

From: [Jenkins, Bill - FNS](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Buhrig, Catherine](#); [Whorl, Brian](#); [Nelson, Katrina - FNS](#); [Hayes, Alyssa - FNS](#); [Boger, Kelly - FNS](#); [SM.FN.SNAP-PDD-COVID](#); [Gagliardi, David - FNS](#); [Ratchford, Eric - FNS](#); [Jacobson-Brown, Sally - FNS](#)
Subject: RE: COVID-19 PA Adjustment Extensions Approvals - July and August
Date: Thursday, July 23, 2020 4:08:11 PM
Attachments: [20200603-TWW-amendment-to-COVID-disaster-emergency-proclamation.pdf](#)

Dear Tara,

Thank you for your email on July 23, 2020. Your request to extend the following adjustments has been approved through August 31, 2020:

Initial Certification and Recertification Interviews – COV-117
Certification Periods and Adjust Reporting Requirements – COV-004

All terms and conditions outlined within the previously approved adjustments apply. Please note, the evaluation report deadline remains 45 days after the end of the adjustments. Data only needs to be provided once per adjustment, regardless of the duration of the waiver.

As noted in our previous email, FNS will approve extensions beyond August on an extremely limited basis. In order to receive an extension beyond August, a State must have an emergency order that extends into the month in which the State is requesting the adjustment and provide data that demonstrates that the adjustment continues to be warranted given the current circumstances in the State. FNS expects requests include data on substantial increases in new applications in recent months (e.g. July and August for September adjustment), sizable increases in a backlog of case actions or applications, or a significant decrease in staffing capacity due to COVID-19, among other supporting information. States are expected to reasonably adjust to changing circumstances, including caseload growth, and FNS will not approve requests where the data is merely comparable with the State agency's data from non-COVID-19 circumstances in which FNS was working with the State under a corrective action plan. These requests should also include plans to return to a new normal in a short time frame. States must submit these requests by the 10th day the month before the adjustment would take effect with a response due back from FNS to the State by the 15th. Because approvals for adjustments beyond August will be extremely limited, States should make arrangements to ensure they are able to return to their new normal by September 1, 2020.

We stand ready to provide technical assistance and answer any of your questions.

Thank you,
Bill

Bill Jenkins
Branch Chief, SNAP Program Integrity
Mid-Atlantic Regional Office
USDA Food and Nutrition Service



From: Buhrig, Catherine <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, July 23, 2020 2:19 PM
To: Gagliardi, David - FNS <[REDACTED]>; Williams, Tara <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Whorl, Brian <[REDACTED]>; Ratchford, Eric - FNS <[REDACTED]>; Jenkins, Bill - FNS <[REDACTED]>; Dombroski, Patricia - FNS <[REDACTED]>; Limbacher, Diana - FNS <[REDACTED]>; Jacober-Brown, Sally - FNS <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED]; Hayes, Alyssa - FNS <[REDACTED]>; Nelson, Katrina - FNS <[REDACTED]>; Boger, Kelly - FNS <[REDACTED]>; SM.FN.SNAP-PDD-COVID <[REDACTED]>; Berberich, Christine - FNS <[REDACTED]>
Subject: RE: [External] FW: COVID-19 PA July and August Adjustment Extensions

Good afternoon Dave,

Pennsylvania (PA) had submitted and was previously denied for a request for adjustments to extend certification periods for the month of July. Pennsylvania is now seeking approval of that requested waiver. In addition, PA was approved to waive the interview requirements at application and recertification for the month of July but was to implement interviews for error prone cases. PA is requesting that all interviews be waived for the month of July.

PA has mailed interim reports and recertification packets for August. The state will process all renewals and interim reports received for the month of August but is requesting adjustment for those households that do not complete the renewal or interim report. This is requested in order to maintain benefits for households that may be unable to cooperate during the health emergency, ensuring that they continue to receive nutrition assistance, and so that the state can mitigate the churn that can occur when households are terminated. This will assist the state as we begin to process what we anticipate to be rising numbers of applications due to the ending of the FPUC benefit. PA also requests a waiver of the interview requirement at application and renewal for the month of August.

We have previously provided the state's emergency order that continues through September. Please let me know if you need me to resend.

Thank you,

Cathy Buhrig, MS, MPA | Director, Bureau of Policy
PRONOUNS: *She/her/hers*
Department of Human Services | Office of Income Maintenance
Room 427 Health & Welfare Building | Hbg PA 17120
[REDACTED]
www.dhs.pa.gov

Apply for or renew health and human services benefits online at www.compass.state.pa.us.

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From: Gagliardi, David - FNS <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 1:42 PM
To: Williams, Tara <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Buhrig, Catherine <[REDACTED]>; Whorl, Brian <[REDACTED]>; Ratchford, Eric - FNS <[REDACTED]>; Jenkins, Bill - FNS <[REDACTED]>; Dombroski, Patricia - FNS <[REDACTED]>; Limbacher, Diana - FNS <[REDACTED]>; Jacober-Brown, Sally - FNS <[REDACTED]>; Hayes, Alyssa - FNS <[REDACTED]>; Nelson, Katrina - FNS <[REDACTED]>; Boger, Kelly - FNS <[REDACTED]>; SM.FN.SNAP-PDD-COVID <[REDACTED]>; Berberich, Christine - FNS <[REDACTED]>
Subject: [External] FW: COVID-19 PA July and August Adjustment Extensions

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Good Afternoon Tara,

While the number of SNAP applications are starting to return to levels similar to before the onset of COVID-19, some States have shared with FNS their ongoing difficulties in handling their increased caseload sizes and reduced operational capacity. These States are struggling to maintain their responsibility for the administrative functions of operating the program responsibly. FNS strongly believes that it is of the utmost importance to ensure the program is administered appropriately so families receive the proper benefits in a timely fashion and that SNAP program integrity is consistently maintained to ensure public confidence in SNAP administration and use of taxpayer resources.

For States that are struggling, each corresponding regional office continues to provide tailored customer service. To best serve recipients, please do not hesitate to call on our team or your fellow States for best practices and solutions in this dynamic and unprecedented situation.

Based on the recent feedback from some States, combined with the recent spike in COVID-19 cases in some parts of the country, FNS is providing an additional opportunity to seek approval for adjustments to extend certification periods or eliminate the interview, including States agencies that were previously denied for July. FNS hopes that approval of these adjustments during July and August will assist the State as it transitions to its new normal in the fall. State agencies should continue to plan appropriately and make necessary systems changes to return to normal processing.

If your State was previously denied for a July adjustment, or did not apply and is now interested, please respond to the FNS regional office within 3 business days and indicate which adjustments your State is seeking. FNS will respond to your request within 3 business days.

In order to request an extension, your State must have an emergency order that extends into the month in which you are requesting the adjustment or waiver. For example, in order to receive an extension for the month of August, the emergency order must extend into some part of August.

Looking ahead, requests for extensions beyond August will be approved on an extremely limited basis. In order to receive an extension beyond August, a State must have an emergency order that extends into the month in which the State is requesting the adjustment and provide data that demonstrates that the adjustment continues to be warranted given the current circumstances in the State. States must submit these requests by the 10th day the month before the adjustment would take effect with a response due back from FNS to the State by the 15th.

FNS expects that requests include data on substantial increases in new applications in recent months (e.g. July and August for September adjustment), sizable increases in a backlog of case actions or applications, or a significant decrease in staffing capacity due to COVID-19, among other supporting information. States are expected to reasonably adjust to changing circumstances, including caseload growth, and FNS will not approve requests where the data is merely comparable with the State agency's data from non-COVID-19 circumstances or where FNS was working with the State under a corrective action plan unrelated to COVID-19. These requests should also include plans to return to a new normal in a reasonably short time frame. Because approvals for adjustments beyond August will be extremely limited, States should make arrangements to ensure they are able to return to their new normal by September 1, 2020.

We stand ready to provide technical assistance and answer any of your questions.

Thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Gagliardi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

Dave Gagliardi, Branch Chief/Regional Disaster Coordinator
SNAP, Program Operations
FNS, Mid-Atlantic Regional Office
[REDACTED]

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