

From: Pisarik, Holly
To: Wingo, Karen <Karen.Wingo@dss.sc.gov>
Godfrey, Rob <RobGodfrey@gov.sc.gov>
Glaccum, David <DavidGlaccum@gov.sc.gov>
CC: Baker, Josh <JoshBaker@gov.sc.gov>
Symmes, Brian <BrianSymmes@gov.sc.gov>
Date: 4/22/2016 1:03:16 PM
Subject: FW: Revised statement for AP on ABAWD Time Limits

I've suggested revisions below. Thoughts?

From: Wingo, Karen [<mailto:Karen.Wingo@dss.sc.gov>]
Sent: Friday, April 22, 2016 11:27 AM
To: Godfrey, Rob; Glaccum, David
Cc: Pisarik, Holly; Baker, Josh; Symmes, Brian
Subject: RE: Revised statement for AP on ABAWD Time Limits

Her questions, provided over the phone, were:

Is it accurate that SC would qualify for a waiver next year? If so, on what basis and why didn't we apply for the waiver?

Proposed Response:

DSS and our partners are committed to providing ABAWDs support and assistance with obtaining gainful employment. As such, South Carolina, since 2012, has required ABAWDs to work or participate in employment training in order to receive benefits and has provided employment training programs in all 46 counties. Of significance, since 2012, there has been no difference between the federally-mandated work requirements and South Carolina work requirements for ABAWDs. Because South Carolina received a waiver from the federal requirement, however, South Carolina did not track compliance with these requirements as stringently as federal law requires. Instead of tracking compliance for all 12 months as required by federal law, South Carolina only tracked compliance 3 out of 12 months. As of March 31, 2016, without the waiver, South Carolina will now track compliance all 12 months. Simply put, South Carolina's choice not to apply for a continued waiver will have little to no impact on what was already required of ABAWDs in South Carolina.

By way of background on the waiver, in 1996, federal legislation was passed which limited ABAWDs' receipt of SNAP benefits to three months in a 36-month period for individuals who did not meet work requirements. Under the law, however, states can request a temporary waiver of the ABAWD time limit when the state has an employment rate of over 10% or it does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for individuals. In order to qualify for a statewide waiver based on unemployment figures, the state must have a seasonally adjusted total unemployment rate (TUR) for the most recent three months reaching at least: (1) 6.5% ; and (2) 110% of such TUR for the corresponding three-month periods ending in either or both of the two preceding calendar years. South Carolina has applied for and received a state-wide waiver of the time limit requirements for ABAWDs since the early 2000s.

Although current data suggests that South Carolina may no longer qualify for a state-wide waiver in 2017, until the 2017 Labor Surplus List is published, the Department cannot determine whether South Carolina will continue to qualify for a state-wide waiver or a partial waiver for particular counties.

Karen Luchka Wingo

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From: Godfrey, Rob [<mailto:RobGodfrey@gov.sc.gov>]
Sent: Friday, April 22, 2016 9:30 AM
To: Glaccum, David <DavidGlaccum@gov.sc.gov>
Cc: Wingo, Karen <Karen.Wingo@dss.sc.gov>; Pisarik, Holly <HollyPisarik@gov.sc.gov>; Baker, Josh <JoshBaker@gov.sc.gov>; Symmes, Brian <BrianSymmes@gov.sc.gov>
Subject: Re: Revised statement for AP on ABAWD Time Limits

Thanks everyone. Can we get a clean email with the specific questions and proposed final answer(s)?

Rob Godfrey
Office of Gov. Nikki Haley

On Apr 21, 2016, at 7:25 PM, Glaccum, David <DavidGlaccum@gov.sc.gov> wrote:

Yes, the mandatory program that mandated work and/or E&T participation to receive benefits. That is important because technically ABAWDS were already required to work under the waiver, we just didn't track them up to federal standards. People should understand this isn't a wholesale change, just better oversight of benefit delivery and more client-agency interaction which will hopefully lead to better job outcomes.

After that change we still need the green light from our press office (copied).

DMG

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 21, 2016, at 7:18 PM, Wingo, Karen <Karen.Wingo@dss.sc.gov> wrote:

I think you are referencing the mandatory program; if so, I will add that we started that in 2012.

Let me know if there are any other edits. Otherwise I will send on to Seanna once I get the green light.

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 21, 2016, at 6:49 PM, Glaccum, David <DavidGlaccum@gov.sc.gov> wrote:

I think we should mention that the state has had work requirements since [2012].

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 21, 2016, at 6:19 PM, Wingo, Karen <Karen.Wingo@dss.sc.gov> wrote:

In 1996, a federal legislation was passed which limited ABAWDs' receipt of SNAP benefits to three months in a 36-month period for individuals who did not meet work requirements. Under the law, however, states can request a temporary waiver of the ABAWD time limit when the state has an employment rate of over 10% or it does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for individuals. During the economic downturn, many states, qualified for and chose to apply for a waiver of the time limits applicable to ABAWDs.

South Carolina has applied for and received a state-wide waiver of the time limit requirements for ABAWDs since the early 2000s. South Carolina operated under a state-wide waiver through March 31, 2016. During this period of time, however, ABAWDs were still mandated to participate in employment training in order to receive benefits.

Due to declining unemployment rates in the state, South Carolina did not seek a waiver after March 31, 2016, and, therefore, reinstated the time limits established by federal law. DSS and our partners are committed to supporting the ABAWD population through employment training. In particular, South Carolina has employment training programs available for ABAWDs in all 46 counties with staff dedicated to providing ABAWDs support and assistance with obtaining gainful employment.

In order to qualify for a statewide waiver based on unemployment figures, the state must have a seasonally adjusted total unemployment rate (TUR) for the most recent three months reaching at least: (1) 6.5%; and (2) 110% of such TUR for the corresponding three-month periods ending

in either or both of the two preceding calendar years. At this time, we do not anticipate South Carolina will qualify for a state-wide time-limit waiver in 2017 under this provision because the most recent data shows South Carolina with a TUR of 5.5%, and 85-87% of the preceding two years and that unemployment numbers are positively trending in the state. Based on the current Labor Surplus List, which is effective through September 30, 2016, 26 counties in South Carolina are designated as LSAs. Therefore, it is anticipated that South Carolina could qualify for a partial waiver in 2017 for those counties with qualifying labor surplus numbers, however, until the 2017 Labor Surplus List is published, the Department cannot determine how many counties would potentially qualify for a waiver of the time limit policy. The state made the decision not to seek a partial waiver due to the economic growth in the state and the declining unemployment rates, as well as a desire to ensure application of consistent standards across the state.

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