

Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) Requirements

The Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), has a work requirement for some adults known as Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs). Some adults may only receive SNAP for three (3) months, unless they are working or otherwise meeting the ABAWD work requirement.

The work requirements apply to individuals who are:

- Age 18-64 years old
- Fit for employment
- Not receiving SNAP with a minor under age 14
- Not pregnant
- Not already exempt from the general work requirements if you are between ages 18 - 59

What is the time limit?

ABAWD eligibility is limited to any three (3) months in a 36-month period unless the individual meets the ABAWD work requirement. The State of West Virginia's current 36-month period begins January 1, 2025, and ends December 31, 2027.

What is the ABAWD work requirement?

ABAWDs can meet the work requirement by:

- Working 80 or more hours monthly. Work does not have to be paid to meet work requirement hours.
- Participating in and complying with the requirements of a work program at least 80 hours per month.

What are the exemptions from ABAWD work requirements?

ABAWDs are exempt from work requirements in the following situations:

- Under 18 but not yet 65 years old
- Medically certified and physically or mentally unfit for employment
- Responsible for a dependent child (you must receive SNAP with this child)
- Exempt from SNAP work requirements
- Pregnant
- Indian (Native American), Urban Indian or California Indian as defined by the Indian Health Care Improvement Act

Regaining Eligibility

ABAWDs who have exhausted their three (3) countable months may regain eligibility at any time by meeting the ABAWD work requirements (80 hours in a 30 day period), meeting an exemption, or at the expiration of the 36-month period.

Countable work activities include:

- Volunteering or working in paid employment, including self-employment
- Participating in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) services
- Participating in Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) services
- Participating in SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) activities

What happens if an ABAWD who has regained eligibility stops meeting the work requirement?

FNS regulations provide that in limited circumstances, ABAWDs can gain an additional three (3) months of eligibility.

This rule:

- Applies only to ABAWDs who regained eligibility but are no longer fulfilling the work requirement.
- Provides that ABAWDs may only take advantage of this rule once in the 36-month period.
- The additional 3 months must be used consecutively.
- If the individual was working, the consecutive three (3) months must start when the ABAWD notifies the agency that they are no longer meeting the work requirement.
- If the individual was participating in a work program, the consecutive three (3) months must start when the agency determines the ABAWD is no longer meeting the work requirement.