



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
Tate Reeves, Governor
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
Robert G. Anderson
Executive Director

March 27, 2020

Mr. Eugene Malveaux
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
USDA Southeast Region
61 Forsyth Street, SW Room 8T36
Atlanta, GA 30303-3427

**RE: MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (MDHS) SNAP
COLLECTION SUSPENSION WAIVER REQUEST**

Dear Mr. Malveaux:

Please find enclosed MDHS's waiver request that would allow the State to suspend collections on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) claims due to COVID-19 (coronavirus).

SNAP regulations (7 CFR 273.18(a)) provides that State must establish and collect any claim resulting from the overpayment or trafficking of benefits. Additionally, SNAP regulations (7 CFR 273.18(e)(3)(v)) requires that claim repayments are due no later than thirty (30) days after the date of the initial household notification. MDHS is asking for FNS to allow MDHS to suspend collection of claims for households in the State of Mississippi with established claims not currently subject to collection via the Treasury Offset Program and for households with claims established after the date of waiver implementation.

Our request to suspend claim collection is based on the adverse effects COVID-19 already had for households in the State of Mississippi and these effects are anticipated to continue for some time. Approval of this waiver will provide effected households financial relief from debt repayment during this time.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you have any questions on concerns, please contact Debresha McDonald, Director of Benefit Recovery Unit, at debresha.blaylock@mdhs.ms.gov or at 601-359-4838.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

Debresha Blaylock

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Debresha McDonald

Director of Benefit Recovery Unit

Enclosure

WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Type of Request:** Suspend collections on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) claims that are not subject to collection via the Treasury Offset Program and households with claims established after the date of waiver implementation.
2. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.18(a); 7 CFR 273.18(e)(3)(v)
3. **State:** Mississippi
4. **Region:** Southeast
5. **Regulatory requirements:**
 - a. 7 CFR 273.18(a) - A recipient claim is an amount owed because of benefits that are overpaid or benefits that are trafficked.
 - b. 7 CFR 273.18(e)(3)(v) - The due date or time frame for repayment must be not later than 30 days after the date of the initial written notification or demand letter.
6. **Description of alternative procedures:** Suspend collections on SNAP claims for two (2) months after implementation date of the waiver for all households in the State of Mississippi due to the pandemic of COVID-19 (coronavirus).
7. **Justification for request:** COVID-19 has had an adverse impact on all households in the State of Mississippi. The Governor of Mississippi, Tate Reeves, has signed an Executive Order (Executive Order No. 1463) that provides “the risk of spread of COVID-19 within Mississippi constitutes a public emergency that may result in substantial injury or harm to life, health, and property within Mississippi.” The executive order commands Mississippians to avoid non-essential gatherings of ten (10) people or more. This has caused many businesses to close. As a result of the foregoing, a substantial number of households are unable to earn wages through their employer. Further, individuals that are sick due to the rapidly spreading COVID-19 are unable to earn wages. As these adverse effects of COVID-19 are anticipated to continue for some time, suspending collections of SNAP claims will provide effected households financial relief from debt repayment during this time.
8. **Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:** The State does not anticipate that the waiver will have a negative impact on households remitting payments for SNAP claims or the State agency.
9. **Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affection portion (if applicable):**
10. **Anticipated implementation date and waiver approval period:** Mississippi requests that the implementation date of this waiver be May 1, 2020 and continue through June 30, 2020.

This time period may be shorter if the Center for Disease Control and Prevention determines that the virus is no longer a threat.

11. **Proposed quality control review procedures:** No special quality control procedures will be required.

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



Title: Robert G. Anderson, Executive Director

13. **Date of request:** March 27, 2020

14. **State agency staff contact:** Debresha McDonald, Director of Benefit Recovery Unit, debresha.blaylock@mdhs.ms.gov or at 601-359-4838