

JUN 22 2007

2010190

SUBJECT: FSP - Idaho – ABAWD - Waiver of the Requirements of 7 CFR 273.24

TO: Dennis Stewart, Director
Food Stamp Program
Western Region

This is in response to the Idaho State agency's request of March 12, 2007, to modify and extend its waiver to exempt individuals residing in certain areas from the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24 based on insufficient jobs. The State agency bases its determination of insufficient jobs on the Bureau of Labor Statistics and 2000 Census data.

Our detailed response approving the State's request is attached. If there are any questions, please contact Vicky Robinson at vicky.robinson@fns.usda.gov or at (703) 305-2476.



Patrick Waldron
Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Attachment

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 2010190
2. **Type of request:** Modification & Extension
3. **Primary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 273.24(f)
4. **Secondary regulation citation:**
5. **State:** Idaho
6. **Region:** Western
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 was 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. **Proposed alternative procedures:** The Idaho State Agency is requesting to extend its ABAWD for individuals residing in 13 counties. The State agency modified its request by adding the counties of Bonner and Lewis and then grouping the counties into three sub-regions. Each of these sub-regions is a one contiguous part of six multi-county Economic Development Regions (EDRs) in the state.

Each area has an aggregate average unemployment rate (UER) of at least 20 percent above the national average of 5.2 percent, or 6.2 percent, for the 24-month period of April 2004 through March 2006 as follows:

Sub-region of Northern Economic Development Region:

County	Labor Force	Unemployment	Area UER
Benewah	98,270	7,737	
Bonner	489,328	24,780	
Boundary	103,026	7,531	
Shoshone	138,380	11,125	
Total for sub-region	829,004	51,173	

Sub-region of North Central Economic Development Region:

County	Labor Force	Unemployment	Area UER
Clearwater	81,064	7,418	
Idaho	173,049	11,472	
Lewis	42,510	1,445	
Total for sub-region	296,623	20,335	

Sub-region of South West Economic Development Region:

County	Labor Force	Unemployment	Area UER
Adams	44,900	3,872	
Payette	249,822	17,123	
Valley	109,841	5,526	
Washington	119,038	6,515	
Total for sub-region	523,601	33,036	

In addition, the State agency is requesting to exempt residents in Minidoka County and in Coeur d'Alene, Fort Hall, and Nez Perce reservations. These areas also have an average unemployment rate of at least 20 percent above the national average of 5.2 percent, or 6.2 percent, for the 24-month period of April 2004 through March 2006 as follows:

Area	Labor Force	Unemployment	UER
Minidoka County	231,522	14,482	6.3
Coeur d'Alene Reservation	26,448	2,096	7.9
Fort Hall Reservation	50,426	7,284	14.4
Nez Perce Reservation	27,529	3,501	12.7

9. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** We are approving Idaho's request in full. Able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) who reside within the preceding areas will be exempt from work requirements based on high unemployment.

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:** None.
12. **Information required for extension:** To receive an extension the State agency must provide verifiable data indicating that there are insufficient jobs in the affected areas.
13. **Expiration date:** The waiver is approved retroactively for one year from April 1, 2007 through March 31, 2008.
14. **Limitation on regional office approval of like requests:** Approval of this waiver is limited to the Idaho State agency.
15. **Quality control procedures:** N/A
16. **Date of national office action:** June 6, 2007
17. **Date of State agency's request:** March 1, 2007
18. **Date of regional office transmittal of request to national office:** March 12, 2007
19. **Date of regional office transmittal of response to State agency:**
20. **Actual implementation date:**