



MAY 01 2008

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food and
Nutrition
Service

3101 Park
Center Drive

Alexandria, VA
22302-1500

970304

SUBJECT: Connecticut Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD)
Waiver of 7 CFR 273.24

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

This is in response to your memorandum of April 9, 2008, transmitting the Connecticut State agency's request to exempt certain individuals from the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24 based on insufficient jobs. The State based its determination of insufficient jobs on U.S. Department of Labor data. In reviewing this request, we found that the Willimantic Micropolitan NECTA did not match up with the cities that the State of Connecticut listed in item 8 of its waiver request. Furthermore, in light of this and the overlap with waiver number 2070032, and in consultation with Karen Guarin of your office, we are approving the cities of Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Britain based on their designation as Labor Surplus Areas (LSAs) for Federal Fiscal Year 2008. The waiver will be effective for one year from May 1, 2008 through April 30, 2009. The remaining areas are covered by waiver 2070032, which was previously approved for two years and will also expire on April 30, 2009.

If you have any questions, please contact Patrick Lucrezio at Patrick.Lucrezio@fns.usda.gov or at (703) 305-2498.

Harriet Kornegay
Assistant Branch Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Attachment

WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver serial number:**
970304
2. **Type of request:**
Modification and Extension
3. **Primary regulation citation, if any:**
Section 6 (o) of the Food Stamp Act, as amended by Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996, P.L. 104-193.
4. **Secondary regulation citation, if any:**
7 CFR 273.24 (f)(3)(iii)
5. **State:**
Connecticut
6. **Region:**
NERO
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 Connecticut is requesting to exempt from these requirements individuals residing in the following eleven areas. The cities of Bridgeport, East Hartford, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, and Windham are eligible based on their designation as Labor Surplus Areas (LSAs) for federal fiscal year 2008. The Waterbury Metropolitan NECTA and the Willimantic Micropolitan NECTA are eligible based on their unemployment rates, which exceed the average U.S. employment rate by 20 percent for the 24-month period of July 2005 to June 2007.

These areas of the State had an average unemployment rate of at least 5.6 during July 2005 to June 2007.

AREA	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, July 2005 to June 2007
Waterbury Metropolitan NECTA	5.7
Willimantic Micropolitan NECTA	6.6

The towns of Beacon Falls, Middlebury, Naugatuck, Prospect, Waterbury, Watertown and Wolcott are eligible based on their inclusion in the Waterbury Metropolitan NECTA and the towns of Brooklyn, Chaplin, Eastford, Hampton, Killingly, Plainfield, Putnam, Scotland, Sterling, Thompson, Windham and Woodstock are eligible based on their inclusion in the Willimantic Micropolitan NECTA.

9. **Justification for request:**
As stated in number 8 above, the areas requested are designated as LSAs or have an average unemployment rate of at least 20 percent above the national average during a recent 24-month period. All of the raw data supporting our numbers that we have used are from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) website.
10. **Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:**
This waiver will provide consistency for households and State agency operations in areas where unemployment remains higher than the national average.
11. **Caseload information, including percent, characteristic, and quality control error rate for affected portion:**
The caseloads for these areas, as of January 1, 2008, represent 56.4% of the caseload for the state. There are no quality control procedures involved.
12. **Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:**
The State is requesting a one-year waiver from May 1, 2008 through April 30, 2009.
13. **Proposed quality control review procedures:**
There are no special quality control procedures needed in conjunction with this waiver.
14. **Signature and title of requesting official:**

Michael P. Starkowski, Commissioner

15. **Date of request:**

February 25, 2008
