

ABAWD Frequently Asked Questions

Who is considered an ABAWD?

An ABAWD is an able-bodied person between the ages of 18 and 49 who has no dependents. ABAWD stands for Able Bodied Adult Without Dependents.

What is the ABAWD time limit?

ABAWDs can only get SNAP for 3 months in 3 years if they do not meet certain special work requirements. This is called the time limit. The 3 year period began January 1, 2016 in Tennessee.

To be eligible beyond the time limit, an ABAWD must work at least 20 hours per week or 80 hours per month, participate in qualifying education and training activities at least 20 hours per week or 80 hours per month. Another way someone can fulfill the ABAWD work requirement is through a SNAP Employment and Training Program.

What are allowable exemptions to the ABAWD time limit policy?

Individuals are exempt from the time limit if they are:

- Under 18 or 50 years of age or older,
- Medically certified as physically or mentally unfit for employment (verification required by DHS)
- Responsible for a dependent child who lives in the household or resides in the household with a household member who is under 18,
- A parent (natural, adoptive, or step) of a household member under age 18, even if the household member who is under 18 is not himself eligible for SNAP,
- Is pregnant,
- Exempt from the general SNAP work requirements under section 6(d) of the Food Stamp Act.

What work training programs are available?

Qualified training programs are offered through the TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development. A qualified training program includes attendance in adult basic education classes, or programs offered under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 or section 236 of the Trade Act of 1974.

Participating in certain E&T activities is one way individuals subject to the time limit can fulfill the ABAWD work requirement, maintain their eligibility to receive SNAP, and learn the skills they need to obtain gainful employment.

How can an ABAWD avoid a disruption in SNAP benefits?

A household member can avoid closure by complying with the work requirements as quickly as possible; providing the appropriate verification to your SNAP caseworker; or contacting your SNAP caseworker if you think that you are exempt from the work requirement.

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If my SNAP case closes due to ABAWD, how do I regain eligibility?

ABAWDs who have exhausted their 3 countable months may regain eligibility at any time by meeting ABAWD work requirements for 30 consecutive days, meeting an exemption from ABAWD work requirements or when their 3-year period expires.