

ILLINOIS


WAIVER STATUS:
Partial

While Illinois technically has a “partial” work requirement waiver, the overwhelming majority of the state is exempted from commonsense work requirements. The current waiver exempts 101 of the state’s 102 counties and runs from January 2018 through December 2018.



TheFGA.org

346,000

able-bodied adults without dependents on food stamps

Subject to work requirement:
9,000

Percent not working:
74%

Waiver Gimmicks
■ FUZZY MATH

Even with the combination of counties, Illinois had to use creative math to get its waiver. The national unemployment rate for the relevant time period was 4.95%. 20% above that rate is 5.94%. But Illinois’ combined unemployment rate for their 101 waived counties was only 5.89% for the relevant time period, lower than the 5.94% needed to qualify for the waiver.

■ OLD DATA

Illinois’ waiver relies on data that goes back to April 2015—three years ago. More recent data paints a much different picture of the state’s economy. For example, Washington County, Illinois has an unemployment rate of 2.6%. 14 counties have unemployment rates under 4%, as of December 2017. And yet work requirements remain completely waived.

■ GERRYMANDERING

Illinois grouped 101 counties with unemployment rates that vary greatly. Many of these counties would not have qualified for waivers had they not been grouped together.

For example, Monroe County enjoyed an average **unemployment rate of just 4.1%** over the 24-month period Illinois used for their waiver. A dozen counties had average unemployment under 5%. But work requirements are waived entirely in these areas.

The Real Story
■ STATEWIDE UNEMPLOYMENT

4.7% in Illinois as of December 2017

■ *A near-record low.*

■ OF 101 EXEMPTED COUNTIES IN IL

0 have unemployment rates above the 10% statutory threshold

■ **Current unemployment rates are as low as 3.7% in waived counties.**

71 have unemployment rates at or below 6%

In fact, according to Help Wanted Online, there are

187,171

available jobs in Illinois.