



Food and
Nutrition
Service

1320 Braddock Place
Alexandria, VA
22314

May 21, 2020

Sean Brown
Deputy Commissioner
Vermont Department for Children and Families
280 State Drive, HC 1 North
Waterbury, Vermont 05671

RE: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – Vermont Waiver Request to Waive State Management Evaluations Due to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Denial

Dear Mr. Brown:

This letter transmits the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) denial of the Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF) request to waive the requirements for State Management Evaluations (ME) for the remainder of Federal Fiscal Year 2020 (FY 2020).

FNS recognizes that the State is facing significant challenges with regard to conducting its MEs at this time due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. However, FNS does not find it appropriate to waive the State's ME requirements for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Instead, FNS suggests that the State agency consider submitting a request for an alternate review schedule, as per 7 CFR 275.5(b)(2), to the FNS Northeast Regional Office for consideration. This option may provide the State with considerable administrative relief because the State could postpone MEs into FY 2021 or FY 2022, provided that each project area in the State is reviewed at least every 3 years and the alternative schedule meets all other standards set by 7 CFR 275.5(b)(2). FNS stands ready to provide additional guidance and technical assistance if the State chooses an alternate review schedule.

In addition, in accordance with 7 CFR 275.9(a), the State has discretion to adjust its ME methods. FNS believes it is reasonable for the State to make such an adjustment in response to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. For example, ME activities can be completed remotely or otherwise tailored or streamlined, as the State agency deems necessary and appropriate.

FNS guidance for States in response to COVID-19 is available at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/disaster/pandemic/covid-19>. Requests, approvals, and denials for waivers and adjustments will also be posted to this webpage.

FNS is ready to provide technical assistance to State agencies as they seek to maintain operations and serve clients during the current Public Health Emergency. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact your respective Regional Office representative.

Sincerely,

Sasha Gersten-Paal
Director
Program Development Division
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program