



United States
Department of
Agriculture

SEP 08 2008

970315

Food and
Nutrition
Service

SUBJECT: FSP – Maine ABAWD Waiver Request – 7 CFR 273.24

3101 Park
Center Drive

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

Alexandria, VA
22302-1500

This is in response to the Maine State agency's request to modify and extend its waiver of the work provisions of 7 CFR 273.24 for residents that live in a combined 12-county area, the Sanford Micropolitan New England City and Town Area, and in the towns of Acton, Benton, Clinton, Harrison, Ogunquit, Parsonfield and Vienna. The State agency bases its determination of insufficient jobs on Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

Our detailed response approving the State's request is attached. If there are any questions, please contact Larry Tropp by email at larry.tropp@fns.usda.gov or telephone at (703) 305-2504.

Angela Kline
Assistant Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Attachment

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 970315
2. **Type of request:** Modification and Extension
3. **Primary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
4. **Secondary regulation citation:** None
5. **State:** Maine
6. **Region:** Northeast
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; or did not participate in and comply with requirements of a program under 7 CFR 273.24(a)(3) or 7 CFR 273.24(a)(4).
8. **Description of proposed alternative procedures:** The State agency has requested to extend its waiver of the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24 for individuals residing in the requested areas. Under the State agency's current request, Androscoggin County would be added to the 11 counties currently covered by the waiver. The combined area has an aggregate average unemployment rate of at least 20 percent above the national average of 4.7 percent, or 5.6 percent, for the 24-month period of June 2006 through May 2008 as follows:

County	Labor Force	Unemployed	Area Unemployment Rate (UER)
Androscoggin	1,402,652	66,616	5.6
Aroostook	853,550	56,143	
Franklin	343,648	21,148	
Hancock	712,544	39,519	
Knox	514,520	22,682	
Lincoln	444,177	19,398	
Oxford	687,116	41,337	
Penobscot	1,874,019	97,618	
Piscataquis	181,312	13,342	
Somerset	604,900	42,360	
Waldo	460,402	25,573	
Washington	357,547	28,317	
Total	8,436,387	474,053	

In addition to the towns currently exempt, the State agency has requested the addition of the towns of Acton, Benton, Harrison, and Parsonfield and will no longer be exempting residents of Livermore Falls. Under this extension, the State agency will continue to exempt residents of the Sanford Micropolitan New England City and Town Area, which includes the towns of Sanford and Shapleigh. All of the aforementioned areas have an average unemployment rate of at least 20 percent above the national average of 4.7 percent, or 5.6 percent, for the 24-month period of June 2006 through May 2008 as follows:

Area	Labor Force	Unemployed	Area Unemployment Rate (UER)
Acton town	24,715	1,443	5.8
Benton town	33,138	1,880	5.7
Clinton town	39,912	2,614	6.5
Harrison town	31,102	1,774	5.7
Ogunquit town	17,687	1,114	6.3
Parsonfield town	21,997	1,256	5.7
Vienna town	6,727	437	6.5
Sanford Micropolitan NECTA	271,736	15,733	5.8

9. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** We are approving the Maine State agency's request in full. Able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) who reside in the preceding areas will be exempt from work requirements based on insufficient jobs.
10. **Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** This waiver is approved under the authority in 7 CFR 273.24(f) which allows the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to waive the applicability of the work requirement provision in 7 CFR 273.24 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 affected individuals.
11. **Conditions and reasons:** Not applicable.
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:** This waiver is effective November 1, 2008 and will expire on October 31, 2009.

14. **Limitation, if any, on regional office approval of like requests:** This waiver is limited to the Maine State agency.
15. **Quality control procedures:** Not applicable.
16. **Date of national office action:**
17. **Date of State agency's request:** August 1, 2008
18. **Date of regional office transmittal of request to national office:** August 14, 2008
19. **Date of regional office transmittal of response to State agency:**
20. **Actual implementation date:**