



Food and Nutrition Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

January 24, 2024

Babs Roberts

Director

Community Services Division

Department of Social and Health Services

Post Office Box 45440

Olympia, Washington 98504

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

Dear Director Roberts:


This is in response to the Washington Department of Social and Health Services' January 4, 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,

DocuSigned by:


284F789F20374D9...

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:* Washington
5. *Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Region:* Western
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 38 counties from February 1, 2024, through January 31, 2025.

The State agency supported its request based upon the combined area having an aggregate average unemployment rate 20 percent above the national average for the 24-month period of August 2021 through July 2023. During this period, the national average unemployment rate was 3.8 percent; 20 percent above that rate is 4.5 percent. The aggregate average unemployment rate for the combined area was 4.7 percent during the 24-month period.

Combined Area (Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data, August 2021 – July 2023)
Counties
Adams County, WA
Asotin County, WA
Benton County, WA
Chelan County, WA
Clallam County, WA
Clark County, WA
Columbia County, WA
Cowlitz County, WA
Douglas County, WA
Ferry County, WA
Franklin County, WA
Garfield County, WA
Grant County, WA
Grays Harbor County, WA
Island County, WA

Jefferson County, WA
Kitsap County, WA
Kittitas County, WA
Klickitat County, WA
Lewis County, WA
Lincoln County, WA
Mason County, WA
Okanogan County, WA
Pacific County, WA
Pend Oreille County, WA
Pierce County, WA
San Juan County, WA
Skagit County, WA
Skamania County, WA
Snohomish County, WA
Spokane County, WA
Stevens County, WA
Thurston County, WA

Wahkiakum County, WA
Walla Walla County, WA
Whatcom County, WA
Whitman County, WA
Yakima County, WA
Combined Unemployment Rate: 4.7%

Data extracted from <http://www.bls.gov> on December 10, 2023.

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:* February 1, 2024
11. *Expiration Date:* January 31, 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: Angela Aikins

Email: angela.aikins@dshs.wa.gov

14. FNS Regional Office Contact Information:

Name: Barbara Smith

Phone: 415-705-2229

Email: Barbara.Smith2@usda.gov