

STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):**
2. **Type of request:** New
3. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.12(a)(5)
4. **Secondary regulation citation, if any:**
5. **State:** Michigan
6. **Region:** MWRO
7. **Regulatory requirements:** Regulatory requirements in 7 CFR 273.12(a)(5) requires certain reporting requirements for households while receiving benefits, including submitting an interim report in the middle of the certification period. The counties must act on changes and benefits are adjusted accordingly.
8. **Proposed alternative procedures:** Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS) is seeking to suspend all reporting requirements, including the requirement for Michigan to issue an interim report and for clients to complete an Mid-Certification Report and Semi-Annual Contact report while under a state of emergency, until the next recertification. Changes would be reported, and verifications would be obtained at the next recertification after the emergency ends. Michigan would only act on changes that would result in an increase of the household's benefit during the emergency.
9. **Justification for request:** On January 31, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern as well as Health and Human Services Secretary, Alex M. Azar II, declared a public health emergency for the United States. The Governor of Michigan, Governor Gretchen Whitmer, declared a state of emergency of the entire state of Michigan on March 10, 2020, (Executive Order 2020-04) to protect the well-being of the citizens of Michigan from the dangerous effects of COVID-19. In addition to the state-declared state of emergency, on March 13, 2020, President Trump declared a national state of emergency over the COVID-19 pandemic.

Further, while the number of applications increases, counties will not have the staff capacity to maintain the work and will need to prioritize accordingly. Allowing this exemption will provide needy citizens of Michigan benefits quicker and lessen the strain on county workforce, who were already at capacity.
10. **Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:** This will help prevent exposure of our customers, as well as state and county employees, to COVID-19. Additionally, this waiver will allow county agencies the time to focus on new SNAP applications rather than

processing changes that would decrease clients' benefits and requesting/obtaining documentary or collateral contact verifications. It would also remove the potential of client's benefits terminating for failing to comply with the verification request during the emergency. Further, while the number of applications increases, the current county workforce level to process the work, already strained, will be unable to keep up with the demand.

- 11. Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affection portion (if applicable):** This waiver will apply to all SNAP applicant and recipient households. The number of SNAP recipients as of February 9,2020 was 1,175,901.
- 12. Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:** Immediately upon approval until the month following the month the state of emergency ends.
- 13. Proposed quality control review procedures:** Cases will be reviewed in accordance with this waiver approval.
- 14. State agency submitting waiver request and State contact person:** Michigan Department of Health & Human Services, Dawn M. Sweeney.
- 15. Signature and title of requesting official:**

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- 16. Date of request:** March 22, 2020
- 17. State agency staff contact (name/email/telephone):** Dawn M. Sweeney, 517-243-5560
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- 18. Regional office contact person:** Richard Uthoff, Richard.Uthoff@usda.gov