



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

Rhode Island Department of Human Services
Division of Economic Support
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July 28, 2010

Ms. Mary Ann Ferris, Director
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
Northeast Region
10 Causeway Street
Boston, MA 02222

Dear Ms. Ferris:

Rhode Island is requesting to modify and extend the waiver numbered 970051 that exempts certain individuals from the requirements of the "Able Bodied Adults Without Dependent" (ABAWDS) regulations.

The current State wide waiver in effect was extended under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 which was signed by President Obama on February 17, 2009. The ARRA ACT of 2009 suspended restrictions on Able Bodied Adults Without Dependent (ABAWDS) participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program as of April 1, 2009 continuing through September 30, 2010.

Based on Rhode Island's existing unemployment rate of 12.0%, the ABAWDS population continues to face extraordinary challenges in finding and securing employment at this time. This request to extend the current waiver would apply to all cities and towns throughout the State of Rhode Island. With this in mind, the State is requesting this 12 month waiver to be effective October 1, 2010.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. If you have any questions, or a need for additional information, please call Ms. Nancy Pellegrino, Administrator of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program at (401) 462-0993.

Enclosed for your review is Rhode Island's waiver request.

Sincerely,


Donalda Carlson

Associate Director, Division of Economic Support

Enc:

Cc: Bonnie Brathwaite, Deputy Director, State Program Improvement, FNS
Gary D.Alexander, Secretary, Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Nancy Pellegrino, Administrator, SNAP Program

WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver serial numbers:**
970051 and 2070033
2. **Type of request:**
Modification and Extension
3. **Primary regulation citation, if any:**
Section 6 (o) of the SNAP Act, as amended by Section 824 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996, P.L. 104-193.
4. **Secondary regulation citation, if any:**
7 CFR 273.24 (f)(3)(iii)
5. **State:**
Rhode Island
6. **Region:**
NERO
7. **Regulatory requirements:**
Under 7 CFR 273.24(b) individuals are not eligible to participate in the SNAP Program as a member of any household if, during the preceding 36-month period, the individual received SNAP 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, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) may waive the applicability of the above provision 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 individuals.
8. **Proposed procedures:**
Rhode Island is requesting a modification and extension of its existing waivers to exempt residents residing in the entire State from the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24 due to having insufficient jobs based on the U.S. Department of Labor data that the State qualifies for extended unemployment benefits.

26 USC 3304 (Public Law 102-318) allows States the option of providing an additional alternative trigger for the extended benefits program, based on the State's

seasonally adjusted total unemployment rate (TUR) for the most recent three months reaching at least: (1) 12.3 percent; and (2) 170 percent of such TUR for the corresponding three-month periods ending in either or both of the two preceding calendar years.

The Department of Labor's Trigger Notice No. 20010-28 shows the State's 3-month average total unemployment rate (TUR) was: (1) 12.3 percent and (2) 114 percent of the 3-month average for the corresponding period in the first year and 170 percent of the 3-month average for the corresponding period in the second year, making the State eligible for extended unemployment benefits.

9. Justification for request:

Rhode Island is continuing to experience state-wide high unemployment conditions and does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for individuals. Based on this fact, we are seeking the waiver to exempt residents from work requirements.

This request to exempt residents residing in the entire State from the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24 is due to having insufficient jobs and the fact that Rhode Island's current unemployment rate of 12.0% is well above the national average of 9.5%. Under 7 CFR 273.24(f), the state may request a waiver if the area in which an individual resides has an unemployment rate of over 10%.

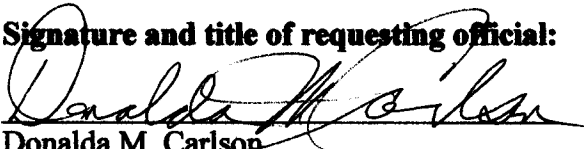
10. Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:

The State is requesting a one-year waiver from October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011.

11. Proposed quality control review procedures:

There are no special quality control procedures needed in conjunction with this waiver.

12. Signature and title of requesting official:



Donalda M. Carlson

Associate Director, Division of Economic Support

13. Date of request:

July 29, 2010