

MAY 15 2002

970304

SUBJECT: FSP - Connecticut - Request to Waive Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, as Amended by Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996

TO: Robert L. Canavan
Director
Food Stamp Program
Northeast Region

This is in response to the Connecticut State Agency's request to extend and modify its current waiver 970304 to exempt residents of certain areas within the State from the requirements of 7 CFR 273.24 of the Food Stamp Program Regulations. This provision limits the receipt of food stamp benefits to 3 months within a 3-year period for able-bodied adults who are not working (or participating in a work program) 20 hours or more each week or participating in workfare. Our response is attached.

If you have any questions, please contact Joseph M. Shea of my staff at (703) 305-2513.

Arthur T. Foley

Arthur T. Foley
Director
Program Development Division

Attachment

cc: All Regions w/Attachment (except MPRO)
PAD

FINAL:FNS:FSP:PDD:CPB:JMShea:05-13-02:jas
DIR:I:CPB:Waivers:970304 2002 extension CT ABAWDs:

Symbol	Surname	Date	Symbol	Surname	Date
870303	S/GA	5-13-02			
PD-100	P.WAN	5/15/02			

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 970304
2. **Type of request:** Extension and Modification
3. **Primary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
4. **Secondary regulation citation:** N/A
5. **State:** Connecticut
6. **Region:** NERO
7. **Regulatory Requirements:** The Food Stamp Program Regulations at 7 CFR 273.24 provide that no individual shall 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 per week, averaged monthly; did not participate in and comply with the requirements of a work program for 20 hours or more per week; 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; or received benefits because they were exempt from these requirements.

The Food Stamp Regulations at 7 CFR 273.24(f) also provide 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 a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for the individuals.

8. **Description of proposed alternative procedures:** Connecticut State Agency wishes to extend and modify waiver 970304, which expired on December 31, 2001, to exclude individuals residing in the cities of Bridgeport, Hartford, and the town of Killingly based on insufficient jobs.

In making its request, the State agency notes that there are thousands of unemployed people in the State's larger cities and over 50,000 statewide. It goes on to say that many others do not qualify for unemployment compensation or have become discouraged in their search for employment and are not included in the official count.

9. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** We are approving the State agency's request for an extension and modification of the waiver to exempt individuals residing in Bridgeport, Hartford, and Killingly based on insufficient jobs effective January 1, 2002. For the 24-month period represented by calendar years 1999 and 2000 an area would need to have an unemployment rate of at least 4.9 percent to claim exemption based on insufficient jobs as established by an unemployment rate that is 20 percent above the national average. Bridgeport had an unemployment rate for this period of 5.2 percent. Hartford had 5.6 percent and Killingly had 5.0 percent. (Although these areas did not qualify as Labor Surplus Areas for Fiscal Year 2002, we grant waivers based on unemployment rates more than 20 percent above the national average over the same period that the Department of Labor uses to determine Labor Surplus Areas. The Department of Labor does not give Labor Surplus Area status to an area if its unemployment rate is under 6 percent.)
10. **Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** The waiver is approved pursuant to 7 CFR 273.24(f) of the Food Stamp Program Regulations, which allows the Secretary to waive the applicability of the work requirement provision in Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act 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 over 10 percent or 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.
13. **Expiration date:** December 31, 2002
14. **Limitation on regional office approval of like requests:** This waiver is limited to the Connecticut State Agency.
15. **Quality Control Procedures:** N/A
16. **Date of national office action:**
17. **Date of State agency's request:** February 4, 2002
18. **Date of regional office transmittal of request to national office:** April 8, 2002
19. **Actual implementation date:**