

FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION

April 13, 2020

Eric Ratchford
Regional Division Director
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Mid-Atlantic Region, USDA-FCS
Food and Nutrition Service
Mercer Corporate Park
300 Corporate Boulevard
Robbinsville, NJ 08691

Dear Mr. Ratchford:

Maryland proposes to suspend QC reviews for the months of April, May, and June. This process is necessary because the state is operating under a State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the State of Emergency, SNAP eligibility offices are closed to the public in observance of social distancing and other public health guidelines. Meanwhile, the state is seeing an unprecedented number of new SNAP applications due to deteriorating economic conditions. Suspending QC operations will allow Maryland to temporarily focus all efforts to SNAP eligibility determination and provide nutrition assistance to Marylanders who need desperately.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at netsanet.kibret@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,



Netsanet Kibret
Executive Director

cc: Alexis Lometz
Augustin Ntabaganyimana
La Sherra Ayala
Yolanda Dockery

WAIVER REQUEST – MARYLAND

1. **Waiver serial number:** N/A
2. **Type of request:** Initial
3. **Primary regulation citation:** 7 CFR 275.10-14
4. **Secondary regulation citation, if any:** N/A
5. **State:** Maryland
6. **Region:** Mid-Atlantic Region
7. **Regulatory requirements:** Under 7 CFR 275.10-14, as part of the Performance Reporting System, each State agency is responsible for conducting quality control reviews.
8. **Proposed alternative procedures:** Maryland proposes to suspend QC reviews for the months of April, May, and June. This process is necessary because the state is operating under a State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
9. **Justification for request:** Under the State of Emergency, SNAP eligibility offices are closed to the public in observance of social distancing and other public health guidelines. Meanwhile, the state is seeing an unprecedented number of new SNAP applications due to deteriorating economic conditions. This request is justified pursuant to 7 CFR 272.3(c) (1) (ii) which permits FNS to authorize waivers that result in a more effective and efficient administration of the program. With the continued increase in SNAP applications stemming from a deteriorating economy, the suspension will also allow state workers currently dedicated to QC reviews to focus on a more immediate priority of processing SNAP applications.
10. **Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:**
Suspending QC operations will allow Maryland to temporarily focus all efforts to SNAP eligibility determination and provide nutrition assistance to Marylanders who it need desperately. This will help the state improve customer service at the time when eligibility determination delays could mean that a family is unable to put food on the table.
11. **Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affected portion:** The proposed procedures would impact all SNAP QC reviews planned for the months of April, May, and June- approximately 200 sample cases.
12. **Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:** Maryland is requesting that QC reviews be suspended for the months of April, May, and June. The State will resume reviews effective July 1, 2020.

13. Proposed quality control review procedures:

There will be no QC reviews conducted during the period in which the suspension will be in effect.

14. Signature and title of requesting official:



Netsanet Kibret
Executive Director, Family Investment Administration
netsanet.kibret@maryland.gov

15. Date of request: April 13, 2020