

MAY 24 2005

2020019

SUBJECT: FSP – Pennsylvania Request for Modification of Waiver 2020019

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

This is in response to the Pennsylvania State Agency's request for a modification of waiver 2020019 to include an exemption for individuals residing in Columbia County from the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24 based on insufficient jobs to provide employment for the affected individuals.

We are approving Pennsylvania State Agency's request to amend their current waiver to include Columbia County based upon it having an unemployment rate exceeding the national average by 20 percent for the 24-month period of December 2002 through November 2004.

Our response is attached. Please contact Susan Burgess of my staff at 703-305-2437 if you have any questions.

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Harriet Kornegay, Assistant Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

cc: All Regions (except MARO) w/attachments
PAD-QC w/attachment
Bob Dalrymple – OANE w/attachments
David Young w/attachments

DRAFT:USDA:FNS:FSP:PDD:CPB:SBurgess:5/04/05:REVISED:5/23/05:je
FILE: ABAWDS - Pennsylvania
DIR:I:CPB:WAIVER:Fiscal Year 2005:2020019 PA ABAWD modify to add Columbia County

Symbol	Surname	Date	Symbol	Surname	Date
	Kornegay	5/24			

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WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 2020019
2. **Type of request:** Modification
3. **Primary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 273.24
4. **Secondary regulation citation:**
5. **State:** Pennsylvania
6. **Region:** MARO
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 Section 20 or a comparable program established by the State.

7 CFR 273.24(f) also provides that, upon the request of a State agency, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) 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. **Description of proposed alternative procedures:** The Pennsylvania State Agency is requesting a modification of waiver 2020019, to exempt individuals residing in Columbia County from the regulatory requirements listed above based on an unemployment rate greater than 20 percent above the national average for the period of December 2002 through November 2004. In support of its request the State agency provided labor market data for this county.
9. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** We are approving the Pennsylvania State Agency's request for the modification of waiver 2020019 to include Columbia County based on their unemployment rate exceeding the average U.S. employment rate by 20 percent.

**Columbia County Unemployment
December 2002 through November 2004**

County	Period	County Labor Force	County Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
Columbia	12/02 – 11/04	812551	56659	7.0%

Source: BLS

National Unemployment Rate for 12/02-11/04: 5.8%

20% above the National Unemployment Rate: 6.9%

The above statistical data used by Pennsylvania was based on information available from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Pennsylvania also submitted spreadsheets to demonstrate these statistics.

10. **Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** This waiver is approved pursuant to 7 CFR 273.24(f), which allows FNS to waive the applicability of the work requirement provision in 7 CFR 273.24 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 over 10 percent, or does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for the affected individuals as provided for at 7 CFR 273.24(f)(3)(iii).
11. **Conditions and reasons:**
12. **Information required for extension:** To receive an extension the State agency must provide verifiable data as outlined in 7 CFR 273.24(f) indicating that there are insufficient jobs in the affected areas. Such data can be found on the State DOL or Federal DOL BLS web sites.
13. **Expiration date:** This waiver modification is effective May 1, 2005 and will expire on November 30, 2005.
14. **Limitation, if any, on regional office approval of like requests:** This waiver is limited to the Pennsylvania State Agency.
15. **Quality control procedures:** There is no special quality control procedures needed in conjunction with this waiver.
16. **Date of national office action:**
17. **Date of State agency's request:** April 25, 2005
18. **Date of regional office transmittal of request to national office:** May 3, 2005
19. **Date of regional office transmittal of response to State agency:**
20. **Actual implementation date:**