

## STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):** 2150046
2. **Type of request:** Initial
3. **Statutory citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
4. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
5. **State:** Virgin Islands
6. **Region:** Northeast Region
7. **Regulatory requirements:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, provides 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) also provides 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. **Description of alternative procedures:** The U.S. Virgin Islands is requesting to exempt able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) on the entire U.S. territory from the SNAP time limit at 7 CFR 273.24.
9. **Justification for request:** Under SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 273.24(f)(2), areas may qualify for an ABAWD time limit waiver if they have insufficient jobs. To support this claim, states may submit evidence that an area has an average unemployment rate for a 24-month time period that is at least 20 percent above the national average for the same 24-month period. 7 CFR 273.24(f)(6) provides that States may define areas to be waived.

The U.S. Virgin Islands is eligible for a waiver based on the island's average unemployment rate for the 24-month period of January 2022 through December 2023. The national average unemployment rate for this 24-month period was 3.6 percent; 20 percent above this was 4.4 percent. The territory's unemployment rate for this period was 4.8 percent. These unemployment rates are calculated from data

obtained from the Virgin Islands Department of Labor, since the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics does not collect data for this territory.<sup>1</sup>

<b>Virgin Islands Department of Labor Statistics Unemployment Data January 2022 through December 2023</b>			
	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Labor Force</b>	<b>Unemployment Rate</b>
Virgin Islands	49,021	1,012,318	<b>4.8%</b>
<b>20% Above National Average Threshold</b>	<b>4.4%</b>		

- 10. Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:** This waiver will provide consistency for state operations.
- 11. Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affection portion (if applicable):** This waiver affects the entire territory.
- 12. Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:**  
The U.S. Virgin Islands is requesting a one-year waiver from January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025.
- 13. Proposed quality control review procedures:** There are no quality control procedures involved.
- 14. State agency submitting waiver request and State contact person:**
- 15. Signature and title of requesting official:**

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Title:

Email for transmission of response:

- 16. Date of request:**
- 17. State agency staff contact (name/email/telephone):**
- 18. Regional office contact person (to be completed by FNS regional office):**

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<sup>1</sup> The data used to support this request were downloaded from the Virgin Islands Department of Labor website: <https://www.vidol.gov/labor-statistics/>