

March 1, 2006

970225

SUBJECT: FSP – Alabama – Request to Waive 7 CFR 273.24

TO: Peggy Fouts, Regional Director
Food Stamp Program
Southeast Region

This is in response to the Alabama State Agency's request to continue to exempt individuals residing in certain areas from the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24 based on insufficient jobs. The States agency used Department of Labor data to support its findings. In addition, the State agency is requesting to modify its waiver by incorporating the combined areas into 5 regions and sub-regions within the State.

Our response approving the State's request is attached. If you have any questions, please contact Vicky Robinson at (703) 305-2476.

/s/

Harriet Kornegay
Assistant Branch Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Attachment

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver Serial Number:** 970225
2. **Type of Request:** Modification and Extension
3. **Primary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
4. **Secondary regulation citation:** N/A
5. **State:** Alabama
6. **Region:** Southeast
7. **Regulatory Requirement:** Under 7 CFR 273.24(b) individuals are not 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 per week, averaged monthly; participate in and comply with the requirements of a work program for 20 hours or more per week; or participate in and comply with requirements of a program under Section 20 or a comparable program established by the State.

Under 7 CFR 273.24(f), upon the request of a State agency, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) may waive the applicability of the above provision for any group of individuals in the State if the FNS makes a determination that the area in which the individuals reside has an unemployment rate of over 10 percent, or does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for the individuals.

8. **Description of proposed alternative procedures:** The Alabama State Agency is requesting to exempt ABAWDS residing in the following areas from the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24 based on having an aggregate average unemployment rate of at least 20 percent above the national average of 5.8 percent, or 6.9 percent, for calendar years 2003-2004:

Region 1:

Area	Total Labor Force	Total Number of Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Colbert County	596,098	42,275	177163/2,488,449= 7.1 percent
Franklin County	325,589	26,487	
Lauderdale County	996,991	66,467	
Marion County	319,885	21,294	
Winston County	249,886	20,640	
Total	2,488,449	177,163	

Sub-region of Region 2:

Area	Total Labor Force	Total Number of Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Bibb County	214,318	12,034	73,269/1,016,413= 7.2 percent
Fayette County	192,435	12,919	
Greene County	85,531	7,118	
Hale County	170,856	12,783	
Lamar County	157,683	13,265	
Pickens County	195,590	15,150	
Total	1,016,413	73,269	

Sub-region of Region 4:

Area	Total Labor Force	Total Number of Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Chambers County	404,850	26,689	156,822/2,284,825= 6.9 percent
Clay County	142,418	9,489	
Coosa County	121,157	9,204	
Randolph County	239,403	16,455	
Talladega County	932,699	66,334	
Tallapoosa County	444,298	28,651	
Total	2,284,825	156,822	

Region 6:

Area	Total Labor Force	Total Number of Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Choctaw County	134,405	12,407	167,569/1,833,286= 9.1 percent
Clarke County	255,895	22,121	
Conecuh County	123,154	10,426	
Dallas County	399,901	42,551	
Marengo County	215,689	13,318	
Monroe County	230,975	18,102	
Perry County	90,980	9,150	
Sumter County	122,185	11,815	
Washington County	168,761	16,666	
Wilcox County	91,341	11,013	
Total	1,833,286	167,569	

Alabama is also requesting to exempt ABAWDS in Barbour and Escambia counties based on having an average unemployment rate of at least 20 percent above the national average for calendar years 2003-2004:

Area	Total Labor Force	Total Number of Unemployed	Unemployment Rates
Barbour County	260,098	18,410	7.1
Escambia County	349,459	27,751	7.9

Finally, the State agency is requesting to exempt ABAWDS in Region 5 and in Jackson County based on having an average unemployment rate of at least 20 percent above the national average of 5.5 percent, or 6.6 percent, for the 24-month period of July 2003 through June 2005:

Region 5:

Area	Total Labor Force	Total Number of Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Bullock County	94,392	10,513	81,447/1,141,484= 7.1 percent
Butler County	219,886	18,893	
Crenshaw County	140,224	9,186	
Lowndes County	121,966	10,798	
Macon County	206,313	13,571	
Pike County	358,703	18,486	
Total	1,141,484	81,447	

Area	Total Labor Force	Total Number of Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Jackson County	654,091	42,998	6.6 percent

9. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** We are approving the State agency's request to modify and extend its waiver to exempt ABAWDS who live in the requested counties from the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24.
10. **Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** The waiver is approved under the authority of 7 CFR 273.24(f), which allows FNS to waive the applicability of the work requirement provision for any group of individuals in the State if FNS makes a determination that the area in which the individuals reside has insufficient jobs.
11. **Conditions and reasons:** N/A
12. **Information required for extension:** To receive an extension, the State agency must provide data indicating that there are insufficient jobs in the affected areas.

- 13. Expiration date:** This waiver is approved April 1, 2006 and will expire on March 31, 2007.
- 14. Limitation, if any, on regional office approval of like requests:** This waiver is limited to the Alabama State Agency.
- 15. Quality control procedures:** N/A
- 16. Date of national office action:** February 23, 2006
- 17. Date of State agency's request:** January 24, 2006
- 18. Date of regional office transmittal of request:** February 6, 2006
- 19. Date of regional office transmittal of response to State agency:**
- 20. Actual implementation date:**