

March 3, 2006

970088

**SUBJECT:** FSP – Georgia ABAWD Waiver

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

This is in response to your request to waive various jurisdictions in the State of Georgia the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24 based on insufficient jobs. The state based their request on unemployment data provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which indicates that the required areas exceeded the national unemployment rate by 20 percent for the corresponding accounting periods,

Our response is attached. If you have any questions, please email Dwight Ricker.

/s/ for  
Harriet Kornegay  
Assistant Branch Chief  
Certification Policy Branch  
Program Development Division

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## WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 970088
2. **Type of request:** Extension and modification
3. **Primary regulation citation, if any:** 7 CFR 273.24
4. **Secondary regulation citation, if any:**
5. **State:** Georgia
6. **Region:** Southeast
7. **Regulatory Requirements:** 7 CFR 273.24 provides 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 or a comparable program established by the State; or received benefits because they were exempt from these requirements.  
  
7 CFR 273.24(f) also provides 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:** The State of Georgia requests a modification and extension of waiver 970088 to exempt from the work requirements individuals residing in four sub-regions within the state. Each of these areas is a contiguous sub-region of one of the twelve Service Delivery Regions (SDRs) in the state. The SDRs were created in 1998 by the Governor and General Assembly and are used by the Department of Community Affairs and Department of Industry, Trade, and Tourism to assist in setting regional community and economic development priorities.<sup>1</sup>

Georgia is seeking waivers for contiguous sub-regions of these Service Delivery Regions based on aggregate average unemployment rates of at least 20 percent above the national average for December 2003-November 2005. During this period, the national average unemployment rate plus 20 percent was 6.4.

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## Sub-region of Service Delivery Region 4:

Area	Unemployment Rate, DEC 2003-NOV 2005	Area	Unemployment Rate, DEC 2003-NOV 2005
Lamar County	5.8	Spalding County	6.5
Meriwether County	6.8	Upson County	6.1
		<b>Total for sub-region</b>	<b>6.4</b>

Meriwether and Spalding Counties qualify based on having average unemployment rates of at least 20 percent above the national average during December 2003-November 2005. Lamar and Upson Counties qualify based on the area's aggregate average unemployment rate, which is at least 20 percent above the national average during December 2003-November 2005.

## Sub-region of Service Delivery Region 7:

Area	Unemployment Rate, DEC 2003-NOV 2005	Area	Unemployment Rate, DEC 2003-NOV 2005
Burke County	7.2	Richmond County	6.3
Glascock County	4.8	Screven County	5.3
Hancock County	6.9	Taliaferro County	6.6
Jefferson County	7.8	Warren County	8.3
Jenkins County	6.0	Washington County	5.9
Lincoln County	6.5	Wilkes County	6.7
McDuffie County	6.3	<b>Total for sub-region</b>	<b>6.4</b>

Burke, Hancock, Jefferson, Lincoln, Taliaferro, Warren, Wilkes Counties qualify based on having average unemployment rates of at least 20 percent above the national average during December 2003-November 2005. Glascock, Jenkins, McDuffie, Richmond, Screven, Washington Counties qualify based on the area's aggregate average unemployment rate, which is at least 20 percent above the national average during December 2003-November 2005.

## Sub-region of Service Delivery Region 8:

Area	Unemployment Rate, DEC 2003-NOV 2005	Area	Unemployment Rate, DEC 2003-NOV 2005
Chattahoochee County	7.3	Randolph County	6.6
Clay County	4.9	Schley County	5.9
Crisp County	6.1	Stewart County	9.6
Dooly County	6.3	Sumter County	6.0
Macon County	8.2	Talbot County	6.0
Marion County	5.1	Taylor County	6.9
Quitman County	6.5	Webster County	6.6
		<b>Total for sub-region</b>	<b>6.5</b>

Chattahoochee, Macon, Quitman, Randolph, Stewart, Taylor, and Webster Counties qualify based on having average unemployment rates of at least 20 percent above the national average during December 2003-November 2005. Clay, Crisp, Dooly, Marion, Schley, Sumter, and Talbot Counties qualify based on the area's aggregate average unemployment rate, which is at least 20 percent above the national average during December 2003-November 2005.

Service Delivery Region 9:

Area	Unemployment Rate, DEC 2003-NOV 2005	Area	Unemployment Rate, DEC 2003-NOV 2005
Appling County	6.2	Toombs County	6.1
Jeff Davis County	6.9	Treutlen County	6.6
Montgomery County	5.6	Wheeler County	6.8
Telfair County	7.5	Wilcox County	5.9
		<b>Total for sub-region</b>	<b>6.4</b>

Jeff Davis, Telfair, Treutlen, and Wheeler Counties qualify based on having average unemployment rates of at least 20 percent above the national average during December 2003-November 2005. Appling, Montgomery, Toombs, and Wilcox Counties qualify based on the area's aggregate average unemployment rate, which is at least 20 percent above the national average during December 2003-November 2005.

In addition, the State is requesting to exempt residents in the Atkinson, Calhoun, Greene, Peach Counties and the Albany, Atlanta, East Point, and Macon cities based on having an average unemployment rate of at least 20 percent above the national average during December 2003-November 2005.

Area	Unemployment Rate, DEC 2003-NOV 2005	Area	Unemployment Rate, DEC 2003-NOV 2005
Atkinson County	6.5	Albany city	6.4
Calhoun County	6.4	Atlanta city	7.0
Greene County	6.4	East Point city	7.2
Peach County	6.5	Macon city	6.5

9. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** As stated in Number 8 above, the areas listed above have an average unemployment rate of at least 20 percent above the national average during a recent 24 –month time period. All of the raw data supporting the numbers are from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) web site. The waiver is approved.
10. **Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** The waiver is approved pursuant to 7 CFR 273.24(f), which allows the Secretary to waive the applicability of the work requirement provision for any group of individuals in the State if the Secretary 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:** Please submit supporting unemployment data that relies on Bureau of Labor Statistics data and/or methods and data indicating unemployment over 10 percent of a lack of sufficient jobs.
13. **Expiration date:** March 31, 2007

14. **Limitations, if any, on regional office approval of like requests:** Waiver applies solely to the State of Georgia.
15. **Quality Control Procedures:** N/A
16. **Date of national office action:**
17. **Date of State agency's request:**
18. **Date of regional office transmittal of response to national office:**
19. **Actual implementation date:**