

WHO IS AN ABAWD?

An ABAWD is defined as an able-bodied adult without dependents. SNAP eligibility for an ABAWD is limited to 3 months in a 36 month period **unless** the individual meets an ABAWD work requirement or an exemption from the ABAWD work requirements. Individuals are **not** subject to ABAWD work requirements if they are:

- Under age 18 or age 50 or older ;
- Determined as physically or mentally unfit for employment;
- Responsible for a dependent child or residing in a household containing a household member under age 18;
- Pregnant; or
- Exempt from general SNAP work requirements.

Individuals are exempt from general SNAP work requirements if they are:

- Responsible for the care of an incapacitated person;
- A student enrolled at least half-time in school;
- A regular participant in a drug addiction or alcoholic treatment and rehabilitation program;
- Employed or self-employed and working a minimum of 30 hours weekly or receiving weekly earnings equal to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours;
- Receiving unemployment compensation;
- Complying with the work requirements of another program including the TANF Work Program;
- Responsible for the care of a child under the age of 6;
- Mentally or physically unfit for employment; or
- Persons under the age of 16 or 60 years of age or older.

HOW CAN AN ABAWD MEET WORK REQUIREMENTS?

An individual determined to be an ABAWD will meet ABAWD work requirements provided that individual is:

- Working 20 or more hours weekly, averaged monthly;
- Participating in a work program 20 hours or more per week;
- Participating in a workfare program or a comparable program as determined by the state of Mississippi and its local subdivisions (county, city, or town); or
- Combining work and participation in a work program for 20 or more hours per week.

WHAT ACTIVITIES QUALIFY AS WORK PROGRAMS?

The following programs meet the definition of an ABAWD work activity:

- A program under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) formerly known as WIA;
- A program under section 236 of the Trade Act of 1974 for workers who have lost/may lose employment due to increased imports; and
- An employment and training program, other than a job search or job search training program, operated or supervised by the State of Mississippi and its local subdivisions. SNAP Employment & Training (E & T) programs meet the criteria for qualified work activities.

HOW ARE THE HOURLY REQUIREMENTS FOR QUALIFIED WORK ACTIVITIES DETERMINED?

Participation hours are determined by the specific, qualifying work activity.

The following qualifying work activities require minimum participation of 20 hours per week:

- WIOA programs;
- Programs under section 236 of the Trade Act of 1974;
- SNAP E & T education or training programs; (20 hours alone or combined with other activities. Job search activities are limited to no more than half of the required hours) ; and
- SNAP E & T work experience programs.

The monthly participation hours for the following qualifying activities are obtained by dividing the household's SNAP allotment by the state or federal minimum wage:

- SNAP E & T workfare programs; or
- Optional workfare programs (workfare programs operated independently of state E & T programs).

ABAWDs will also have the option to self-initiate their own public service activities. Known as comparable workfare programs, these activities require the ABAWD to locate and arrange their own workfare assignments. Participation hours for comparable workfare programs may not be required to exceed 30 hours per week, but individuals may volunteer for additional hours. Comparable workfare programs require pre-approval through the local MDHS office.

WHAT IS AN ABAWD COUNTABLE MONTH?

Any month in which an ABAWD receives SNAP benefits for a **full** month without meeting either the work requirements or an exemption from those work requirements will increment the 3 month counter. A prorated month of SNAP benefits **will not** be considered one of the 3 countable months. For example, if benefits are prorated during an initial month of application, that initial month would not be considered one of the 3 countable months. Once an ABAWD has exhausted the 3 full months of SNAP participation, that individual will lose eligibility for the remainder of the 36 month period, **unless** ABAWD work requirements or an exemption from those requirements are met. The 3 countable months are not required to be used consecutively.

HOW IS THE 36-MONTH PERIOD MEASURED?

Beginning January 1, 2016, Mississippi will limit SNAP eligibility for ABAWDs to 3 months within a 36 month period. ABAWDs will be required to meet the ABAWD work requirement or lose SNAP benefits for the remainder of their 36 month period. Mississippi will use a **FIXED INDIVIDUAL CLOCK** to measure the 36 month period. For any **applicant** applying for SNAP on/after January 1, 2016, the 36 month period will begin with the date of application. 3 years from the date of application, the individual's clock will be reset and a new 36 month period of eligibility will begin. The first of the 3 countable months for current SNAP **recipients** subject to ABAWD work requirements will begin with the January 2016 SNAP allotment.

WHAT ARE THE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR ABAWDs?

Current reporting requirements for SNAP state that **applicant** households must report all changes relating to their SNAP eligibility at the application/certification interview. **Certified** households are required to report changes when the household's total gross monthly income (earned and unearned) exceeds 130% of the poverty level for their household size. These changes must be reported by the 10th of the month following the date the change occurs. SNAP recipients completing the **MDHS-EA-905 SNAP/TANF Interim Eligibility and Income Report**, must report changes in the rate of pay or the hours worked for any household member, including all ABAWDs. **Additionally, SNAP regulations require that all ABAWD households must report when their work hours fall below 20 hours per week or an average of 80 hours monthly, regardless of whether or not the household's income meets or exceeds 130% of the federal poverty level.**

HOW DOES AN ABAWD REGAIN ELIGIBILITY AFTER THE 3 MONTHS OF ELIGIBILITY HAVE BEEN EXHAUSTED?

ABAWDS who exhaust their 3 countable months may regain SNAP eligibility at any time if:

- They meet an exemption from ABAWD work requirements;
- They meet the ABAWD work requirements for 30 consecutive days; or
- They provide verification that they will meet the ABAWD work requirements within 30 days from the date of application.

There is no limit on the number of times an ABAWD may regain eligibility. Once eligibility has been regained, benefits are prorated from the date the individual regains eligibility.

WHAT HAPPENS TO ABAWDS WHO REGAIN ELIGIBILITY BUT ARE NO LONGER MEETING THE WORK REQUIREMENTS?

In limited circumstances, an ABAWD who regains eligibility but no longer meets the work requirements may gain an additional 3 months of SNAP eligibility provided:

- They are no longer fulfilling the work requirement;
- The 3 additional months of eligibility must be used consecutively; and
- This provision is allowed only once in a 3-year period.

For persons losing employment or having their work hours fall below 20 hours per week (averaged monthly), the 3 consecutive months of eligibility must begin when the individual notifies the agency that they are no longer meeting the ABAWD work requirements.

If the individual was participating in a work program or workfare program, the 3 consecutive months must begin when the agency determines the ABAWD is no longer in compliance.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR SNAP?

For your convenience, the application for SNAP (MDHS-EA-900) may be printed from our website at:

www.mdhs.state.ms.us

You may complete an application for SNAP at your local MDHS office during normal business hours. An application may also be mailed or faxed to you per your request.

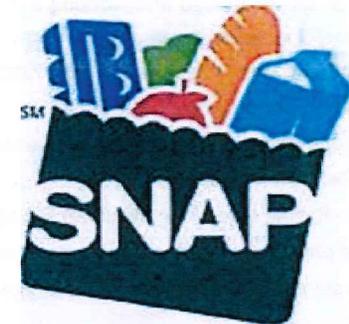
MDHS will consider each application without regard to race, color, gender, sex, age, disability, religion, national origin, or political beliefs.

For additional assistance, please contact your local MDHS office at the following address:



ABLE-BODIED ADULTS WITHOUT DEPENDENTS (ABAWD)

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FIELD OPERATIONS