



Department of
Job and Family Services

Mike DeWine, Governor

Kimberly Hall, Director

April 16, 2020

Julie Mikkelson, Director
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
USDS, Food and Nutrition Service
77 West Jackson Blvd 20th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604-3507

Dear Ms. Mikkelson:

Attached please find a new waiver request to allow a household member who has good cause for failing to provide a Social Security Number (SSN) to participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for longer than the application month and one additional month. Currently, the State agency may extend the timeframe for an individual to participate in SNAP after having established good cause for failure to provide an SSN for up to an additional three months.

This waiver request is in response to the March 13, 2020, national declaration of emergency due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic as well as the state of emergency declared in Ohio on March 9, 2020. All local Social Security offices were closed to the public for in-person service starting Tuesday, March 17, 2020. Approval of this waiver will help families maintain benefits and protect the lives, safety and health of the citizens of Ohio due to limiting personal contact (social distancing). This will help prevent exposure of our customers, as well as state and county employees, to COVID-19. Additionally, this will allow county agencies to focus only on new SNAP applications as they continue to be received, and not have to terminate individuals for the good cause period ending.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Betsy Suver at Betsy.Suver@jfs.ohio.gov or (614) 425-5859.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Betsy Suver, Chief
Bureau of Cash/Food Policy & Technical Support
Office of Family Assistance
Attachment

30 East Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215
jfs.ohio.gov

STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):**
2. **Type of request:** New
3. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.6 (d)
4. **Secondary regulation citation, if any:**
5. **State:** Ohio
6. **Region:** Midwest Region
7. **Regulatory requirements:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations in 7 CFR 273.6(d) require that households participating or applying for SNAP benefits provide the Social Security Number (SSN) for each household member or apply for one before certification.
8. **Proposed alternative procedures:** The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services will extend the good cause timeframe for failure to provide a Social Security Number (SSN) for individuals participating or applying for SNAP for up to three additional months. This will allow the State agency to grant good cause for up to five months, the month of application plus four additional months.
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, declaring a public health emergency for the United States. The Governor of Ohio, Mike DeWine, declared a state of emergency for the entire state of Ohio on March 9, 2020, (Executive Order 2020-01D) in order to protect the well-being of the citizens of Ohio from COVID-19. In addition to the state-declared emergency, on March 13, 2020, President Trump declared a national state of emergency in response to COVID-19.

All local Social Security offices were closed to the public for in-person service starting Tuesday, March 17, 2020. Approval of this waiver will assist in protecting the lives, safety and health of the citizens of Ohio due to limiting personal contact (social distancing). It will allow county agencies to focus only on new SNAP applications as they continue to be received, and not have to terminate individuals for the good cause period ending. Further, while the number of applications increases, the current workforce level to process the work, already strained, is at risk of becoming unsteady.

10. **Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:** The State agency may extend the timeframe for an individual to participate in SNAP after having established good cause for failure to provide an SSN for up to an additional three months. This waiver will allow the State agency to grant good cause for a total of five months - the month of application plus one month as already provided for by 7 CFR 273.6(d), and three additional months. Approval

