



Food and
Nutrition
Service

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Date: September 4, 2019

Sean P. Brown
Deputy Commissioner
Department for Children and Families
Division of Economic Services
280 State Drive
Waterbury, Vermont 05671

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – Vermont Request to Waive
Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents Time Limit – Approval**

Dear Mr. Brown:

This is in response to the Vermont State agency's July 9, 2019, request to waive the SNAP time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents in 17 areas from October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020.

The State agency's request meet the requirements for approval provided at 7 CFR 273.24(f) and relevant Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) guidance. Therefore, FNS is approving the State to waive the time limit in the area for a 12-month period, as requested. The attached waiver response includes the approved areas, the supporting evidence used, and the conditions of approval. Please contact your FNS Regional Office with any questions.

As you may be aware, FNS has proposed regulations that would strengthen the standards by which areas can qualify for these waivers so that the statutory ABAWD work requirement is applied more broadly. The rule, once finalized, could change the qualifying areas and approval period for this waiver.

FNS also reminds the State agency that it must measure the 3-year period and track ABAWDs on a continuous basis, even in areas under a waiver. The State must continue tracking so that the State will be ready to transition off of the waiver when it expires and reintroduce the time limit.

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

Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) Waiver Response

- 1. Serial Number:** 2130033
- 2. Request Type:** Extension and amendment
- 3. Statutory Citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
- 4. Regulatory Citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
- 5. State:** Vermont
- 6. Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Region:** Northeast
- 7. Requirement:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and regulations at 7 CFR 273.24 provide that no individual 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. Requested Area(s) and Support:** The Vermont State agency has requested to waive the ABAWD time limit in 17 cities and towns from October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020. The State agency has supported its request based upon the selected areas having average unemployment rates at least 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of February 2017 through January 2019. The State has considered some towns individually and combined others that are contiguous. During this time period the national average unemployment rate was 4.1 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 4.9 percent. As shown in the following tables, the requested areas' unemployment rates for the selected time period reached at least 4.9 percent.

Table 1: Individual Towns (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, February 2017 through January 2019)

Individual Towns	Unemployment Rate
1. Concord Town	5.0%
2. Dover Town	5.22%
3. Sutton Town	5.9%
4. Wells Town	5.3%
Data extracted from http://www.bls.gov on July 16, 2019	

Table 2: Combined Area 1 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, February 2017 through January 2019)

Towns
1. Barton town
2. Brighton town
3. Charleston town
4. Coventry town
5. Derby town
6. Glover town
7. Irasburg town
8. Newport city
9. Newport town
10. Troy town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 4.9%

Table 3: Combined Area 1 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data February 2017 through January 2019)

Towns
1. Eden town
2. Johnson town
3. Montgomery town
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 4.9%

- 9. FNS Action and Justification:** FNS is approving the State agency to waive the ABAWD time limit as requested. The State agency's request meets the requirements for approval provided at 7 CFR 273.24(f) and relevant FNS guidance.
- 10. Authority:** The waiver is approved pursuant to section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and 7 CFR 273.24(f).
- 11. Implementation Date:** October 1, 2019
- 12. Expiration Date:** September 30, 2020
- 13. Information Required for Amendment or 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.
- 14. State Agency Contact Information:**
 Name: Pat Duda
 Phone Number: (802) 241-0603
 Email: Pat.Duda@vermont.gov
- 15. FNS Regional Office Contact Information:**
 Name: Ashley Krebs
 Phone Number: (617) 565-1612
 Email: Ashley.Krebs@fns.usda.gov