



SEP 30 2015

Food and
Nutrition
Service

Park Office
Center

3101 Park
Center Drive
Alexandria
VA 22302

Ms. Patricia Duda
Director
Agency of Human Services
Vermont Department for Children and Families
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, Vermont 23219-2901

RE: SNAP – Vermont Request to Waive Able-bodied Adults without
Dependents Time Limit – Extension and Modification – Approval

Dear Ms. Duda:

This is in response to the Vermont Department for Children and Families' request to extend and modify waiver number 2130033, which would allow Vermont to exempt able-bodied adults without dependents in 30 areas from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program time limit at 7 CFR 273.24. The requested areas include:

Barton town	Derby town	Lowell town
Belvidere town	Dover town	Newport city
Bloomfield town	East Haven town	Norton town
Bridgewater town	Eden town	Pittsfield town
Brighton town	Ferdinand town	Searsburg town
Brunswick town	Granby town	Sheffield town
Burke town	Irasburg town	Sutton town
Charleston town	Jay town	Victory town
Concord town	Killington town	Warren's Gore
Coventry town	Lemington town	Westmore town

The Bureau of Labor Statistics data provided by the State agency supports waiver approval for the requested areas. Therefore, the Food and Nutrition Service is approving Vermont to waive the time limit in all 30 requested areas for a 12-month period, effective October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016. The detailed waiver response is attached. If you have any questions, please contact Kevin Pasquaretta at Kevin.Pasquaretta@fns.usda.gov.

Sincerely,

Sasha Gersten-Paal
Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Attachment

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver Serial Number:** 2130033
2. **Type of Request:** Extension and Modification
3. **Primary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
4. **State:** Vermont
5. **Region:** Northeast
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 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. 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 20 hours per week; any combination of working and participating in a work program for a total of 20 hours per week; or participating in and complying with a workfare program.

Regulations at 7 CFR 273.24(f) also provide that, upon the request of a State agency, the Secretary may waive the applicability of the above provision 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.

7. **Description of proposed alternative procedures:** The Vermont Department for Children and Families has requested to waive the ABAWD time limit at 7 CFR 273.24 in 30 areas of the State from October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016.

The Vermont State agency has supported its request to waive the time limit in 24 towns based upon the combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of May 2013 through April 2015. The combined area is composed of the following 24 towns in Southern Vermont: Barton, Belvidere, Bloomfield, Brighton, Brunswick, Burke, Charleston, Concord, Coventry, Derby, East Haven, Eden, Ferdinand, Granby, Irasburg, Lemington, Lowell, Newport City, Norton, Sheffield, Sutton, Victory, Warren's Gore, and Westmore. During the 24-month period of May 2013 through April 2015 the national average unemployment rate was 6.4 percent; 20 percent above this is 7.7 percent.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data May 2013 – April 2015*		
Town	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total
Barton	3,064	31,696
Belvidere	324	4,441
Bloomfield	131	2,104
Brighton	1,045	13,266
Brunswick	139	1,417
Burke	1,475	20,733
Charleston	865	15,250
Concord	1,140	14,107
Coventry	555	13,493
Derby	3,146	56,041
East Haven	270	3,296
Eden	1,620	17,870
Ferdinand	-	316
Granby	105	967
Irasburg	792	15,440
Lemington	116	785
Lowell	775	10,847
Newport City	5,147	45,216
Norton	303	1,486
Sheffield	638	7,941
Sutton	591	11,100
Victory	15	591
Warren's Gore	-	96
Westmore	160	4,493
Combine Area Total	22,416	292,992
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	7.7%	
20% Above National Average Threshold	7.7%	

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on September 15, 2015

The State agency has supported its request to waive the time limit in the towns of Dover and Searsburg based upon the combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate that exceeds 20 percent of the national average for May 2013 through April 2015. Both towns are located in the Brattleboro Labor Market Area.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data May 2013 – April 2015*		
Town	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total
Dover	1,257	15,764
Searsburg	116	1,524
Combine Area Total	1,373	17,288
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	7.9%	
20% Above National Average Threshold	7.7%	

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on September 15, 2015

The State agency has supported its request to waive the time limit in the contiguous towns of Pittsfield, Killington, and Bridgewater based upon the combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate that exceeds 20 percent of the national average for a the 24-month period of January 2013 through December 2014.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data January 2013 – December 2014*		
Town	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total
Pittsfield	630	7,786
Killington	1,427	12,978
Bridgewater	766	13,960
Combine Area Total	2,823	34,724
Group Unemployment Rate	8.1%	
20% Above National Average Threshold	8.1%	

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on September 15, 2015

Lastly, the State agency supported its request to waive the time limit in Jay town based on the area having a recent 3-month average unemployment rate over 10 percent for the period of February 2015 through April 2015.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data February 2015 – April 2015*		
Town	Unemployed Total	Labor Force Total
Jay	116	940
Unemployment Rate	12.3%	

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on September 15, 2015

8. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is approving the State Agency's request to waive the ABAWD time limit in all 30 requested areas because the areas meet the requirements for approval provided at 7 CFR 273.24(f) and relevant FNS guidance.
9. **Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** This waiver is approved pursuant to 7 CFR 273.24(f).
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 State requests extension based upon unemployment rates, it must provide FNS with all supporting documentation, including data spreadsheets.
12. **Expiration date:** This waiver is effective from October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016.
13. **Limitation, if any, on regional office approval of like requests:** This waiver is limited to the Vermont State agency.
14. **Date of national office action:** SEP 30 2015
15. **Date of State agency's request:** August 31, 2015
16. **Date of regional office transmittal of request:**
17. **Implementation date (notify FNS if actual date differs):** October 1, 2015
18. **State agency contact:**
Pat Duda
Pat.Duda@vermont.gov
(802) 769-6439
19. **FNS regional contact:**
Kevin Pasquaretta
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(617) 565-5402