

STATE WAIVER REQUEST

- 1. Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):**
- 2. Type of request:** Initial
- 3. Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.10(f)(5); 7 CFR 273.12(a)(5)(iii)(B), 7 CFR 273.14(a)
- 4. State:** Oklahoma
- 5. Region:** Southwest
- 6. Regulatory requirements:** 7 CFR 273.10(f)(5) states 'State agencies may lengthen a household's current certification period once it is established, as long as the total months of the certification period do not exceed 24 months for households in which all adult members are elderly or disabled, or 12 months for other households. If the State agency extends a household's certification period, it must advise the household of the new certification ending date with a notice containing the same information as the notice of eligibility set forth in paragraph (g)(1)(i)(A) of this section.

7 CFR 273.12(a)(iii)(5)(B) states '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 and 6 months, as required by the State Agency. Households in which all adult household members are elderly or disabled with no earned income and are certified for periods lasting between 13 months and 24 months must file a periodic report once a year.

7 CFR 273.14(a) states 'No household may participate beyond the expiration of the certification period assigned in accordance with 273.10(f) without a determination of eligibility for a new period. ;
- 7. Description of alternative procedures:** The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) is requesting a waiver that will allow for a temporary, 3-month extension of certification beyond 12 or 24 months for any household that is subject to a recertification. Additionally, any periodic report forms otherwise due within the 3-month waiver period would be waived. Certification periods will be automatically extended by 3 months to ensure that case closures do not occur because of the client's inability to go into a County office or otherwise submit paperwork to recertify or meet periodic report requirements. Periodic report forms will not be issued nor required to be sent back prior to this 3-month period.

Due to this 3-month extension, all cases impacted by the extended certification period will be required to complete a recertification by the end of month three as long as a recertification was due prior to or by the 3rd month. All households who are still within their original certification period but would have otherwise been required to file a periodic report during the waiver period will be required to complete a periodic report by the end of month 3 and will maintain their previous certification period.

Oklahoma will maintain mandatory reporting requirements that take place between certification periods. However, the households will not be required to file a periodic report or recertification nor be subject to those additional reporting requirements during this 3 month waiver period.
- 8. Justification for request:** As of March 19, 2020, there are 44 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Oklahoma. On March 15, 2020, Governor Kevin Stitt issued Executive Order No.2020-07 and 2020-08, Declaration of a State of Emergency to Coordinate Response and Protective Actions to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19. On March 13,

2020 President Donald Trump declared a national state of emergency due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus. With the current health crisis, Oklahoma is seeing an increase in SNAP applications as many people are currently out of work or their hours have been reduced with business shutting down or closing early. With this waiver, Oklahoma will ensure households continue to receive their SNAP benefits timely with the increase demand for SNAP benefits.

This request is justified pursuant to 7 CFR 272.3(c)(1)(ii) which permits FNS to authorize waivers that result in a more effective and efficient administration of the program.

9. Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations: Oklahoma believes this waiver will prevent benefits from ending during the COVID-19 health crisis.

10. Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affection portion (if applicable): As of March 18, 2020 Oklahoma has 570,316 total SNAP recipients comprised of 324,304 adults and 246,012 children. There are 56,207 recipients over the age of 60. They represent 9.9% of our total recipients and 17.3% of our adult recipients. Oklahoma currently has 270,268 active SNAP cases.

11. Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:

OKDHS will implement supplemental benefits immediately upon approval of this waiver.

OKDHS will utilize media press releases along with social media and our Agency website to provide awareness to recipients and venders of SNAP of the approved waiver.

12. Proposed quality control review procedures: No special QC procedures are required for cases subject to the provisions of this waiver. Cases should be reviewed using standard review procedures contained in the FNS 310 Handbook..

13. State agency submitting waiver request and State contact person:

The State agency submitting this waiver request is the Oklahoma Department of Human Services. The state agency contact person is Susan Baker, Program Field Representative, SNAP-LIHEAP Section, Adult and Family Services.

14. Signature and title of requesting official:



Patrick Klein
Adult and Family Services Director
Patrick.Klein@okdhs.org

15. Date of request: March 19, 2020

16. State agency staff contact (name/email/telephone):

Susan Baker
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17. Regional office contact person *(to be completed by FNS regional office):*

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