

August 4, 2005

970304

SUBJECT: FSP – Connecticut Request for Modification of Waiver 970304

TO: Mary Ann Ferris, Regional Director
Food Stamp Program
Northeast Region

This is in response to the Connecticut State Agency's request for a second modification of waiver 970304 to include an exemption for individuals residing in the Waterbury area, comprised of the towns of Beacon Falls, Middlebury, Naugatuck, Prospect, Waterbury, Watertown, and Wolcott from the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24 based on insufficient jobs to provide employment for the affected individuals.

We are approving Connecticut State Agency's request for a second modification of their current waiver to include the towns of Beacon Falls, Middlebury, Naugatuck, Prospect, Waterbury, Watertown, and Wolcott based upon an unemployment rate that exceeds the national average by 20 percent for the 24-month period of March 2003 through February 2005.

Our response is attached. Please contact Celeste Perkins of my staff at 703-305-2507 if you have any questions.

/s/

Harriet Kornegay
Assistant Branch Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

FINAL:USDA:FNS:FSP:PDD:CPB:CPERKINS:07/19/05:REVISED:8/3/05:je
FILE: Connecticut ABAWD
DIR:I:WAIVERS: 970304 – CT ABAWD (2nd Mod.2005)

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 970304
2. **Type of request:** 2nd Modification
3. **Primary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
4. **Secondary regulation citation:**
5. **State:** Connecticut
6. **Region:** NERO
7. **Regulatory requirements:** The 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; or did not participate in and comply with requirements of a program under Section 20 or a comparable program established by the State.

The regulations at 7 CFR 273.24(f) also provide that, 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 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:** The Connecticut State Agency is requesting a second modification of waiver 970304, to exempt individuals residing in Towns of Beacon Falls, Middlebury, Naugatuck, Prospect, Waterbury, Watertown, and Wolcott from the regulatory requirements listed above based on an unemployment rate greater than 20 percent above the national average for the period of March 2003 through February 2005. In support of its request the State agency provided labor market data for these areas.

9. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** We are approving the Connecticut State Agency's request for a second modification of waiver 970304 to include the Towns of Beacon Falls, Middlebury, Naugatuck, Prospect, Waterbury, Watertown, and Wolcott because these towns combined unemployment rate of 6.9 exceed the national average unemployment rate by 20 percent (6.8) for the requested 24-month period of March 2003 through February 2005 based on information available from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

**Unemployment Rate
March 2003 through February 2005**

Towns	Period	Town Labor Force	Town Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
Beacon Falls	03/03 – 02/05	72755	4046	5.6%
Middlebury	03/03 – 02/05	85668	3427	4.0%
Naugatuck	03/03 – 02/05	408330	26464	6.5%
Prospect	03/03 – 02/05	119546	5893	4.9%
Waterbury City	03/03 – 02/05	1275431	103525	8.1%
Watertown	03/03 – 02/05	291562	15440	5.3%
Wolcott	03/03 – 02/05	209188	10887	5.2%
TOTAL	03/03 – 02/05	2457597	169499	6.9%

Source: BLS

National Unemployment Rate for 03/03-02/05: 5.7%
20% above the National Unemployment Rate: 6.8%

The above statistical data used to make our decision was based on information available from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) for the requested 24-month period of March 2003 through February 2005.

10. **Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** This waiver is approved pursuant to 7 CFR 273.24(f), which allows FNS to waive the applicability of the work requirement provision in 7 CFR 273.24 for any group of individuals in the State if FNS makes a determination that the area in which the individuals reside has an unemployment rate over 10 percent, or does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for the affected individuals as provided for at 7 CFR 273.24(f)(3)(iii).
11. **Conditions and reasons:**
12. **Information required for extension:** To receive an extension the State agency must provide verifiable data as outlined in 7 CFR 273.24(f) indicating that there are insufficient jobs in the affected areas. Such data can be found on the State DOL or Federal DOL BLS web sites.
13. **Expiration date:** This waiver modification is effective May 1, 2005 and will expire on April 30, 2006.
14. **Limitation, if any, on regional office approval of like requests:** This waiver is limited to the Connecticut State Agency.
15. **Quality control procedures:** There is no special quality control procedures needed in conjunction with this waiver.
16. **Date of national office action:**
17. **Date of State agency's request:** May 13, 2005
18. **Date of regional office transmittal of request to national office:** May 28, 2005
19. **Date of regional office transmittal of response to State agency:**