



Food and
Nutrition
Service

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Date: September 4, 2019

Kathy Bruen
SNAP Manager
Economic Assistance & Employment Supports Division
Minnesota Department of Human Services
444 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-3815

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

Dear Ms. Bruen:

This is in response to the Minnesota State agency's July 25, 2019, request to waive the SNAP time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents in 26 counties and 11 reservation areas from October 1, 2019, through September 30, 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 as requested. 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,

Sasha Gersten-Paal
Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) Waiver Response

1. **Serial Number:** 2160002
2. **Request Type:** Extension
3. **Statutory Citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
4. **Regulatory Citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
5. **State:** Minnesota
6. **Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Region:** Midwest
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 Minnesota State agency requested to waive the ABAWD time limit in 26 counties and 11 reservations from October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020. The State agency grouped 26 contiguous counties for consideration as a combined area. The State agency supported its request based upon the combined area and each of the reservations having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of May 2017 through April 2019. During this time period the national average unemployment rate was 4.0 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 4.8 percent. As shown in the following tables, the aggregate unemployment rates for the requested areas were 4.8 percent or greater during the selected time period.

Table 1: Combined Area 1 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data May 2017 through April 2019)

Counties
1. Aitkin County
2. Becker County
3. Beltrami County
4. Carlton County
5. Cass County
6. Clearwater County
7. Crow Wing County
8. Hubbard County

Counties
9. Isanti County
10. Itasca County
11. Kanabec County
12. Kittson County
13. Koochiching County
14. Lake of the Woods County
15. Mahnommen County
16. Marshall County
17. Mille Lacs County
18. Morrison County
19. Norman County
20. Pennington County
21. Pine County
22. Polk County
23. Red Lake County
24. Roseau County
25. Todd County
26. Wadena County
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 4.8%
Data extracted from http://www.bls.gov on July 29, 2019

Table 2: Reservation Areas (American Community Survey and Bureau of Labor Statistics Data May 2017-April 2019)

Reservation	Unemployment Rate
1. Bois Forte Reservation	12.6%
2. Fond du Lac Reservation	7.8%
3. Grand Portage Reservation	7.8%
4. Leech Lake Reservation	10.0%
5. Lower Sioux Community Reservation	11.3%
6. Mille Lacs Reservation	11.2%
7. Prairie Island Community Reservation	6.5%
8. Red Lake Reservation	13.4%
9. Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community Reservation	12.6%
10. Upper Sioux Community Reservation	14.6%
11. White Earth Reservation	7.3%
Data extracted from http://www.bls.gov and http://factfinder.census.gov on July 29, 2019.	

- 9. FNS Action and Justification:** FNS is approving the State agency to waive the ABAWD time limit as requested. The State agency's request meets 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:** October 1, 2019
- 12. Expiration Date:** September 30, 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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