

Program: SNAP

Effective Date: November 1, 2025

Description of Changes

1. 402 – ABAWD Countable Months – Exemptions - Change

ABAWD changes will be effective with **all applications and reviews** received 11/1/2025 and after.

Age Limit increasing to 55 to 65.

Child in the home is decreasing from 18 to 14.

New exemption for Indians, Urban Indians or California Indians

Removal of exemptions for Veterans, Homeless and Former Foster Care.

2. 403 – ABAWD Geographic Waiver

ABAWD Geographic Waiver for **Rolette County and the Turtle Mountain Reservation** will be ending effective 10/31/2025. A mailing has been sent to those individuals on October 10, 2025, that would not meet the new exemption of Indians, Urban Indians or California Indians.

Those Geographic Waivered individuals who do not meet another exemption will have ABAWD count months starting effective 11/1/2025.

Reminder: Please refrain from manually adjusting count months in the system. The ABAWD exemption will be updated automatically through the system update.

Policy Section Updates

1. 402 – ABAWD Countable Months – Exemptions – Change

Overview

GENERAL RULE- ABAWDs are limited to three months of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in a 36-month period unless they are:

1. Fulfilling the work requirement as defined in this policy.
2. Meet an exemption as defined in this policy.
3. Covered under a current geographic waiver.
4. Receiving benefits for prorated months.

Fulfilling the Work Requirement

1. Employed, either for wages, **self-employment** enterprise, in-kind services or non- compensation/volunteer or any combination of the above a monthly average of 80 per month or 20 hours per week. (This means a person who worked 80 hours in four weeks would have an average of 20 hours per week for the month.)
 - This must be verified via pay stubs, written statement from the employer, self-employment records, or verbal or written statement from the volunteer organization or individual for whom volunteer work is being done.
 - For individuals hired under contract, view the contract to determine the anticipated number of weeks the individual will be working in the position. Then determine the number of hours per week to evaluate this exemption.
 - Unpaid or volunteer work can be provided at religious or community organizations. (This does not include court-ordered community services or work done for family members for friends when the individual is not paid.)

Note: Narratives must be entered to indicate specifically what **verification** was used.

2. Participating in and complying with a Title 1 of the Workforce Investment Opportunities Act (WIOA) Program, Section 26 of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act (TAA) program, or SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) qualifying component 20 hours a week, averaged monthly.

Note: A combination of employment, volunteering or compliance with a work program can be used to meet this requirement. (e.g., 20 hours per week volunteering at the hospital the first two weeks of the month can be

combined with 20 hours per week in a qualifying E&T component the last two weeks of the month to allow for the entire month to meet this requirement.)

Good Cause

If an individual would have worked an average of 20 hours per week but missed some work for good cause, the individual shall be considered to have met the work requirement if the absence from work is temporary and the individual retains his or her job. Good cause shall include circumstances beyond the individual's control, such as, but not limited to, illness, illness of another **household** member requiring the presence of the member, a household emergency, or the unavailability of transportation. See SNAP 302 for a complete list of good cause circumstances. A 10-day notice requesting verification of good cause is sent when it has been reported or discovered that the ABAWD is no longer meeting the work requirement. This notice must be sent before an Advance Notice of Closure.

Exemptions

Any [Work Registration Exemption in 301](#) OR one of the following exemptions will exempt an ABAWD from the three-month time limit. **If an individual is [Work Registration](#) exempt, narrate that the same exemption applies for ABAWD time limit provision.** If they are not Work Registration exempt, screen the individual to see if they meet one of the exemptions below:

Exception: as the ABAWD age is 65, any individual exempt from work requirements due to being 60 and older, maybe a countable ABAWD until the age of 65 unless another ABAWD exemption applies.

1. **Age 17 or younger.** The month following the month of the 18th birthday is the first month counted toward the three-month limit unless the individual meets another exemption.
2. **Age 55 ~~65~~ or older.** The month of the ~~55th~~ **65th** birthday counts as an exempt month.
3. ~~An individual who is **homeless**. Participants no longer have to be experiencing chronic homelessness to receive the exemption. When assessing for this exemption, a [homeless individual](#) is defined below.~~
 - ~~○ **Homeless individual** means an individual who lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence or an individual whose primary nighttime residence is~~
 - ~~▪ A supervised shelter designed to provide temporary accommodations (such as a welfare hotel or congregate shelter).~~
 - ~~▪ A halfway house or similar [institution](#) that provides temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized.~~

- ~~• A temporary accommodation for not more than 90 days in the residence of another individual; or~~
 - ~~• A place not designed for, or ordinarily used, as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (outdoors, a hallway, a bus station, a lobby, or similar places).~~
4. **Physically or mentally unfit for employment.** If mental or physical unfitness is claimed but not evident (not visible during interview or not previously documented of ongoing unfitness), verification must be required. Appropriate verification may consist of receipt of temporary or permanent disability benefits issued by governmental or private sources, or a statement from a physician or licensed or certified psychologist.
- Physically or mentally unfit also includes individuals in receipt of VA disability compensation regardless of the individual's disability percentage. Refer to the disability policy in the manual when determining whether to enter the disability in the disability screen in the integrated eligibility system indicating that the individual is a "[disabled member](#)" and narrate.
5. ~~A **Veteran** is defined as an individual who served in the United States Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, National Guard, Space Force, and reserve components of the Armed Forces). Conditions of discharge are not considered for this exemption.~~
6. ~~Individuals who were in **foster care on the date they turned 18** but are **under the age of 25** (ages 18-24). For these individuals, if they were in foster care on their 18th birthday but have not yet turned 25, they receive the exemption. This exemption shall end on the individual's 25th birthday. This includes any individual who was in a foster care program run by the State, District, Territory, or Indian Tribal Organization as of their 18th birthday or later and is under 25 years of age.~~
7. An individual with responsibility to care for a dependent **parent** (natural parent, adoptive, or step) of a household member under age 18 **14**, even if the household member who is under 18 **14** is not [eligible](#) for SNAP.
8. **Residing** in a SNAP household where a member is under age 18 **14**, even if the household member who is under 18 **14** is not eligible for SNAP.
1. **Pregnant** and have provided medical documentation of the estimated date of delivery.
2. **Indians, Urban Indians or California Indians**
Indian, Urban Indians or California Indians is defined as: people who are eligible for Indian Health Service (IHS); this includes members and descendants of federally recognized American Indian or Alaska Native tribes, as well as California Indians and others recognized under federal law. Verification is required.
10. **Individual resides** in a waived county (see 403).

11. State Discretionary Exemption Criteria

- State discretionary exemption criteria are applied at the discretion of SNAP policy, allowing flexibility in their implementation based on specific circumstances.

Verification of ABAWD Exemptions

If the eligibility worker determines an individual's exemption is questionable, the eligibility worker must first attempt to verify the exemption status using information available to the State agency, such as information from other public assistance programs through data sharing, before requiring individuals provide documentary evidence or other sources of verification.

ABAWD Exception Hierarchy –

The integrated eligibility system will determine ABAWD exemptions following the below hierarchy:

1. Indians, Urban Indians or California Indians
2. Parent or responsible individual with child under 14 in the home.
3. Physically or Mentally unfit for employment
4. Individual reside in a Waiver County.
5. Individual is pregnant.
6. Individual is exempt from Work requirement
7. ABAWD meeting Work Hours requirement.
8. Prorated Month.
9. State Discretionary Exemption.

- ~~10. Individual is a veteran.~~
- ~~2. Individual was in foster care.~~
- ~~3. Individual is pregnant.~~
- ~~4. Individual is in a homeless household.~~
- ~~5. Individual resides in Waiver County.~~
- ~~6. ABAWD meeting Work Hours requirement.~~
- ~~7. ABAWD meeting Work Program requirement.~~
- ~~8. Prorated Month.~~
- ~~9. State Discretionary Exemption.~~

~~**Note:** the eligibility worker must ensure that the proper ABAWD exemption was applied in the order of the above hierarchy prior to SNAP authorization.~~

2. 403 – ABAWD Geographic Waiver

Overview

At the request of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Secretary of Agriculture may waive the Able- Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) provision for an identified group of individuals. The Secretary determines if the area meets established labor market criteria to be **eligible** for the waiver. HHS uses this information to request ABAWD waivers. The areas waived vary from year to year.

Waived Reservations 07/01/2025 through ~~06/30/2026~~ 10/31/2025

• ~~Turtle Mountain~~ Reservation

- None

WAIVED COUNTIES 07/01/2025 through ~~06/30/2026~~ 10/31/2025

• ~~Rolette~~

- None

ABAWDs who reside within the geographical boundaries of the reservation and counties are not subject to ABAWD time limits.

Narratives

Narratives must identify ABAWD individuals and if an ABAWD waiver exemption is applicable.