

**Request to Remove Regulations Concerning Student
Impacted By the COVID-19 Virus**

1. **Type of Request:** Initial
2. **Primary Citation:** 7 CFR 273.5(a)
3. **State:** West Virginia
4. **Region:** MARO
5. **Regulatory Requirements:**

Under 7 CFR 273.5(a), individuals are not eligible to participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as a member of any household if the individual is a student enrolled at least half-time in an institution of higher education unless the individual qualifies for an exemption contained in paragraph (b) of the section.

6. **Description of Alternative Procedures:**

The State of West Virginia is requesting to temporarily waive this requirement so that a student may, if otherwise eligible, participate in the SNAP.

7. **Justification for Request:**

Due to the Coronavirus COVID-19, the State of West Virginia is operating under a state of emergency. All public and private colleges and most businesses have been closed. As such, students are no longer receiving meals through their purchased meal plans. In addition, they do not have the opportunities to meet the work requirement exemptions found in 7 CFR 273.5(b).

Due to Covid-19:

Residents of the State are confirmed to have contracted Covid-19;

Businesses have closed or significantly reduced their hours;

Some or all areas of the State are containment or quarantine zones;

The State's residents have experienced economic impacts due to job suspensions or losses; and

The State's residents have been directed to practice social distancing

8. Anticipated Impact on Households and State Agency Operations:

This waiver will allow individuals who follow federal and state authorities' instructions to practice social distancing to not lose or be denied SNAP eligibility during a declared public health emergency. This change would assist in streamlining SNAP applications during a national pandemic.

9. Caseload Information, Including Percent, Characteristics, and Quality Control Error Rate for Affection Portion (If Applicable):

The proposed procedures would be for those who apply for SNAP benefits or are part of an existing SNAP household or whose income is being counted towards the calculation of a SNAP household beginning 04/01/2020 and ending the last day of the month following the month the declaration of a public health emergency is lifted.

10. Anticipated Implementation Date and Time Period For Which Waiver Is Needed:

The State is requesting this waiver from April 1, 2020 through the last day of the month following the month that the public health emergency related to the Coronavirus COVID-19 is lifted.

11. Proposed Quality Control Review Procedures:

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

12. State Agency Submitting Waiver Request and State Contact Person:

The State of West Virginia, Department of Health and Human Resources.
State contact person: Monica Hamilton

13. Signature and Title of Requesting Official:

Linda Watts

Linda Watts, Commissioner
Bureau for Children and Families
West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources

14. Date of Request: March 24, 2020

15. State Agency Staff Contact (Name/Email/Telephone):

Monica Hamilton, Monica.A.Hamilton@wv.gov, (304) 356-4620

16. Regional Office Contact Person (to be completed by FNS Regional office):