



Food and Nutrition Service

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

February 10, 2026

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 Director Eubanks:

This is in response to the New Jersey Department of Human Services' (DHS) November 14, 2025, request to waive the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) time limit for time-limited participants, formerly known as able-bodied adults without dependents. The attached waiver response includes the approved areas, the supporting evidence used, and the conditions of approval.

The State agency requested to waive the time limit in Cape May county and Camden city from February 1, 2026, to January 31, 2027. The State agency supported its request based upon each area having a three-month average unemployment rate over 10 percent, using data for the three-month period of February 2025 to April 2025 in Cape May county and June 2025 to August 2025 in Camden city. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) approves this waiver consistent with current regulations. However, it is imperative that the State agency regularly review unemployment rates to ensure the waiver usage reflects current needs.

The State agency has a responsibility to assess unemployment rates across the State to determine whether waivers of the time limit are appropriate. FNS strongly encourages the State agency to examine whether a waiver is necessary and account for the delay between the unemployment data period and the waiver implementation period.

FNS reminds the State agency that it must measure the three-year period and track time-limited participants on a continuous basis, even in areas under a waiver. The State agency must continue tracking so that the State agency will be ready to transition off the waiver when it expires and reintroduce the time limit.

FNS also reminds DHS of the clear expectation that SNAP participants who can work, do work. Time-limited participants are required to work or participate in a work program for at least 80 hours a month, or to complete workfare. The SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) program is one of many ways that time-limited participants can meet this requirement and helps SNAP participants gain skills and find work that moves them toward self-sufficiency.

Connecting participants to New Jersey's SNAP E&T program supports our shared goal to lift millions of Americans out of dependency and into hopeful futures.

Please contact your Regional Office representative with any questions.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:
Ronald Ward
884CE83AFF4741A...

Ronald Ward
Acting Associate Administrator
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Food and Nutrition Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

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 time limit. 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 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 for non-contiguous States, has an unemployment rate 1.5 times the national average.
- 7. **Requested Area(s) and Support:** The State agency requested to waive the time limit in one county and one city from February 1, 2026, to January 31, 2027.

The State agency supported its request based upon one county having a three-month average unemployment rate over 10 percent for the three-month period of February 2025 through April 2025. The unemployment rate for the requested county was 10.8 percent during the three-month period (Table 1).

Table 1: Counties (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, February 2025 – April 2025)

County	Unemployment Rate
Cape May County	10.8%

Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on November 24, 2025.

The State agency supported its request based upon one city having a three-month average unemployment rate over 10 percent for the three-month period of June 2025

through August 2025. The unemployment rate for the requested city was 10.5 percent during the three-month period (Table 2).

Table 2: Cities (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, June 2025 – August 2025)

County	Unemployment Rate
Camden City	10.5%

Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on November 24, 2025.

- 8. FNS Action and Justification:** FNS is approving the State agency's request to waive the 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).
- 1. Implementation Date:** February 1, 2026
- 2. Expiration Date:** January 31, 2027
- 10. 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.
- 11. State Agency Contact Information:**
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- 12. FNS Regional Office Contact Information:**
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