

**DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER NO. FOOD ASSISTANCE AND ENERGY  
PROGRAMS 5-2006,  
2007 Regional ABAWD Two-Year Waiver (November 16, 2006)**

**(Food Stamps)**

**TO:** County Directors of Social Services

**ATTENTION:** Food Stamp Supervisors

**DATE:** November 16, 2006

**SUBJECT:** 2007 Regional ABAWD Two-Year Waiver

**EFFECTIVE:** December 1, 2006

**I. Background**

Each year, the Department of Labor releases a national list of counties that have a 24-month average unemployment rate that exceeds the national average by 20 percent. Seven areas within North Carolina were on the August 15, 2006 list. Each is a contiguous sub-area of one of the seven economic development regions in the state. The seven regions are West, Piedmont Triad, Charlotte, Research Triangle, Northeast, Eastern, and Southeast. Seventy two North Carolina counties in these regions meet the high unemployment criteria.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved a waiver request to exempt Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWDs) from the three-month time limit in the seventy two counties for two years. The waiver is effective December 1, 2006, through November 30, 2008, and is called the 2007 Regional ABAWD Two-Year waiver.

Twenty eight counties are not eligible under the guidelines for the 2007 Regional Two Year waiver. These counties will continue to exempt their ABAWD population by utilizing the ABAWD 15% exemption. Under this exemption, USDA allows states to exempt no more than 15% of a state's ABAWD population from the three month time limits. These counties will be allowed to exempt ABAWDs from the time limits through November 30, 2008.

According to USDA regulations, ABAWDs in the counties geographically exempt from Employment and Training activities cannot be automatically exempt from the time limits. These counties are in either under the waiver or under the 15% exemption.

Under the 2007 Regional ABAWD Two Year waiver or the 15% exemption, all ABAWDs statewide can continue to receive Food Stamp benefits beyond the three months out of thirty-six months regulatory restriction. This can aid in your county's efforts to increase participation in the Food Stamp Program by exempting as many ABAWDs as possible from the time limits.

A chart is attached to identify each county's status regarding treatment of ABAWDs.

## **II. POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

A. For all counties covered by the Regional Waiver or who are covered by the 15% exemption, certify households containing an ABAWD according to the household's recertification type. Work registration requirements are still applicable under the ABAWD waiver and the 15% exemption, Food Stamp Employment and Training (E&T) requirements and sanctions for non-compliance continue to apply.

B. January 2006 through December 2008 is the current thirty-six month period for ABAWD eligibility. Use an ABAWD tracking chart to document and track the 36-month period.

C. Regional Waiver Counties: Effective December 1, 2006, enter code 13 in the work registration field (80E) for newly eligible ABAWDs. Enter code Z in field 80K to track the ABAWD. Code 13 will be entered automatically, if appropriate, the night of November 30 for individuals who currently have an ABAWD code. No changes are required to the code until the waiver expires or the eligibility of the ABAWD changes. For Quality Control purposes, please note the waiver dates on each individual ABAWD tracking form.

### **Counties covered under the 2007 Regional Two Year Waiver**

<b>Alamance</b>	<b>Franklin</b>	<b>Pender</b>
<b>Alexander</b>	<b>Gaston</b>	<b>Perquimans</b>
<b>Alleghany</b>	<b>Gates</b>	<b>Person</b>
<b>Anson</b>	<b>Graham</b>	<b>Pitt</b>
<b>Ashe</b>	<b>Granville</b>	<b>Richmond</b>
<b>Avery</b>	<b>Greene</b>	<b>Robeson</b>
<b>Beaufort</b>	<b>Halifax</b>	<b>Rockingham</b>
<b>Bertie</b>	<b>Haywood</b>	<b>Rowan</b>
<b>Bladen</b>	<b>Hertford</b>	<b>Rutherford</b>
<b>Brunswick</b>	<b>Hoke</b>	<b>Scotland</b>
<b>Burke</b>	<b>Hyde</b>	<b>Stanly</b>
<b>Caldwell</b>	<b>Iredell</b>	<b>Stokes</b>

<b>Camden</b>	<b>Jackson</b>	<b>Swain</b>
<b>Caswell</b>	<b>Jones</b>	<b>Transylvania</b>
<b>Catawba</b>	<b>Lenoir</b>	<b>Tyrrell</b>
<b>Cherokee</b>	<b>Lincoln</b>	<b>Vance</b>
<b>Chowan</b>	<b>Macon</b>	<b>Warren</b>
<b>Clay</b>	<b>Madison</b>	<b>Washington</b>
<b>Cleveland</b>	<b>Martin</b>	<b>Wayne</b>
<b>Columbus</b>	<b>McDowell</b>	<b>Wilkes</b>
<b>Cumberland</b>	<b>Montgomery</b>	<b>Wilson</b>
<b>Davidson</b>	<b>Nash</b>	<b>Yancey</b>
<b>Duplin</b>	<b>Northampton</b>	
<b>Edgecombe</b>	<b>Pasquotank</b>	

D. 15% Exemption Counties: Effective December 1, 2006, enter code 16 in the work registration field (80E) for newly eligible ABAWDs. Enter code Z in field 80K to track the ABAWD. Code 16 will be entered automatically, if appropriate, the night of November 30 for those individuals who currently have an ABAWD code. Because your county is waived by the 15% exemption, there is no need to change the code until the waiver expires or the eligibility of the ABAWD changes. For Quality Control purposes, please note the waiver dates on each individual ABAWD tracking form.

**Counties covered by the 15% ABAWD Exemption**

<b>Buncombe</b>	<b>Guilford</b>	<b>Pamlico</b>
<b>Cabarrus</b>	<b>Harnett</b>	<b>Polk</b>
<b>Carteret</b>	<b>Henderson</b>	<b>Randolph</b>
<b>Chatham</b>	<b>Johnston</b>	<b>Sampson</b>
<b>Craven</b>	<b>Lee</b>	<b>Union</b>
<b>Currituck</b>	<b>Mecklenburg</b>	<b>Wake</b>
<b>Dare</b>	<b>Moore</b>	<b>Watauga</b>
<b>Davie</b>	<b>New Hanover</b>	<b>Yadkin</b>
<b>Durham</b>	<b>Onslow</b>	
<b>Forsyth</b>	<b>Orange</b>	

E. Workfare Counties: There are no procedural changes as a result of the Regional Waiver. However, code 11 will be entered automatically in field 80E, if appropriate, the night of November 30 for those individuals who currently have an ABAWD code.

**Workfare Counties**

Mitchell Surry

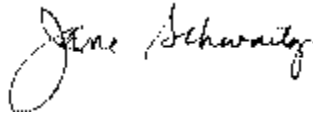
### III. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

Effective December 1, 2006, at each application, recertification, and change in situation, evaluate each potential ABAWD. Determine eligibility as appropriate. Use the appropriate two-digit numerical ABAWD work registration code found in Food Stamp Manual Section 245 to track ABAWDs.

At each application, recertification, and change in situation, if there is an ABAWD whose dependent relationship code in field 80K is J (ineligible ABAWD), add the ABAWD back to the food stamp case after verifying all other eligibility factors. Change the dependent relationship code to Z, and use the appropriate work registration code (field 80E) and ABAWD tracking form. Depending on the E&T activities in your county, re-register the ABAWD with the Employment Security Commission using the NCSES-2624 or refer the ABAWD to Career Start, if appropriate.

If you have any questions concerning the policy contained in this letter, please contact your Food Assistance and Energy Program Representative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane Schwartz". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Jane Schwartz, Chief

Economic Services Section

JS:dp