



Food and
Nutrition
Service

Park Office
Center

3101 Park
Center Drive
Alexandria
VA 22302

DEC 12 2017

Lisa Watson
Deputy Secretary
Office of Income Maintenance
Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
P.O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105

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

Dear Ms. Watson:

This is in response to the Pennsylvania State agency's request to waive the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents in 69 areas 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 Pennsylvania to waive the time limit in the 69 areas for the requested 12-month period. The approval amends and extends waiver number 2150045. The attached waiver response includes the approved areas, the supporting evidence used, and the conditions of approval. If you have any questions please contact Katrina Vann at Katrina.Vann@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

Enclosure

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 2150045
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:** Pennsylvania
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 Pennsylvania State agency has requested to waive the ABAWD time limit in 59 counties and 10 minor civil divisions from January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018. Pennsylvania has grouped 59 contiguous counties for consideration as a combined area, and has supported its request based upon the combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for a recent 24-month period. In addition, the State has supported its request for three individual minor civil divisions, designated by the State's Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, and three respective groupings of contiguous minor civil divisions (which include the remaining seven minor civil divisions) based upon each having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for a recent 24-month period. The State agency selected the same 24-month period – August 2015 through July 2017 – for the 59 counties and 10 minor civil divisions. During this time period the national average unemployment rate was 4.78 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 5.7 percent. As detailed in the following tables, the aggregate unemployment rates for the requested areas reached or exceeded 5.7 percent during the selected time period.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data August 2015 through July 2017*		
County Group	Unemployed	Labor Force
1. Adams County	51,848	1,329,877
2. Armstrong County	56,465	796,283
3. Beaver County	123,912	2,058,369
4. Bedford County	32,925	577,009
5. Blair County	75,128	1,459,890
6. Bradford County	44,345	726,502
7. Bucks County	368,472	8,202,688
8. Butler County	115,806	2,358,899
9. Cambria County	96,700	1,473,972
10. Cameron County	3,933	53,482
11. Carbon County	44,410	759,618
12. Clarion County	26,587	433,559
13. Clearfield County	59,811	869,498
14. Clinton County	30,323	447,347
15. Columbia County	44,402	811,369
16. Crawford County	55,632	981,804
17. Dauphin County	158,880	3,423,053
18. Delaware County	336,534	7,074,034
19. Elk County	20,664	390,732
20. Erie County	196,754	3,211,532
21. Fayette County	108,380	1,403,937
22. Forest County	3,408	45,088
23. Franklin County	91,798	1,862,209
24. Fulton County	10,570	174,966
25. Greene County	29,423	420,078
26. Huntingdon County	31,841	471,095
27. Indiana County	65,912	968,941
28. Jefferson County	32,297	496,219
29. Juniata County	14,834	291,013
30. Lackawanna County	141,228	2,553,902
31. Lawrence County	65,055	996,418
32. Lebanon County	73,551	1,693,411
33. Lehigh County	236,253	4,493,224
34. Luzerne County	237,766	3,813,474
35. Lycoming County	89,526	1,412,394
36. McKean County	28,719	447,446
37. Mercer County	72,765	1,263,906
38. Mifflin County	28,012	499,871
39. Monroe County	121,121	1,959,921
40. Montour County	9,153	220,058

41. Northampton County	193,599	3,784,282
42. Northumberland County	64,224	1,049,975
43. Perry County	25,979	584,478
44. Philadelphia County	1,122,015	16,939,791
45. Pike County	37,606	599,621
46. Potter County	13,190	177,552
47. Schuylkill County	99,213	1,623,696
48. Snyder County	22,619	491,438
49. Somerset County	56,326	818,482
50. Sullivan County	4,659	69,388
51. Susquehanna County	27,335	502,458
52. Tioga County	32,258	478,207
53. Union County	21,774	472,293
54. Venango County	38,883	568,351
55. Warren County	25,102	472,586
56. Washington County	150,345	2,566,615
57. Wayne County	30,130	536,431
58. Westmoreland County	246,542	4,399,364
59. Wyoming County	20,128	339,008
Combined Area Totals	5,667,070	99,401,104
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	5.7%	

*All Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on November 7, 2017.

Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, PA Dept. L&I Data August 2015 through July 2017**			
Individual Minor Civil Divisions	Unemployed	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
Lancaster City	38,520	649,663	5.9%
Penn Hills Township	30,967	536,190	5.8%
Pottstown Borough	16,251	284,078	5.7%

Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, PA Dept. L&I Data August 2015 through July 2017**		
Minor Civil Divisions Group 1	Unemployed	Labor Force
York City	36,670	429,712
York Township	14,945	358,017
Springettsbury township (York County)	14,986	313,945
Combined Area Totals	66,601	1,101,674
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.0%	

Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, PA Dept. L&I Data August 2015 through July 2017**		
Minor Civil Divisions Group 2	Unemployed	Labor Force
Reading City	60,265	821,351
Muhlenberg Township	12,067	265,738
Combined Area Totals	72,332	1,087,089
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.7%	

Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, PA Dept. L&I Data August 2015 through July 2017**		
Minor Civil Divisions Group 3	Unemployed	Labor Force
West Mifflin Borough	14,129	242,368
McKeesport City	14,954	192,479
Combined Area Totals	29,083	434,847
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.7%	

**Data based on information submitted by the State's Center for Workforce Information and Analysis. Information provided on November 29, 2017.

9. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is approving the Pennsylvania State agency request to waive the ABAWD time limit in the 69 areas 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:** This waiver is limited to the Pennsylvania State agency.
14. **Date of National Office action:** DEC 12 2017
15. **Date of State agency's request:** October 18, 2017

16. Date of Regional Office transmittal of request: October 26, 2016

17. State agency contact:

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18. FNS regional contact:

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