

September 20, 2006

2030027

SUBJECT: Washington Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD)
Waiver of 7 CFR 273.24

TO: Dennis Stewart, Director
Food Stamp Program
Western Region

This is in response to your memorandum dated August 31, 2006, transmitting the Washington State agency's request to modify and extend its waiver which exempts certain individuals from the work requirements of 7 CFR 273.24.

Our response approving the State's request is attached. If you have any questions, please contact Melissa Daigle at Melissa.Daigle@fns.usda.gov or at (703) 305-2501.

/S/

Harriet Kornegay, Assistant Branch Chief
Certification Policy Branch
Program Development Division

Attachment

cc: All Regions (except WRO)
Bob Dalrymple OAE
John Knaus
Civil Rights

FINAL: FNS:FSP:PDD:CPB:MDAIGLE:09/20/06:mcl
DIR:I:CPB:WAIVERS:FiscalYear2007:2030027 WA ABAWD Mod.& Ext.

Symbol	Surname	Date	Symbol	Surname	Date

WAIVER RESPONSE

1. **Waiver serial number:** 2030027
2. **Type of request:** Extension and Modification
3. **Primary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 273.24 (f)
4. **Secondary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 273.24 (f) (3) (iii)
5. **State:** Washington
6. **Region:** Western
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; did not participate in and comply with requirements of a program under Section 20 or a comparable program established by the State; or was exempt from these requirements.

7 CFR 273.24(f) also provides that, upon the request of a State agency, the Secretary 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.

7 CFR 273.24 (f) (3) (iii) permits State agencies to use “data from the BLS (Bureau of Labor Statistics) or the BLS cooperating agency that an area has a 24-month average unemployment rate that exceeds the national average by 20 percent for any 24-month period no earlier than the same period the ETA used to designate LSAs for the current fiscal year.”

8. **Proposed alternative procedures:** The Washington State Agency is requesting to extend their waiver for one year only in the following 35 counties and 2 cities:
 - Adams, Asotin, Benton, Chelan, Clallum, Clark, Columbia, Cowlitz, Douglas, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, Kitsap, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lewis, Lincoln, Mason, Okanogan, Pacific, Pend Oreille, Pierce, Skagit, Skamania, Snohomish, Spokane, Stevens, Thurston, Whakiakum, Walla Walla, and Yakima Counties
 - Des Moines and SeaTac Cities.

The chart below illustrates data Washington obtained from the BLS, showing that the selected counties collectively and the cities individually had an unemployment rate of at least 20 percent above the national unemployment rate of 5.3 percent, or 6.4 percent, for the 24-month period of calendar years 2004 through 2005:

	CY 2004 - 2005	CY 2004 - 2005	CY 2004 - 2005
	Total	Total number	Average
	labor force	of unemployed	Unemployment Rate
			(one decimal place)
Combined Counties			
Adams County	198,911	14,997	7.5
Asotin County	244,444	15,659	6.4
Benton County	2,069,270	119,911	5.8
Chelan County	945,099	60,944	6.4
Clallam County	697,985	45,310	6.5
Clark County	4,801,472	323,508	6.7
Columbia County	39,715	3,126	7.9
Cowlitz County	1,045,840	82,127	7.9
Douglas County	475,765	28,025	5.9
Ferry County	72,656	7,154	9.8
Franklin County	680,623	48,446	7.1
Garfield County	26,327	1,452	5.5
Grant County	914,826	71,386	7.8
Grays Harbor County	756,669	59,243	7.8
Island County	764,164	47,249	6.2
Jefferson County	325,812	18,192	5.6
Kitsap County	2,906,156	160,983	5.5
Kittitas County	458,394	27,934	6.1
Klickitat County	229,092	19,531	8.5
Lewis County	758,524	58,940	7.8
Lincoln County	115,694	7,212	6.2
Mason County	582,729	39,041	6.7
Okanogan County	498,553	37,991	7.6
Pacific County	226,499	15,909	7.0
Pend Oreille County	122,500	10,189	8.3
Pierce County	8,854,857	573,782	6.5
Skagit County	1,350,895	85,092	6.3
Skamania County	121,343	9,669	8.0
Snohomish County	8,207,340	446,223	5.4
Spokane County	5,423,003	329,394	6.1
Stevens County	439,469	34,931	7.9
Thurston County	2,926,096	156,100	5.3
Wahkiakum County	40,708	2,953	7.3
Walla Walla County	705,253	41,435	5.9
Yakima County	2,837,854	230,394	8.1
Total for Sub-region	50,864,537	3,234,432	6.4

Other Areas			
Des Moines city	367,355	23,398	6.4
SeaTac city	332,572	22,619	6.8
National Unemployment Rate	3,560,658	188,878	5.3
20% Threshold			6.4

9. **Justification for request:** To ensure the equitable distribution of food stamp benefits in areas experiencing high unemployment.
10. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** We are approving the State agency's request in full. Able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) who reside on the aforementioned areas will be exempt from work requirements based on the areas having an unemployment rate at least 20 percent above the national average of 5.3, or 6.4 percent, for the 24-month calendar years of 2004 through 2005.
11. **Regulatory or legislative basis for action:** The waiver is approved pursuant to 7 CFR 273.24(f), which allows the Secretary to waive the applicability of the work requirement provision for any group of individuals in the State if the Secretary makes a determination that the area in which the individuals reside has insufficient jobs.
12. **Conditions and reasons:** None.
13. **Information required for extension:** To receive an extension the State agency must provide data for the affected areas indicating that there continue to be insufficient jobs for individuals subject to 7 CFR 273.24.
14. **Expiration date:** The waiver is approved for one year, effective October 1, 2006 through September 30, 2007.
15. **Limitation on regional office approval of like requests:** Approval of this waiver is limited to the Washington State agency.
16. **Quality control procedures:** N/A
17. **Date of national office action:** September 6, 2006
18. **Date of State agency's request:** August 31, 2006
19. **Date of regional office transmittal of response to State agency:**
20. **Actual implementation date:**