



Eric Holcomb, Governor  
State of Indiana

*Division of Family Resources*  
402 W. WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM W392  
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46204-2747

March 23, 2020

Julie Mikkelson, Director  
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program  
USDS, Food and Nutrition Service  
77 West Jackson Blvd 20<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60604-3507

Dear Ms. Mikkelson:

Attached please find new waiver requests in response to the March 13, 2020, national declaration of emergency due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic as well as the public health emergency declared in Indiana on March 6, 2020. Approval of these waivers will allow us to focus only on new SNAP applications as they continue to be received, and to process the applications immediately following the interview without pending for documentary evidence to return. Further, while the number of applications increases, the current workforce level to process the work, already strained, will be unable to keep up with the demand under the current procedures.

Indiana is requesting waivers to do the following alternate procedures during the state of emergency:

- Allow for all certifications periods to be extended by twelve months for all recertifications that become due during the state of emergency;
- Suspend all reporting requirements during the certification period (including the submission of the Interim Report) during the time Indiana is under a state of emergency; and
- Suspend the requirement for state agencies to notify and grant households of the option to conduct SNAP certification and recertification interviews in-person or in the residence of the individual.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact David Smalley at [David.Smalley@fssa.in.gov](mailto:David.Smalley@fssa.in.gov) or (317) 232-2010.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Adrienne Shields, Director  
FSSA/Division of Family Resources



## STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):**
2. **Type of request:** New
3. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.10(f)(1),(3) and (5)
4. **Secondary regulation citation, if any:**
5. **State:** Indiana
6. **Region:** Midwest Region
7. **Regulatory requirements:** The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations at 7 CFR 273.10(f)(3) provide that the State agency must certify each eligible household for a definite period of time. State agencies must assign the longest certification period possible based on the predictability of the household's circumstances. The first month of the certification period will be the first month for which the household is eligible to participate. The certification period cannot exceed 12 months except to accommodate a household's transitional benefit period. Federal rule 7 CFR 273.10(f)(1) provides that a State agency may certify for up to 24 months households in which all adult members are elderly or disabled. Additionally, 7 CFR 273.(f)(S) provides State agencies the ability to lengthen a household's current certification period once it is established, as long as the total months of the certification period do not exceed 24 months for households in which all adult members are elderly or disabled, or 12 months for other households. If the State agency extends a household's certification period, it must advise the household of the new certification ending date with a notice containing the same information as the notice of eligibility set forth in paragraph (g)(1)(i)(A) of this section.
8. **Proposed alternative procedures:** Indiana FSSA/Division of Family Resources (DFR) is requesting a waiver of the regulatory requirement and proposes to extend all certification periods by an additional twelve (12) months for recertifications that become due during the time Indiana is under a state of emergency due to COVID-19. Additionally, the waiver would not require Indiana to send a notice to households regarding the extended certification period. Rather, Indiana would not send the notice of expiration until it would be due under the extended certification period.
9. **Justification for request:** On January 31, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern as well as Health and Human Services Secretary, Alex M. Azar II, declared a public health emergency for the United States. The Governor of Indiana, Eric Holcomb, declared a state of emergency of the entire state of Indiana on March 6, 2020, (Executive Order 20-02) to protect the well-being of the citizens of Indiana from the dangerous effects of COVID-19. In addition to the state-declared state of emergency,

on March 13, 2020, President Trump declared a national state of emergency over the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approval of this waiver will assist in protecting the lives; safety and health of the citizens of Indiana due to limiting personal contact (social distancing) to help prevent the rapid spread of this virus. It will allow DFR county offices to focus only on new SNAP applications as they continue to be received. Further, while the number of applications increases, the current workforce level to process the work, already strained, is at risk of becoming unsteady. Minimizing the number of cases that have to be "worked" in order for individuals to maintain SNAP benefits is crucial. We are requesting a full year extension for all recertifications because only extending recertifications to the month after the state of emergency ends will overwhelm the county offices and make the recovery from this pandemic continue over a longer period of time.

- 10. Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:** This waiver will allow currently certified households that become due for a recertification during the state of emergency to continue to receive SNAP for an additional 12 months without the need to redetermine eligibility. This will help prevent exposure of our customers, as well as state employees, to COVID-19. Additionally, this will allow county offices to focus only on new SNAP applications as they continue to be received. Further, while the number of applications increases, the current workforce level to process the work, already strained, is at risk of becoming unsteady.
- 11. Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affected portion (if applicable):** This waiver will apply to all SNAP applicant and recipient households. Indiana's federal fiscal year (FFY) 2018 quality control error rate was 7.18%. The number of SNAP recipients as of January 2020 was 561,268.
- 12. Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:** Immediately upon approval for the period of time during which Indiana is under a state of emergency due to COVID-19.
- 13. Proposed quality control review procedures:** Cases will be reviewed in accordance with this waiver approval.
- 14. State agency submitting waiver request and State contact person:** Indiana FSSA/Division of Family Resources.
- 15. Signature and title of requesting official:**

Adrienne Shields  
Director, Division of Family Resources  
Adrienne.Shields@fssa.in.gov

- 16. Date of request:** March 23, 2020


**17. State agency staff contact (name/email/telephone):** David Smalley, [David.Smalley@fssa.in.gov](mailto:David.Smalley@fssa.in.gov), (317) 232-2010

**18. FNS Regional office contact person:** Jerrie Farinas, [Jenie.Farinas@usda.gov](mailto:Jenie.Farinas@usda.gov)

## STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):**
2. **Type of request:** New
3. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.12(a)(5)
4. **Secondary regulation citation, if any:**
5. **State:** Indiana
6. **Region:** Midwest Region
7. **Regulatory requirements:** The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations at 7 CFR 273.12(a)(5) requires certain reporting requirements for households while receiving benefits, including submitting an interim report in the middle of the certification period. The State must act on changes and benefits are adjusted accordingly.
8. **Proposed alternative procedures:** Indiana FSSA/Division of Family Resources is requesting to suspend all reporting requirements, including the requirement for Indiana to issue an interim report and for clients to complete an Interim Report while under a state of emergency. Changes would be reported and verifications would be obtained at the next recertification after the emergency ends. Indiana would only act on changes that would result in an increase of the household's benefit during the emergency.
9. **Justification for request:** On January 31, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern as well as Health and Human Services Secretary, Alex M. Azar II, declared a public health emergency for the United States. The Governor of Indiana, Eric Holcomb, declared a public health emergency for the entire state of Indiana on March 6 2020, (Executive Order 20-02) to protect the well-being of the citizens of Indiana from the dangerous effects of COVID-19. In addition to the state-declared emergency, on March 13, 2020, President Trump declared a national state of emergency over the COVID-19 pandemic. Approval of this waiver will assist in protecting the lives, safety and health of the citizens of Indiana due to limiting personal contact (social distancing) to help prevent the rapid spread of this virus.

This will help prevent exposure of our customers, as well as state employees, to COVID-19. Additionally, this waiver will allow DFR local office staff the time to focus on new SNAP applications rather than processing changes that would decrease clients' benefits and requesting/obtaining documentary or collateral contact verifications. It would also remove the potential of client's benefits terminating for failing to comply with the verification request during the emergency. Further, while the number of applications increases, the current State workforce level to process the work, already strained, will be unable to keep up with the demand.

- 10. Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:** This waiver seeks to suspend reporting requirements during the time Indiana is under a state of emergency; changes would be reported and verifications would be obtained at the next recertification. Additionally, this waiver will allow DFR local office staff the time to focus on new SNAP applications rather than processing changes that would decrease clients' benefits and requesting/obtaining documentary or collateral contact verifications. It would also remove the potential of client's benefits terminating for failing to comply with the verification request during the emergency. Furthermore, while the number of applications increases, the current State workforce level to process the work, already strained, will be unable to keep up with the demand.
- 11. Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affection portion (if applicable):** This waiver will apply to all SNAP recipient households. Indiana's federal fiscal year (FFY) 2018 quality control error rate was 7.18%. The number of SNAP recipients as of January 2020 was 561,268.
- 12. Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:** Immediately upon approval until the month following the month the state of emergency ends.
- 13. Proposed quality control review procedures:** Cases will be reviewed in accordance with this waiver approval.
- 14. State agency submitting waiver request and State contact person:** Indiana FSSA/Division of Family Resources. State policy contacts: David Smalley and Suzanne Tryan.
- 15. Signature and title of requesting official:**  
  
Adrienne Shields  
Director, FSSA/Division of Family Resources  
Adrienne.Shields@fssa.in.gov
- 16. Date of request:** March 23, 2020
- 17. State agency staff contact (name/email/telephone):** David Smalley, David.Smalley@fssa.in.gov, (317) 232-2010
- 18. Regional office contact person:** Jenie Farinas, [Jenie.Farinas@usda.gov](mailto:Jenie.Farinas@usda.gov)

## STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):**
2. **Type of request:** New
3. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.2(e)(1), 7 CFR 273.2(e)(2), 7 CFR 273.2(e)(2)(i), 7 CFR 273.14(b)(3)
4. **Secondary regulation citation, if any:**
5. **State:** Indiana
6. **Region:** Midwest Region
7. **Regulatory requirements:** The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations at 7 CFR 273.2(e)(1) provide, in part, interviews may be conducted at the SNAP office or other mutually acceptable location, including a household's residence.

Regulatory requirements at 7 CFR 273.2 (e)(2) provide, in part, the State agency may provide a home-based interview only if a household meets the hardship criteria and requests one. Also, the state agency must grant a face-to-face interview to any household that requests one.

Regulatory requirements at 7 CFR 273.2(e)(2)(i) provide that the State agency must inform each applicant of the opportunity for a face-to-face interview at the time of application and recertification and grant a face-to-face interview to any household that requests one at any time, even if the State agency has elected the option to routinely provide telephone interviews.

Regulatory requirements at 7 CFR 273.14(b)(3) provide as part of the recertification process, the State agency must conduct an interview with a member of the household or its authorized representative at least once every 12 months for households certified for 12 months or less. The provisions of § 273.2(e) also apply to interviews for recertification. The State agency may choose not to interview the household at interim recertifications within the 12-month period. The requirement for an interview once every 12 months may be waived in accordance with § 273.2(e)(2).

8. **Proposed alternative procedures:** Indiana FSSA/Division of Family Resources is requesting a waiver of the regulatory requirement that requires the option for a face-to-face or in-home interview. Indiana will conduct all interviews by telephone as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic of 2019.

Indiana rules currently allow for telephone interviews at applications and recertification.

9. **Justification for request:** On January 31, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern as well as Health and Human Services Secretary, Alex M. Azar II, declared a public health emergency for the United States. The

Governor of Indiana, Eric Holcomb, declared a public health emergency for the entire state of Indiana on March 6, 2020, (Executive Order 20-02) to protect the well-being of the citizens of Indiana from the dangerous effects of COVID-19. In addition to the state-declared emergency, on March 13, 2020, President Trump declared a national state of emergency over the COVID-19 pandemic. Approval of this waiver will assist in protecting the lives, safety and health of the citizens of Indiana due to limiting personal contact (social distancing) to help prevent the rapid spread of this virus.

- 10. Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:** This waiver will allow SNAP application and recertification interviews to be conducted by telephone only. This will help prevent exposure of our customers, as well as state and county employees, to COVID-19.
- 11. Caseload information, including percent, characteristics, and quality control error rate for affection portion (if applicable):** This waiver will apply to all SNAP applicant and recipient households. Indiana's federal fiscal year (FFY) 2018 quality control error rate was 7.18%. The number of SNAP recipients as of January 2020 was 561,268.
- 12. Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed:** Immediately upon approval until the month following the month the state of emergency ends.
- 13. Proposed quality control review procedures:** Cases will be reviewed in accordance with this waiver approval.
- 14. State agency submitting waiver request and State contact person:** Indiana FSSA/Division of Family Resources, Adrienne Shields.
- 15. Signature and title of requesting official:**  

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Adrienne Shields  
Director, FSSA/Division of Family Resources  
Adrienne.Shields@fssa.in.gov
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