

Waiver Request

1. Waiver serial number:

2. Type of request: Initial

3. Primary regulation citations: 7 CFR 273.10(f)(1)

4. Secondary regulation citation, if any: 273.12(a)(5)(B)

5. State: New Hampshire

6. Region: Northeast (NERO)

7. Regulatory requirements: 7CFR 273.10(f)(1) Determining household eligibility and benefits.
273.12(a)(5)(B) Reporting Requirements

273.10(f)(1)

(1) Households in which all adult members are elderly or disabled. The State agency may certify for up to 24 months households in which all adult members are elderly or disabled. The State agency must have at least one contact with each household every 12 months. The State agency may use any method it chooses for this contact.

273.12(a)(5)(B)

(B) Submission of periodic reports by non-exempt households. Households that are certified for longer than 6 months, except those households described in §273.12(a)(5)(iii)(A), must file a periodic report between 4 months and 6 months, as required by the State agency. Households in which all adult members are elderly or have a disability with no earned income and are certified for periods lasting between 13 months and 24 months must file a periodic report once a year. In selecting a due date for the periodic report, the State agency must provide itself sufficient time to process reports so that households that have reported changes that will reduce or terminate benefits will receive adequate notice of action on the report in the first month of the new reporting period.

8. Proposed alternative procedures: The State agency has notified the Food and Nutrition Service that it would like to exercise its option to extend certification periods from 6 months for simplified reporters and ABAWDS and 12 months for elderly and disabled households to 12-months and 24-months respectively. The State's current reporting structure will remain in place. This population moving from 12 to 24 months are change reporters

The elderly or disabled population with no earned income will continue to be change reporters. As a result of lengthening the certification periods, this group of households will have an interim reporting requirement. The state proposes to waive this reporting requirement for households who have interim reports due between March 18, 2020 and July 31, 2020. During that time period, the state would waive the requirement of an interim report for any household that is due to provide one between March 18th and July 31st 2020 until the household's next recertification. At the time of the recertification, the household would once again be subject to the interim reporting requirements.

Interim reporting requirements would be required of all elderly or disabled households with no earned income effective August 1, 2020.

Similarly, all simplified reporting households, will have a periodic reporting requirement. The state proposes to waive this reporting requirement for households who have periodic reports due between March 18, 2020 and July 31, 2020. During that time period, the state would waive the requirement of an interim report for any household

that is due to provide one between March 18th and July 31st 2020 until the household's next recertification. At the time of the recertification, the household would once again be subject to the periodic reporting requirements.

Periodic reporting requirements would be required of simplified reporters effective August 1, 2020.

9. Justification for Request: The State believes this waiver request is justified pursuant to §272.3(c)(1)(i) and (ii), which allows FNS to approve waivers it determines appropriate the when specific regulatory provision cannot be implemented due to extraordinary temporary situations and when approval of the waiver would result in a more effective and efficient administration of the program.

The Coronavirus pandemic continues to spread across the country and CDC and other national health experts are advising social distancing, self-isolation and in some cases, quarantine, as the best ways to contain and stop the virus. The District Offices will not be open except to households who walk in and there are protocols in place which may lead to the inability of an applicant to be interviewed if and when the applicant arrives. The State is also planning for the absence of staff as the virus spreads and is trying to minimize the contact between clients and the District Offices in order protect the health of both households and eligibility workers, due to the spread of the virus.

10. Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations: New Hampshire anticipates that the impact of this waiver will be to ease the stress for households who are anxious about losing benefits. It will also allow continuation of benefits in the event that the pandemic continues to spread, households become more isolated and workers are unable to go to work due to their own illness or need to care for another family member who may be sick.

11. Proposed Implementation: The State proposes to implement this waiver on March 20, 2020. New Hampshire proposes to apply this waiver to individuals who are required to provide periodic reports between March 18, 2020 and July 31, 2020.

13. Proposed quality control review procedures: No special Quality Control procedures will be required.

14. Signature and title of requesting official:


Name: Debra Sorli
Title: Bureau Chief, Bureau of Family Assistance

15. Date of request: March 25, 2020

16. State Agency Staff Contacts:

Name: Maureen Burke and/or Laurie Green

Phone: 603-271-9660 and/or 603-271-9287

E-mail: Maureen.burke@dhhs.nh.gov and/or laurie.green@dhhs.nh.gov

Regional Office Contact: *(to be completed by FNS Regional Office)*