



Food and
Nutrition
Service

Park Office
Center

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Center Drive
Alexandria
VA 22302

DEC 12 2017

Ms. Babette Roberts
Director, Community Services Division
Department of Social and Health Services
State of Washington
Post Office Box 45440
Olympia, Washington 98504

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

Dear Ms. Roberts:

This is in response to the Washington State agency's request to waive the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents in 38 counties and one Native American reservation area 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 Washington to waive the time limit in the 38 contiguous counties and the reservation area for the requested 12-month period. Please note that this waiver also applies to all other reservation areas in the State, since their geographic boundaries lie within the 38 approved counties. The approval amends and extends waiver number 2150021.

The attached waiver response includes the approved areas, the supporting evidence used, and the conditions of approval. If you have any questions please contact Shahdy Monemzadeh at Shahdy.Monemzadeh@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

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 2150022
2. **Type of request:** 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:** Washington
6. **Region:** Western
7. **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 Washington State agency has requested to waive the ABAWD time limit in 38 contiguous counties and one Native American reservation area from January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018. The State agency has grouped 38 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 agency has supported its request for one reservation area based upon the area having an average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for a recent 24-month period. The State agency selected the same 24-month period – July 2015 through June 2017 – for the 38 counties and the reservation area. During this time period the national average unemployment rate was 4.8 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 5.8 percent. As detailed in the following tables, the unemployment rates for the requested areas reached or exceeded 6.0 percent during the selected time period.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data July 2015 – June 2017*		
County	Unemployment	Labor Force
1. Adams	14,011	209,611
2. Asotin	11,534	239,210
3. Benton	143,639	2,258,740
4. Chelan	58,848	1,047,200
5. Clallam	50,603	656,172
6. Clark	317,266	5,275,420
7. Columbia	2,688	41,490
8. Cowlitz	77,597	1,072,138
9. Douglas	32,829	493,503
10. Ferry	6,416	60,451
11. Franklin	70,348	954,221
12. Garfield	1,277	22,005
13. Grant	77,255	1,073,695
14. Grays Harbor	55,195	654,929
15. Island	45,580	784,683
16. Jefferson	19,103	275,224
17. Kitsap	155,372	2,821,483
18. Kittitas	30,286	515,917
19. Klickitat	15,959	232,313
20. Lewis	60,037	767,877
21. Lincoln	6,519	117,296
22. Mason	42,950	562,857
23. Okanogan	35,966	514,299
24. Pacific	16,102	198,763
25. Pend Oreille	9,991	112,611
26. Pierce	589,859	9,706,591
27. San Juan	8,737	189,179
28. Skagit	90,419	1,390,977
29. Skamania	8,533	121,540
30. Snohomish	422,292	9,875,413
31. Spokane	345,526	5,598,986
32. Stevens	35,718	428,092
33. Thurston	175,911	3,123,467
34. Wahkiakum	2,686	31,053
35. Walla Walla	37,967	689,574
36. Whatcom	148,375	2,573,537
37. Whitman	27,115	554,698
38. Yakima	235,074	3,004,092
Total	3,485,583	58,249,307
Combined Area Unemployment Rate	6.0%	

*Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on December 4, 2017

American Community Survey and Bureau of Labor Statistics Data July 2015-June 2017**	
Reservation Area	Unemployment Rate
Muckleshoot Reservation	9.0%

**Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> and <http://factfinder.census.gov> on December 4, 2017

- 10. Action and reason for approval or denial:** The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is approving the Washington State agency's request to waive the ABAWD time limit in the 38 counties and one reservation area because it meets the requirements for approval provided at 7 CFR 273.24(f) and relevant FNS guidance.
- 11. 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).
- 12. 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.
- 13. Implementation date and expiration date:** The waiver is effective January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018.
- 14. Limitation if any on regional office approval of like requests:** The waiver is limited to the Washington State agency.
- 15. Date of national office action:** DEC 12 2017
- 16. Date of State agency's request:** October 20, 2017
- 17. Date of regional office transmittal of request:** October 20, 2017
- 18. State agency contact:**
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19. FNS regional contact:

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