

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

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April 21, 2020

Dana Platin
Division Director
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Mountain Plains Regional Office
1244 Speer Blvd 903
Denver, CO 80204

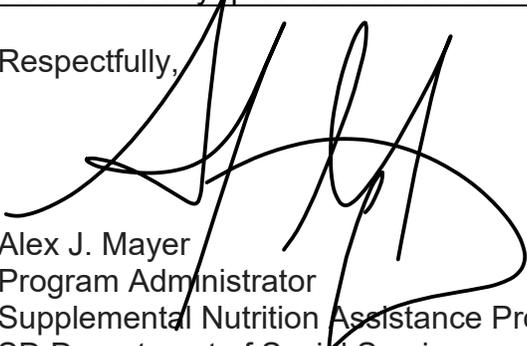
Dear Ms. Platin,

Please find the attached waiver extension request. The State is requesting to waive the regulation at 7 CFR 273.2(a)(2), 7 CFR 273.2(e), and 7 CFR 273.14(b)(3). The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the United States and has required every state agency to do its part to maintain access to vital supports like SNAP, while too taking proactive measures to reduce further transmission of the virus. The State of South Dakota has begun implementing such provisions to reduce the proliferation of this virus amongst those in the State, most recently issuing an Executive Order closing all South Dakota Department of Social Services' (DSS) offices.

The closure of our State offices has created a unique program constraint when attempting to certify households because much of our State staff are unable to work remotely. This leaves a limited team made up of supervisors and regional managers able to complete all aspects of SNAP certifications, while also ensuring access is maintain to our other programs like TANF and Medicaid. The agency remains committed to our most vulnerable citizens. It is then of the utmost importance that the State not only continue to be able to issue benefits, but that we assure accurate and timely determination for our citizens who are in need of food assistance during this time.

If there are any questions related to this request, please let me know.

Respectfully,



Alex J. Mayer
Program Administrator
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
SD Department of Social Services
Division of Economic Assistance

cc: Philip Fraley, FNS USDA Regional Office, SNAP Operations Branch Chief
Kari Mardyla-Goddard, FNS USDA Regional Office, Acting Operational Team Lead

STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):**
2. **Type of request:** Extension
3. **Statutory citation:** Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended
4. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.2(a)(2), 7 CFR 273.2(e), and 7 CFR 273.14(b)(3)
5. **State:** South Dakota
6. **Region:** MPRO
7. **Regulatory requirements:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations at 7 C.F.R. 273.2(a)(2) requires that the application process include an interview.

Regulations at 7 C.F.R. 273.2(e) requires that the State agency interview households for eligibility before certifying.

Regulations at 7 C.F.R. 273.14(b)(3) requires that State agencies interview households as part of the recertification process.

8. **Description of alternative procedures:**

The State will not be required to interview a household at initial application or recertification, provided that the applicant's identity has been verified and all other mandatory verifications in 7 C.F.R. 273.2(f)(1) have been completed. The State will be required to contact the household if any information on the application is questionable and cannot be verified. The State will make every attempt to verify household circumstances through data matching and mailing or uploading verifications to the State system.
9. **Justification for request:**

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the United States and has required every state agency to do its part to maintain access to vital supports like SNAP, while too taking proactive measures to reduce further transmission of the virus. The State of South Dakota has begun implementing such provisions to reduce the proliferation of this virus amongst those in the State, most recently issuing an Executive Order closing all South Dakota Department of Social Services' (DSS) offices.

The closure of our State offices has created a unique program constraint when attempting to certify households as much of our State staff are unable to work remotely. This leaves a limited team made up of supervisors and regional managers able to complete all aspects of SNAP certifications, while also ensuring access is

maintain to our other programs like TANF and Medicaid. The agency remains committed to our most vulnerable citizens. It is then of the utmost importance that the State not only continue to be able to issue benefits, but that we assure accurate and timely determination for our citizens who are in need of food assistance during this time.

As a result of the State office closures the State agency has been significantly overwhelmed with maintaining operations. This alternative of waiving the interview requirements has streamlined processes ensuring the State is able keep up with the high demand for our support during this time of uncertainty in our country.

10. Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:

This waiver will assure access to vital program supports are maintained so there is consistency for households. Furthermore, State agency operations remain streamlined by removing the interview requirement for this limited time, aiding in the agency's response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Finally, these measures reduce the spread of COVID-19 reducing potential instances of exposure for both customer and staff. This allows the State to have sufficient staff in local office and maintains timely access to SNAP throughout this time of uncertainty.

11. Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:

The State is requesting a short-term waiver, from June 1, 2020 through to August 31, 2020 for the continuation of the state waiving interview requirements.

12. Proposed quality control review procedures:

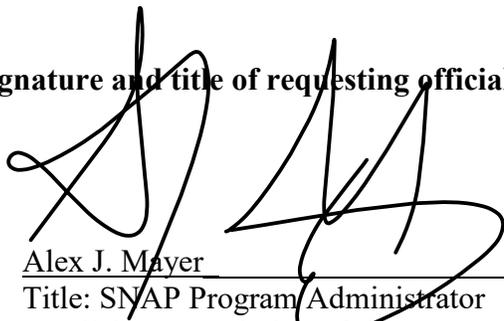
There are no special quality control procedures needed in conjunction with this waiver.

13. State agency submitting waiver request and State contact person:

State Agency: State of South Dakota, Department of Social Services

State Contact: Alex Mayer, SNAP Program Administrator

14. Signature and title of requesting official:



Alex J. Mayer

Title: SNAP Program Administrator

Email for transmission of response: Alex.Mayer@state.sd.us

15. Date of request: April 21, 2020

16. State agency staff contact (name/email/telephone):

Alex Mayer 605-773-5468

- 17. Regional office contact person (to be completed by FNS regional office):**
Philip Fraley at Philip.Fraley@usda.gov