

**STATE WAIVER REQUEST**  
**Expedite Applications**

1. **Type of request:** Initial
2. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.2(i) [7 USC 2020(e)(9)]
3. **State:** Arizona
4. **Region:** SWRO
5. **Regulatory requirements:** In accordance with 7 CFR 273.2(i) establish the expedited processing standards including households eligible for expedited processing, interview and verification requirements.
6. **Description of alternative procedures:** Arizona is operating under a State of Emergency declared by Arizona's Governor, Douglas Ducey's statewide Declaration of emergency issued on March 11, 2020 due to impacts of COVID-19. On March 13, 2020, President Trump declared "that the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States constitutes a national emergency" retroactive to March 1, 2020. 235 of these cases are in Arizona with 30,000 additional cases in the United States. Since the President's Emergency Proclamation Arizona has seen a significant increase in the number of individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19. Extended school closures have been mandated for all school districts in Arizona on March 16, 2020. Arizona Department of Economic Security is experiencing significant staffing deficiencies as the workers struggle to balance care for their children and working to serve SNAP applicants/recipients.

In an effort to provide much needed access to food benefits in the most expedient manner possible, all new applications for assistance will be treated as expedited cases regardless of whether or not the household meets the entitlement provisions of 7 CFR 273.2(i)(1)(i)-(iii).

Verifications will be handled in accordance with 7 CFR 273.2(i)(4) which requires the verification of identity. Reasonable efforts will be made to verify additional elements of eligibility prior to benefit issuance but will not delay the issuance of benefits.

7. **Justification for request:** This request is justified pursuant to 7 CFR 272.3(c)(1)(iii) which permits FNS to authorize waivers when "Unique geographic or climatic conditions within State preclude effective implementation of the specific regulatory provision and require an alternate procedure." The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant disruptions in the administration of SNAP offices throughout the state of Arizona. Additionally, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (HR6201) which permits broad authority for the USDA to approve adjustments in

“issuance methods and application and reporting requirement under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008”.

8. **Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:** Arizona averages approximately 41,220 new applications each month.
9. **Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affection portion (if applicable):** N/A
10. **Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:**  
This waiver would be implemented immediately upon approval and would remain in effect for 60 days or until the Arizona State of Emergency is lifted, whichever is later.
11. **Proposed quality control review procedures:** The Expedited processed case will not require any special quality control procedures. Cases granted benefits using the COVID Expedited process will be included in the universe of Active cases subject to selection according the AZ SNAP QC Sampling Plan. Cases will be reviewed using standard review procedures in the FNS Handbook 310.

**12. Signature and title of requesting official:**

Signature



Name:

Jeffrey W. Morley

Title:

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AZ Department of Economic Security

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**13. Date of request: March 25, 2020**

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

Name:

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Title:

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**15. Regional office contact person (to be completed by FNS regional office):**