

GEORGIA WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):**
2. **Type of request:** Initial
3. **Regulatory citation:** 7CFR 273.12(a)(1)(i) through (viii); 7 CFR 273.12(c)
4. **State:** Georgia
5. **Region:** SERO
6. **Regulatory requirements:** Current regulations at 7 CFR 273.12(a)(1)(i) through (viii) require households to report the following changes:

- A change of more than \$100 in the amount of unearned income, except changes relating to public assistance (PA) or general assistance (GA)
- All changes in household composition
- Changes in residence and the resulting changes in shelter costs,
- Acquisition of a licensed vehicle that is not fully excludable under §273.8.
- Changes in liquid resources such as cash, stocks, bonds, and bank accounts that reach or exceed the resource limits as described in §273.8 (b)
- Changes in the legal obligation to pay child support.
- For able-bodied adults subject to the time limit of §273.24, any changes in work hours that bring an individual below 20 hours per week, averaged monthly, as defined in §273.24(a)(1)(i).
- Whenever a member of the household wins substantial lottery or gambling winnings in accordance with §273.11(r).

Federal regulations at 273.12(c) states that the State agency shall take prompt action on all changes to determine if the change affects the household's eligibility or allotment.

7. **Proposed alternative procedures:** Under the State's current reporting options, all households are subject to simplified reporting requirements. Households are certified for a 6-month and 12-month period and are required to report the following:
 - When gross monthly income exceeds 130 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for the household size.
 - When an ABAWD begins to work less than 20 hours a week, averaged 80 hours per month.
 - Whenever a member of the household wins substantial lottery or gambling winnings in accordance with §273.11(r).

The State currently acts on the following changes during the certification period:

- All address changes and any potential shelter cost changes reported by the AU to the agency.
- All changes reported by the household to the eligibility worker for the purpose of updating the Food Stamp case.
- Changes processed in the TANF and Medicaid Programs that automatically update the Food Stamp case.
- Changes reported by the Social Services Program to the eligibility worker.
- Changes reported by the household that the household or a household member has won substantial lottery or gambling winnings in the amount of \$3500 or more.
- A household member is identified as a fleeing felon or probation or parole violator.
- Information received through Interfaces and data matches from Social Security (SDX, BENDEX) and the related Gateway Alerts.
- ABAWD Reports and the related Gateway Alerts.
- Gateway Alerts that a child in the AU has turned age 18

The State is requesting to act on these reported changes at the next certification or recertification for benefits. Currently, the State acts on these changes within 10 days of report if reported during the certification period. The state is requesting to act on these changes at the next recertification if the report is received during the certification period.

8. Justification for request: As of March 22, 2020, the Georgia Department of Public Health reports there are 600 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 23 deaths in Georgia.

With the growing number of cases in Georgia, there is a need for social distancing to prevent the spread of the virus. All social events throughout the state such as school activities, athletic events, church services and other social events have been cancelled in the state. This virus has caused many agencies and companies to shut down, and the state is closing its county offices to the public to limit the spread of COVID-19 and to protect both staff and the public.

The growing number of businesses and schools closing has caused a significant increase in the number of SNAP applications submitted online, as households have access to the Gateway system to complete applications and recertifications. Due to the large increase in SNAP applications received, the Customer Contact Center (CCC) staff are needed to help customers complete online and telephonic applications. The state will focus its effort on processing applications as the volume of online applications continue to increase due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Temporarily waiving the requirement to act on changes reported during the certification period will help the state to focus its attention on processing applications and recertifications in a timely manner

9. **Caseload information, including percent of caseload and description of population expected to be affected by this waiver:** As of February 2020, Georgia's SNAP caseload was 601,075 cases. This waiver will include SNAP applicants and recipients in all 159 counties of the state.
10. **Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:** This waiver will ensure SNAP applicants and recipients continue to receive benefits and will allow timely processing of SNAP cases to ensure program access continues in a timely manner.
11. **Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed (please indicate if the waiver approval is needed to make system adjustments):** This waiver will be implemented immediately upon approval from the Food and Nutrition Service.
12. **Proposed quality control review procedures:** The proposal does not affect quality control sampling or review procedures. Cases will be reviewed using the standard review procedures contained in the FNS Handbook 310.
13. **Name, title, and email of requesting official:**
- Name:** Jon M. Anderson
- Title:** Chief Deputy Division Director, Office of Family Independence
- Email:** Jon.Anderson@dhs.ga.gov
14. **Date of request:** March 23, 2020
15. **State agency staff contact:**
- Name:** Kimberlin Donald
- Title:** SNAP Director
- Email:** Kimberlin.Donald@dhs.ga.gov
16. **Regional Office contact person (to be completed by FNS regional office):**