

APR 21 7008

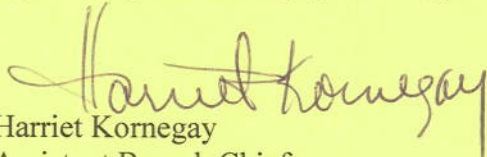
980013

SUBJECT: Arkansas – Request to Waive 7 CFR 273.24

TO: Judy Barron, Regional Director
Food Stamp Program
Southwest Region

This is in response to your April 15, 2008 email transmitting the Arkansas State agency's April 14, 2007 request to modify and extend their current waiver exempting residents of certain areas from the work requirement for Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD).

Attached is our response. We are approving the State's request to waive work requirements in 73 counties. Forty-two counties qualify individually based upon average unemployment rates that are at least 20 percent about the national average. Thirty-one counties qualify based upon aggregate average unemployment rates of at least 20 percent above the national average when the state as a whole, minus Benton and Washington Counties, is treated as a region. If you have any questions, please contact Melissa Daigle Katz at 703-305-2501.



Harriet Kornegay
Assistant Branch Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Attachment

FINAL:USDA:FNS:FSP:PDD:CPB:MDaigleKatz:04/16/08: laj: 04/18/08
DIR:I:CPB/Waivers/2008: 980013 AR ABAWD MOD AND EXT APPROVAL

Symbol	Surname	Date	Symbol	Surname	Date
	DaigleKatz	04-21-08			
	Kornegay	04/21/08			

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WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 980013
2. **Type of request:** Modification and Extension
3. **Primary regulation citation, if any:** 7 CFR 273.24(b)
4. **Secondary regulation citation, if any:** 7 CFR 273.24 (f)(3)(iii)
5. **State:** Arkansas
6. **Region:** SWRO
7. **Regulatory requirements:** 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. **Proposed procedures:** The State of Arkansas requests to waive individuals residing in a sub-region of the state made up of contiguous counties. The contiguous areas are eligible based on the sub-region's average unemployment rate which is at least 20 percent above the national average during December 2005 through November 2007, when the national average unemployment rate plus 20 percent was 5.5.

Combined Counties (Arkansas, less Benton and Washington Counties)

Area	Unemployment Rate, DEC 2005-NOV 2007	Area	Unemployment Rate, DEC 2005-NOV 2007
Arkansas County	8.5	Lee County	10.1
Ashley County	7.9	Lincoln County	7.9
Baxter County	5.4	Little River County	4.4
Boone County	4.9	Logan County	5.0
Bradley County	6.9	Lonoke County	4.3
Calhoun County	6.9	Madison County	3.7
Carroll County	4.4	Marion County	5.4

Chicot County	8.7	Miller County	4.7
Clark County	5.6	Mississippi County	7.9
Clay County	8.9	Monroe County	7.6
Cleburne County	5.6	Montgomery County	5.0
Cleveland County	6.0	Nevada County	5.8
Columbia County	6.3	Newton County	5.0
Conway County	5.0	Ouachita County	7.7
Craighead County	4.8	Perry County	4.9
Crawford County	4.7	Phillips County	8.4
Crittenden County	6.6	Pike County	5.5
Cross County	7.6	Poinsett County	6.8
Dallas County	6.9	Polk County	5.0
Desha County	9.9	Pope County	4.8
Drew County	7.9	Prairie County	6.2
Faulkner County	4.4	Pulaski County	4.7
Franklin County	4.4	Randolph County	8.1
Fulton County	5.2	Saline County	4.3
Garland County	5.3	Scott County	4.6
Grant County	4.9	Searcy County	5.0
Greene County	6.1	Sebastian County	4.9
Hempstead County	5.8	Sevier County	4.2
Hot Spring County	5.2	Sharp County	6.7
Howard County	5.7	St. Francis County	9.4
Independence County	5.8	Stone County	5.6
Izard County	6.3	Union County	6.8
Jackson County	7.9	Van Buren County	6.0
Jefferson County	7.8	White County	6.0
Johnson County	5.1	Woodruff County	9.0
Lafayette County	7.7	Yell County	4.5
Lawrence County	6.9	Total for Sub-region	5.6

42 Counties: Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Calhoun, Chicot, Clark, Clay, Cleburne, Cleveland, Columbia, Crittenden, Cross, Dallas, Desha, Drew, Greene, Hempstead, Howard, Independence, Izard, Jackson, Jefferson, Lafayette, Lawrence, Lee, Lincoln, Mississippi, Monroe, Nevada, Ouachita, Phillips, Pike, Poinsett, Prairie, Randolph, Sharp, St. Francis, Stone, Union, Van Buren, White, and Woodruff Counties qualify for waivers based on having average unemployment rates that are at least 20 percent above the national average during December 2005 through November 2007.

31 Counties: Baxter, Boone, Carroll, Conway, Craighead, Crawford, Faulkner, Franklin, Fulton, Garland, Grant, Hot Spring, Johnson, Little River, Logan, Lonoke, Madison, Marion, Miller, Montgomery, Newton, Perry, Polk, Pope, Pulaski, Saline, Scott, Searcy, Sebastian, Sevier, and Yell Counties qualify for waivers based on the area's aggregate average unemployment rate which is at least 20 percent above the national average during December 2005 through November 2007.

9. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** The request is approved based upon insufficient jobs, as demonstrated by the labor force and unemployment data compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Labor Surplus Areas designated by the Employment and Training Administration. The State agency has provided documentation that indicates that the requested area had unemployment rates that exceeded 20 percent of the national average for the accounting period November 2004 through October 2006 and that the city of Hot Springs was indeed a Labor Surplus Area.
10. **Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** This waiver is approved under 7 CFR273.24 (f), which allows FNS to waive the applicability of the work requirement provision for any groups of individuals in the State if FNS determines that the area in which the individual resides does not have sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for the affected areas, or the areas exceeded the national unemployment average by 20 percent for 24 consecutive months.
11. **Conditions and reasons:** None
12. **Information required for extension:** Provide unemployment rate data for the affected areas, which is compiled by the Bureau of labor statistics, or its cooperating agency, which indicates an unemployment rate of 10 percent or a lack of sufficient jobs.
13. **Expiration date:** This waiver is effective May 1, 2008 through April 30, 2009.
14. **Limitation , if any, on regional office approval of like requests:** The waiver is limited to the Arkansas State Agency
15. **Quality Control procedures:** None
16. **Date of national office action:** April 16, 2008
17. **Date of state agency's request:** April 14, 2008
18. **Date of regional office's transmittal of request to national office:** April 15, 2008
19. **Date of regional office's transmittal or response to state agency:**
20. **Actual implementation date:**