lake town

Towns and Cities
11. Garfield plantation
12. Hamlin town
13. Masardis town
14. Nashville plantation
15. New Canada town
16. New Sweden town
17. Oxbow plantation
18. Perham town
19. Portage Lake town
20. Square Lake unorganized
21. St. Francis town
22. St. John plantation
23. Stockholm town
24. Wade town
25. Wallagrass town
26. Westfield town
27. Westmanland town
28. Winterville plantation
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 7.6%

Table 18: Combined Area 15 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities
1. Andover town
2. Byron town
3. Carthage town
4. Gilead town
5. Greenwood town
6. Hanover town
7. Lincoln plantation
8. Magalloway plantation
9. Milton unorganized
10. Newry town
11. North Oxford unorganized
12. Roxbury town
13. Upton town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 5.9%

Table 19: Combined Area 16 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, January 2016 through December 2017)

Towns and Cities
1. Bingham town
2. Brighton plantation
3. Caratunk town
4. Dennistown plantation
5. Embden town
6. Highland plantation
7. Jackman town
8. Mercer town
9. Moose River town
10. Moscow town
11. Northeast Somerset unorganized
12. Northwest Somerset unorganized
13. Pleasant Ridge plantation
14. Starks town
15. The Forks plantation
16. West Forks plantation
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 5.5%

9. FNS Action and Justification: FNS is approving the State agency to waive the ABAWD time limit in the 204 areas cited in item 8, as these areas meet 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 30, 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:

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15. FNS Regional Office Contact Information:

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