



United States Department of Agriculture

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Food and
Nutrition
Service

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Center

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Alexandria
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Lennox Zamore
Administrator
Division of Family Assistance
U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Human Services
1303 Hospital Ground, Suite 1
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802

RE: SNAP – Virgin Islands Request to Waive Able-bodied Adults without
Dependents Time Limit - Extension - Approval

Dear Mr. Zamore:

This is in response to the Virgin Islands Department of Human Services' request for an extension of its waiver to exempt able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD) throughout the territory from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) time limit at 7 CFR 273.24.

The Virgin Islands State agency has requested an extension of its current territory-wide waiver of the ABAWD time limit. The Virgin Islands' current waiver is effective through September 30, 2015. The Virgin Islands has supported its extension request based upon the territory's qualification for extended unemployment benefits, a criterion for waiver approval provided by SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 273.24. The territory has provided a copy of the Department of Labor's Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) trigger notice 2013-49, effective December 22, 2013, showing that the Virgin Islands qualified for EUC, an extended unemployment benefit program. Following longstanding Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) policy, States and territories can qualify for a 12-month Statewide waiver for up to 12 months after the trigger date. Based upon EUC trigger notice 2013-49, the Virgin Islands is eligible for a territory-wide ABAWD time limit waiver from December 2014 through December 2015, which would extend the territory's current ABAWD time limit waiver by 3 months.

FNS is approving the Virgin Islands' request to extend its waiver of the ABAWD time limit by 3 months, from October 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015. Please note that FNS has assigned waiver number 2150046 to this extension approval for tracking purposes. The detailed waiver response is attached. If you have any questions, please contact Alyssa Hayes at Alyssa.Hayes@fns.usda.gov.

Sincerely,

Sasha Gersten-Paal
Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Attachment

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver Serial Number:** 2150046
2. **Type of Request:** Extension
3. **Primary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
4. **State:** The Virgin Islands
5. **Region:** Mid-Atlantic
6. **Regulatory Requirement:** Federal 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 requirements. Regulations at 7 CFR 273.24(a) provide that fulfilling the work requirement means: working 20 hours or more per week, averaged monthly; participating in and complying with the requirements of a work program or a workfare program for at least 20 hours per week; or any combination of working and participating in a work program for a total of 20 hours per week.

Under SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 273.24(f)(2)(ii), a State can qualify for a 12-month statewide waiver of the ABAWD time limit if the Department of Labor's Unemployment Insurance Service determines that the State qualifies for extended unemployment benefits. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) can approve a waiver if the State qualifies for extended benefits, regardless of whether the State has elected the option to offer the benefit itself. States that meet the extended benefit criteria can qualify for a 12-month statewide ABAWD waiver up to 12 months after the trigger date.

7. **Description of proposed alternative procedures:** The Virgin Islands is requesting to waive the ABAWD time limit at 7 CFR 273.24 from October 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015.
8. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** FNS is approving the Virgin Islands State agency's request to waive the ABAWD time limit because the territory meets the requirements for approval provided at 7 CFR 273.24(f)(2)(ii). The Virgin Islands qualified for extended unemployment benefits through the Department of Labor's Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) trigger notice 2013-49, effective December 22, 2013.
9. **Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** This waiver is approved pursuant to 7 CFR 273.24(f)(1)(ii).

10. **Conditions and reasons:** None.
11. **Information required for extension:** To receive an extension the State agency must provide FNS with a formal waiver request supported by data or other information as described in 7 CFR 273.24(f). If the territory requests extension based upon unemployment rates, it must provide FNS with all supporting documentation, including data spreadsheets.
12. **Expiration date:** This waiver extension is effective October 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015.
13. **Limitation, if any, on regional office approval of like requests:** This waiver is limited to the Virgin Islands Department of Human Services.
14. **Date of national office action:**
15. **Date of State agency's request:** January 21, 2015
16. **Date of regional office transmittal of request:** January 26, 2015
17. **Implementation date (notify FNS if actual date differs):** October 1, 2015
18. **State agency contact:**
Lennox Zamore
Lennox.Zamore@dhs.vi.gov
(340) 715-6921
19. **FNS regional contact:**
Alyssa Hayes
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(609) 259-5055