



SEP 08-2008

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

2030035

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

SUBJECT: FSP - Alaska – ABAWD Waiver 2008 Extension - 7 CFR 273.24

3101 Park  
Center Drive

TO: Dennis Stewart, Regional Director  
Food Stamp Program  
Western Region

Alexandria, VA  
22302-1500

This is in response to your August 19, 2008 email forwarding the Alaska State Agency's request to extend their waiver of the work requirements at 7 CFR 273.24 for all able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) statewide. The waiver allows ABAWDs who are not working or participating in a work program 20 hours or more each week or participating in workfare to maintain eligibility for the Food Stamp Program.

As the Alaska has provided data demonstrating a 36-month unemployment rate that is 20 percent above the national average for July 2005 through June 2008, we are approving this waiver for a two-year period.

Our response is attached. If you have any questions, please contact Melissa Daigle Katz at 415-705-1323, ext. 304.

Angela Kline  
Assistant Branch Chief  
Certification Policy Branch  
Program Development Division

Attachment

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Tuesday, September 09, 2008.tif

## WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 2030035
2. **Type of request:** Extension
3. **Primary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
4. **Secondary regulation citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act, as amended by Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996, P.L. 104-193
5. **State:** Alaska
6. **Region:** WRO
7. **Regulatory Requirements:** 7 CFR 273.24 provides that no individual will be eligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program as a member of any household if, during the preceding 36-month period, the individual received food stamp benefits for not less than 3 months (consecutive or otherwise), during which the individual did not work 20 hours or more a week, averaged monthly; did not participate in and comply with the requirements of a work program for 20 hours or more a week; or did not participate in and comply with requirements of a program under Section 20 of the Food Stamp Act or a comparable program established by the State.  
  
7 CFR 273.24 also provides that, upon the request of a State agency, the Secretary may waive the applicability of the above provision for any group of individuals in the State if the Secretary makes a determination that the area in which the individuals reside has an unemployment rate of over 10 percent, or does not have enough jobs to provide employment for the individuals.
8. **Description of proposed alternative procedures:** Alaska is seeking to renew its current year-round statewide waiver of 7 CFR 273.24, exempting all able bodied adults residing in Alaska from the ABAWD work requirements. Alaska's unemployment rate of 6.49% exceeded the national unemployment rate of 4.76% by over 20 percent for a 36-month period (July 2005 – June 2008). Alaska requests that this waiver be renewed for two years, through September 30, 2010. Alaska has supplied data from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, a Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) cooperating agency, and the BLS as documentation.

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9. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** We are approving the extension of this waiver for a two-year period. Alaska demonstrated that their unemployment rate of 6.49 % exceeded the national unemployment rate of 4.76% by over 20 percent for a 36-month period (July 2005 – June 2008), so they qualify for a 2-

year extension based on verification that the area has experienced chronic high unemployment.

10. **Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** 7 CFR 273.24, which allows the Secretary to waive the applicability of the work requirement provision for any group of individuals in the State if the Secretary makes a determination that the area in which the individuals reside as an unemployment rate of over 10 percent or an insufficient number of jobs.
11. **Conditions or Reasons:** N/A
12. **Information required for extension:** Please submit supporting unemployment data that relies on standard BLS data and/or methods that indicates unemployment rates over 10 percent or a lack of sufficient jobs. Please continue to submit data for a 36-month period when requesting a two-year waiver based upon an unemployment rate of 20 percent above the national average.
13. **Expiration date:** The waiver is approved from October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2010.
14. **Limitation on regional office approval of like requests:** The waiver is limited to the Alaska State Agency.
15. **Quality Control Procedures:** N/A
16. **Date of national office action:**
17. **Date of State agency's request:** July 31, 2008
18. **Date of regional office transmittal of request to National office:** August 19, 2008
19. **Date of regional office transmittal of response to State agency:**
20. **Actual implementation date:**