



Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

Park Office  
Center

3101 Park  
Center Drive  
Alexandria  
VA 22302

**DEC 20 2018**

Ms. Iwona Ramian  
SNAP Administrator  
Rhode Island Department of Human Service  
57 Howard Avenue  
Louis Pasteur Bldg. Room 121  
Cranston, Rhode Island 02920

RE: SNAP – Rhode Island Request to Extend Certification Periods

Dear Ms. Ramian:

This letter is in response to the Rhode Island Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) request to waive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations at 7 CFR 273.10(f)(5). This waiver would allow the State to extend certain households' certification periods by an additional two months. Although the State only requested a waiver of program regulations, extending certification periods would also require a waiver of Section 3(f) of the Food and Nutrition Act as these households were already certified for the maximum statutorily allowable length.

In its request, DHHS shared that approximately 3,000 Rhode Island SNAP households with certification periods expiring October 31, 2018, were not sent a Notice of Expiration or provided an application for recertification. This mailing issue resulted in 2,500 of the 3,000 households failing to recertify before their certification periods expired. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) recognizes that the State agency is dedicated to program access and has been working to correct a broad range of issues associated with their eligibility system. However, we are denying Rhode Island's request.

FNS acknowledges the progress DHHS continues to make in resolving these system issues and appreciates the State's ongoing efforts to mitigate impact on SNAP households. FNS National Office and Northeast Regional Office remain committed to providing continued technical assistance and support. If you have questions or need additional information regarding this decision, please contact [Matthew.Henschel@usda.gov](mailto:Matthew.Henschel@usda.gov) or (615) 565-1610.

Sincerely,

Lizbeth Silbermann  
Director  
Program Development Division