



Food and
Nutrition
Service

Park Office
Center

3101 Park
Center Drive
Alexandria
VA 22302

MAR 23 2018

Toni Blue Washington
Division of Benefit Programs Director
Virginia Department of Social Services
801 East Main Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

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

Dear Ms. Washington:

This is in response to the Virginia State agency's request to waive the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD) in 55 areas from May 1, 2018, through April 30, 2019.

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 approves Virginia to waive the time limit in the 55 areas for the requested 12-month period. The approval amends and extends waiver number 2140016. The enclosed waiver response includes the approved areas, the supporting evidence used, and the conditions of approval. If you have any questions please contact Geraldine Alphe-Igihon at Geraldine.Alphe-Igihon@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:** 2140016
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:** Virginia
6. **Region:** Mid-Atlantic
7. **Requirement:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, and 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) also provides 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 in 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 Virginia State agency has requested to waive the ABAWD time limit in 55 areas from May 1, 2018 through April 30, 2019.

The State agency has grouped 54 economically tied counties and cities in southern Virginia for consideration as a combined area. The State agency supported its request based upon the combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of January 2016 through December 2017. 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 table, the unemployment rate for the combined area was 5.5 percent during the selected time period.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2016 – December 2017		
County	Unemployment	Labor Force
1. Accomack County	18,298	378,909
2. Alleghany County	8,219	165,452
3. Bath County	2,098	59,431
4. Bland County	3,170	65,856
5. Bristol city	8,694	180,579
6. Brunswick County	8,572	148,158
7. Buchanan County	15,045	161,063
8. Buckingham County	8,172	152,564
9. Carroll County	15,246	309,564
10. Charles City County	4,207	90,329
11. Charlotte County	6,181	125,491
12. Covington city	3,443	57,252
13. Craig County	2,541	57,245
14. Cumberland County	4,880	110,872
15. Danville city	27,512	459,780
16. Dickenson County	9,282	106,548
17. Dinwiddie County	15,054	323,829
18. Emporia city	3,246	53,975
19. Franklin city	4,832	84,643
20. Galax city	3,311	69,453
21. Grayson County	8,294	170,230
22. Greensville County	4,979	101,653
23. Halifax County	19,737	357,069
24. Hampton city	82,930	1,544,565
25. Henry County	28,233	531,541
26. Highland County	1,010	30,441
27. Hopewell city	14,766	234,969
28. Lancaster County	6,821	122,761
29. Lee County	12,489	200,679
30. Lunenburg County	5,617	125,544
31. Martinsville city	8,711	124,014
32. Mecklenburg County	16,085	296,886
33. Northampton County	7,840	138,365
34. Northumberland County	7,034	130,253
35. Norton city	2,418	39,130
36. Patrick County	8,716	189,654
37. Petersburg city	24,243	327,667
38. Pittsylvania County	32,875	710,603
39. Portsmouth city	61,326	1,065,812

40. Prince Edward County	12,678	244,110
41. Prince George County	16,761	364,411
42. Pulaski County	21,882	399,231
43. Richmond County	3,542	93,946
44. Russell County	16,018	267,667
45. Scott County	10,106	227,280
46. Smyth County	18,032	327,007
47. Surry County	4,320	88,031
48. Sussex County	5,800	96,789
49. Tazewell County	25,935	380,278
50. Washington County	27,824	648,096
51. Westmoreland County	10,009	215,159
52. Williamsburg city	8,766	159,630
53. Wise County	23,997	309,819
54. Wythe County	17,797	327,592
Total	749,594	13,751,875
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	5.5%	

*Data extracted from Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment survey (<http://www.bls.gov>) on February 27, 2018.

The State has also requested one county individually. The State agency has supported its request based upon the county having an average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of August 2015 through July 2017. 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 table, the unemployment rate for the county was 5.7 percent during the selected time period.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data August 2015 – July 2017		
	Unemployment	Labor Force
Page County	15,772	277,497
Unemployment Rate	5.7%	

*Data extracted from Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment survey (<http://www.bls.gov>) on February 27, 2018.

9. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) approves the Virginia State agency's request to waive the ABAWD time limit in the requested 55 areas because the areas 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 and supporting documentation.
- 12. Implementation date and expiration date:** The waiver is effective May 1, 2018 through April 30, 2019.
- 13. Limitation if any on Regional Office approval of like requests:** The waiver is limited to the Virginia State agency.
- 14. Date of National Office action:** **MAR 23 2018**
- 15. Date of State agency's request:** February 20, 2018
- 16. Date of Regional Office transmittal of request:** February 20, 2018
- 17. State agency contact:**
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- 18. FNS Regional Contact:**
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