

Food Stamp Alert

Time limits for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD) start on July 1, 2023.



Does this affect me?



Beginning July 1, 2023, if you are an ABAWD, an adult under 53 who is not disabled and does not have a child under age 18 living in your home, you can only receive food stamps for three months in a three-year period UNLESS you are working or meet an exemption.

How can I keep my food stamps?



-  Work at least 20 hours/week. This can be at a job, in your own business, or in exchange for goods or services.
-  Volunteer 20 hours/week.
-  Do job training through DSS 20 hours/week.
-  Do any combination of the above, or meet an exemption.

Exemptions:



- Under the age of 18
- **Over the age of 52**
- **Pregnant**
- **Living with children (even if they aren't yours)**
- **Receiving disability benefits**
- **Unfit for work according to a medical professional**
- **24 years old or younger and in Foster Care on your 18th birthday.**
- **In school or taking classes part-time (special rules apply)**
- **Applying for or receiving Unemployment Insurance Benefits**
- **In a drug or alcohol treatment program, or in need of one**
- **Caring for a disabled person**
- **Veterans**
- *Some other exemptions apply*



ABAWD Time Limit FAQ

Why do I need to follow the time limit rules now?



Congress created the ABAWD time limit rule several years ago. However, they suspended these rules on April 1, 2020, due to the COVID-19 Federal Public Health Emergency (PHE). Because the PHE declaration has ended, DSS is reinstating the ABAWD time limit rules. If you are an ABAWD between the ages of 18 through 52 and you do not comply with the work requirements or meet an exemption, your food stamp benefits may end after you received them for 3 months.

How can my DSS Caseworker help?



Contact your FNS caseworker at your County Department of Social Services (DSS) if you have questions about the time limit or if you need help showing that the limit doesn't apply to you. Visit or call your local DSS, (www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/local-dss-directory)

What if my Food Stamp benefits are reduced or end due to the time limit, but I should have been exempt?



DSS is required to give you advanced written notice of a proposed reduction or termination of benefits at least 10 business days before they take such action. The notice must state the reason for the action, the effective date of the action, and the name and contact information of the person to contact to request more information or to request a fair hearing to challenge the action.



You have the right to be represented by legal counsel at your hearing. Free legal services may be available to you. If you need legal assistance for your food stamp case, you can apply for help at Legal Aid of North Carolina by calling 1 (866) 219-LANC (5286) or by visiting us online.

