

WAIVER REQUEST
Certification Extension due to COVID-19

1. Waiver serial number (if request is extension): N/A

2. Type of request: Initial

3. Primary regulation citation: 7 CFR 273.12(a)(5)(iii)

4. Secondary regulation citation: 7 CFR 273.14(a)

5. State: Florida

6. Region: SERO

7. Regulation requirements: 7 CFR 273.10(f)(3)(i) requires a minimum certification period of six months for most households. 7 CFR 273.10(f)(5) allows states to extend certification periods up to 12 months or 24 months for those households that are all elderly or disabled. 7 CFR 273.12(a)(5)(iii) requires an interim periodic report in the sixth month for households assigned to simplified reporting (SR), if the certification period exceeds six months.

7 CFR 273.14 states no household may participate beyond the expiration of the certification period assigned in accordance with § 273.10(f) without a determination of eligibility for a new period. The State agency must establish procedures for notifying households of expiration dates, providing application forms, scheduling interviews, and recertifying eligible households prior to the expiration of certification periods. Households must apply for recertification and comply with interview and verification requirements.

8. Proposed alternative procedure: The state requests to waive the expiration for certification periods expiring from April through July. Florida is requesting to extend the certification period for two additional months and waive the periodic reporting requirement statewide. The FLORIDA eligibility system currently sends the Notice of Expiration 45 days prior to the end of the certification period. Florida is requesting certification periods expiring from April through July to be extended for two months to ensure these households receive the appropriate Notice of Expiration to renew.

Current Expiration	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020
Proposed Expiration	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020

In addition, the state is requesting new applications approved in April and May, be given a seven-month certification period and waive the periodic reporting requirements statewide.

Florida is requesting this be implemented due to the expected impact from the coronavirus pandemic. The state is ensuring the continuity of, and safe access to, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) during severe pandemic conditions and periods of social

distancing. Florida is being proactive and expects an increase in demand for SNAP benefits due to income lost due to illness or business closures, especially to the tourism industry.

9. Justification for request: This waiver is requested under provisions of 7 CFR 272.3(c)(1)(i) which allows the Food and Nutrition Service to authorize waivers due to extraordinary temporary situations, 7 CFR 272.3(c)(1)(ii) which allows approval of waivers which result in a more effective and efficient administration of the SNAP program, and 7 CFR 272.3(c)(1)(iii) which allows waiver approval due to climatic conditions that require an alternate procedure.

Governor DeSantis issued an executive order on March 9, 2020, declaring a state of emergency to ensure that state and local governments have the resources and flexibility they need to prepare and respond. Extending the certification periods will allow current SNAP recipients to continue to participate and reduce recertification-related workload while ramping up for any increased SNAP caseload. Additionally, extending certification periods provides the State with the flexibility in administering SNAP to mitigate future workload concerns and focus on recovery efforts.

10. Anticipated impact on households and state agency operations: This waiver will ensure current SNAP households continue to receive SNAP benefits without interruption due to their potential inability to submit their recertifications or needed verification during the coronavirus public health emergency.

11. Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affected portion: The estimated number of cases that would be extended under this proposal is approximately:

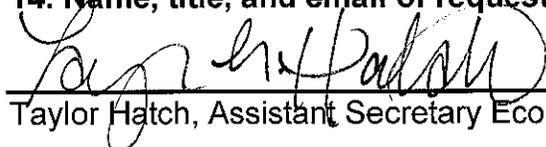
	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020
Estimated Caseload	178,467	181,638	198,895	202,996

The State's current payment error rate is currently under the federal tolerance rate.

12. Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed: The waiver is requested for immediate implementation.

13. Proposed Quality Control Procedures : No special QC procedures are required for cases subject to the provisions of this waiver. Cases should be reviewed in accordance with the provisions of this waiver using standard review procedures contained in the FNS Handbook 310.

14. Name, title, and email of requesting official:



Taylor Hatch, Assistant Secretary Economic Self Sufficiency

15. Date of request: March 21, 2020