



Food and Nutrition Service

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

June 21, 2024

Angela Morse
Director
Division of Benefit Programs
Department of Social Services
801 East Main Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219-2901

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

Dear Director Morse:

This is in response to the Virginia Department of Social Services' May 24, 2024, 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,

/s/

Catrina L. Kamau
Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

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:** Virginia
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 three individual cities and two regional groupings of nine counties and cities from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025.

The State agency supported its request based upon three individual cities 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 average unemployment rate for the requested areas was 5.3 percent or greater during the 24-month period.

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

Cities	Unemployment Rate
Danville City, VA	5.3
Hopewell City, VA	5.6
Martinsville City, VA	5.7

Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on June 7, 2024.

The State agency supported its request based upon the combined area of five counties and two cities having an aggregate 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 average unemployment rate for the combined area was 5.2 percent during the 24-month period.

Table 2: Combined Area 1 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, February 2021 – January 2023)

Combined Area 1
Brunswick County, VA
Dinwiddie County, VA
Emporia City, VA
Greensville County, VA
Petersburg City, VA
Surry County, VA
Sussex County, VA
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 5.2%

Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on June 7, 2024.

The State agency supported its request based upon the combined area of two counties having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of May 2021 through April 2023. During this period, the national average unemployment rate was 4.0 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 4.8 percent. The average unemployment rate for the combined area was 4.8 percent during the 24-month period.

Table 3: Combined Area 2 (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, May 2021 – April 2023)

Combined Area 2
Buchanan County, VA
Dickenson County, VA
Combined Area Unemployment Rate: 4.8%

Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on June 7, 2024.

- 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:** July 1, 2024
- 11. Expiration Date:** June 30, 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: Michele Thomas
 Email: michele.thomas@dss.virginia.gov
- 14. FNS Regional Office Contact Information:**
 Name: Anita Diggs
 Email: anita.diggs@usda.gov