



Food and
Nutrition
Service

Park Office
Center

3101 Park
Center Drive
Alexandria
VA 22302

DEC 12 2017

Ms. Natasha Johnson
Director
Division of Family Development
Department of Human Services
PO Box 716
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

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

Dear Ms. Johnson:

This is in response to the New Jersey State agency's request to waive the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents in three 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 New Jersey to waive the time limit in the three counties for the requested 12-month period. The approval amends and extends waiver number 970028. The attached waiver response includes the approved areas, the supporting evidence used, and the conditions of approval. If you have any questions please contact Marilene Nepali at Marilene.Nepali@fns.usda.gov.

FNS is reviewing its policies regarding ABAWD time limit waivers. 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

Attachment

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 970028
2. **Type of request:** Extension and amendment
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:** New Jersey
6. **Region:** Mid-Atlantic
7. **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 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 New Jersey State agency has requested to waive the ABAWD time limit in three counties from January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018. The State agency has supported its request based upon each county having an average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of July 2015 through June 2017. During this time period the national average unemployment rate was 4.8 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 5.8 percent. As detailed in the following tables, the unemployment rate for each county was at least 5.8 percent during the selected time period.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data July 2015 through June 2017*			
Individual Areas	Unemployed	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
1. Atlantic County	223,194	2,985,008	7.5%
2. Cape May County	108,620	1,137,074	9.6%
3. Cumberland County	118,385	1,614,787	7.3%

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on November 28, 2017

- 9. Action and reason for approval or denial:** The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is approving the New Jersey State agency's request to waive the ABAWD time limit in the three counties because it meets 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, 2018, through December 31, 2018.
- 13. Limitation, if any, on Regional Office approval of like requests:** The waiver is limited to the New Jersey State agency.
- 14. Date of National Office action:** **DEC 12 2017**
- 15. Date of State agency's request:** October 30, 2017
- 16. Date of Regional Office transmittal of request:** November 28, 2017
- 17. State agency contact:**
Larry Braasch
(609) 588-2405
Larry.Braasch@dhs.state.nj.us
- 18. FNS regional contacts:**
Marilene Nepali
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