



United States Department of Agriculture

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Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

1320 Braddock Place  
Alexandria, VA  
22314

December 18, 2023

Alecia Eubanks  
Assistant Division Director  
Division of Family Development  
Department of Human Services  
Post Office Box 716  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0716

RE: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – New Jersey Request to Waive Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents Time Limit – Initial – Approval

Dear Assistant Division Director Eubanks:

This is in response to the New Jersey Department of Human Services' November 24, 2023, request to waive the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs). The attached waiver response includes the approved areas, the supporting evidence used, and the conditions of approval.

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) also reminds the State agency that it must measure the 3-year period and track ABAWDs on a continuous basis, even in areas under a waiver. The State must continue tracking so that the State will be ready to transition off the waiver when it expires and reintroduce the time limit. Please contact your Regional Office representative with any questions.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catrina Kamau".

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Catrina L. Kamau  
Chief  
Certification Policy Branch  
Program Development Division

Enclosure

Enclosure

**ABLE-BODIED ADULTS WITHOUT DEPENDENTS (ABAWD)  
WAIVER RESPONSE**

1. **Request Type:** Initial
2. **Statutory Citation:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
3. **Regulatory Citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
4. **State:** New Jersey
5. **Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Region:** Mid-Atlantic
6. **Requirement:** Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and regulations at 7 CFR 273.24 provide that no individual shall be eligible to participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as a member of any household if the individual received program benefits for more than 3 months during any 3-year period in which the individual was subject to but did not comply with the ABAWD work requirement. Section 6(o) and 7 CFR 273.24 also provide that, upon the request of the State agency, the Secretary may waive the applicability of the 3-month ABAWD time limit 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.
7. **Requested Area(s) and Support:** The State agency requested to waive the ABAWD time limit in 18 areas (one combined area of 17 counties and one city) from February 1, 2024, to January 31, 2025.

The State agency supported its request based upon the combined area and the one city having an average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of February 2021 through January 2023. During this period, the national average unemployment rate was 4.4 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 5.2 percent. The aggregate average unemployment rate was 5.2 percent for the combined area (Table 1) during the 24-month period. The average unemployment rate was 6.5 percent for the one city (Table 2) during the 24-month period.

**Table 1: Combined Area 1 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, February 2021 – January 2023)**

<b>Counties</b>
Atlantic County, NJ
Bergen County, NJ
Burlington County, NJ
Camden County, NJ
Cape May County, NJ
Cumberland County, NJ
Essex County, NJ

Gloucester County, NJ
Hudson County, NJ
Middlesex County, NJ
Monmouth County, NJ
Ocean County, NJ
Passaic County, NJ
Salem County, NJ
Sussex County, NJ
Union County, NJ
Warren County, NJ
<b>Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 5.2%</b>

Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on December 5, 2023.

**Table 2: Cities (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, February 2021 – January 2023)**

City	Unemployment Rate
Trenton City, NJ	6.5%

Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on December 5, 2023.

- 8. FNS Action and Justification:** FNS is approving the State agency's request to waive the ABAWD time limit. The State agency's request meets the requirements for approval provided at 7 CFR 273.24(f) and relevant FNS guidance.
- 9. Authority:** The waiver is approved pursuant to section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and 7 CFR 273.24(f).
- 10. Implementation Date:** February 1, 2024
- 11. Expiration Date:** January 31, 2025
- 12. Information Required to Submit a Modification, Extension, or New Waiver:**  
To receive a modification, extension, or submit a new waiver to replace the current waiver, the State agency must provide FNS with a formal request supported by data or other information as described in 7 CFR 273.24(f). Any request based upon unemployment rates must include data spreadsheets and supporting documentation.
- 13. State Agency Contact Information:**  
Name: Alecia Eubanks  
Email: [alecia.eubanks@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:alecia.eubanks@dhs.nj.gov)
- 14. FNS Regional Office Contact Information:**  
Name: Marissa Patton  
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