

February 21, 2007

970073

SUBJECT: FSP – Maryland - Request to Extend ABAWD Waiver 970073

TO: Joseph Weingart, Regional Director
Food Stamp Program
Mid-Atlantic Regional Office

This is in response to the Maryland State Agency’s request to extend waiver 970073, which exempts individuals residing in the Workforce Investment Area that includes Somerset and Worcester counties, from the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24, because of insufficient jobs. The request is for two years.

The State bases its determination of insufficient jobs on U.S. Department of Labor data that shows that the two combined counties had an unemployment rate of at least 20 percent above the national average for the 36 month period of November 2003 through October 2006.

Our response approving the State’s request is attached. If you have any questions, please contact Dwight Ricker at (703) 305-2468.

/s/

Patrick Waldron
Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Attachment

cc: All Regions (except MARO)

FINAL:USDA :FNS:FSP:PDD:CPB:DRicker013107
DIR:I : CPB/Waivers/2007 :970073 MD ABAWD

Symbol	Surname	Date	Symbol	Surname	Date

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 970073
2. **Type of request:** Extension
3. **Primary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
4. **Secondary regulation citation:**
5. **State:** Maryland
6. **Region:** MARO
7. **Regulatory Requirements:** Under 7 CFR 273.24(b), an individual is 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, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) may waive the applicability of the above provision 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 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:** Maryland is seeking a waiver from Section 6(o) of the Food Stamp Act, based on having a 36 month unemployment rate that is 20 percent above the national average for the aggregate unemployment data for Somerset and Worcester counties, which is considered a Workforce Investment Area (WIA). The unemployment rate for November 2003 to October 2006 for the WIA is 6.1 percent which is 20 percent greater than the national unemployment threshold for the same period, which is 6.0 percent.
9. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** 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.

10. **Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** This waiver is approved under the authority of 7 CFR 273.24(f), which allows FNS to waive the applicability of the work requirement provision for any group of individuals in the State if FNS 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:** To receive an extension the State agency must provide data indicating that there are insufficient jobs in the Workforce Investment Area.
13. **Expiration date:** This waiver extension is approved effective March 1, 2007 and will expire on February 28, 2009.
14. **Limitation on regional office approval of like requests:** This waiver is limited to the Maryland State agency.
15. **Quality Control Procedures:** N/A
16. **Date of national office action:**
17. **Date of State Agency's request:** January 5, 2007
18. **Date of regional office transmittal of request to National Office:** January 29, 2007
19. **Date of regional office transmittal of response to State agency:**
20. **Actual implementation date:**