

# The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Quick Hits and Updates

November 2021

# General Work Requirements

<b>Requirement</b>	<p><b>Most able-bodied adults, unless otherwise exempt, are required to engage in certain work activities (e.g., register for work, accept a suitable job if offered one) to gain or retain eligibility for benefits. Further, states may require certain able-bodied recipients to participate in SNAP E&amp;T activities.</b></p> <p><b>These individuals are called work registrants.</b></p>
<b>Age</b>	Under age 16 or over age 59. Individuals between ages 16 and 18 are also exempt if they are not a head of household or if they are attending school or a training program.
<b>Disability</b>	Those receiving disability benefits or otherwise physically or mentally unfit are exempt. A caretaker of a disabled dependent is exempt.
<b>Age of Youngest Child</b>	Parents needed to care for a child under the age of six may be exempted.
<b>Other Exemptions</b>	Those meeting other program requirements (TANF, unemployment insurance) and those in certain rehabilitation or education programs are exempt.
<b>Treatment of Recipients with Earnings</b>	Those working 30 hours per week or earning at least the minimum wage times 30 hours are exempted.
<b>Definition of Work and Work-Related Activities</b>	<p>Federal requirements: All nonexempt recipients must register for work (a state-administered process where the participant annually notifies the state's SNAP or employment service office that he or she is employable and not working), must accept a suitable job if offered one, and may not voluntarily quit a job without good cause. A recipient may not voluntarily reduce work effort below 30 hours per week.</p> <p>State requirements: Varies by state whether a recipient is required to participate in SNAP E&amp;T services and what services the state offers.</p>
<b>Hours</b>	The maximum hours per month that a state can require a recipient to participate in E&T or workfare is the lesser of (1) the number of hours derived from dividing the household's allotment by the minimum wage, or (2) 120 hours per month.
<b>Sanctions for Failure to Participate</b>	States determine and enforce sanctions, with maximum penalty set in Federal law depending on if it is the first, second, or third violation.
<b>Good Cause</b>	<p>The State agency is responsible for determining good cause when a SNAP recipient fails or refuses to comply with SNAP work requirements. Good cause includes circumstances beyond the recipient's control, such as, but not limited to, illness, illness of another household member requiring the presence of the recipient, a household emergency, the unavailability of transportation, or the lack of adequate child care for children who have reached age six but are under age 12. Note that good cause also includes circumstances where an individual under the age of 60 has retired.</p> <p>Lastly, good cause also assists individuals who leave a job in connection with patterns of employment in which workers frequently move from one employer to another such as migrant farm labor or construction work.</p>

# Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) Time Limit

An ABAWD is a person between the ages of 18 and 49 who has no dependents and is not disabled.

ABAWDs can only get SNAP for three months in three years if they do not meet certain special work requirements. **This is called the time limit.**

To be eligible beyond the time limit, an ABAWD must work at least 80 hours per month, participate in qualifying education and training activities at least 80 hours per month, or comply with a workfare program.

Another way to fulfill the ABAWD work requirement is through a SNAP E&T program.

The time limit does not apply to people who are unable to work due to physical or mental health reasons, pregnant, care for a child or incapacitated family member, or are exempt from the general work requirements.

The law also provides that States may qualify to temporarily waive the three-month time limit in areas with high unemployment or depressed labor markets.

**\*Until the Federal government declares an end to the public health emergency, states cannot apply the time limit to an ABAWD unless the individual is not complying with a work program or workfare program offered by the state that meets standards of section 6(o)(2)(B) or (C).\***

# SNAP Employment and Training (E&T)

The SNAP E&T program helps SNAP participants gain skills and find work that moves them forward to self-sufficiency. These programs also help to reduce barriers to work by providing support services – such as transportation and childcare – as participants prepare for and obtain employment.

Each state is required to operate a SNAP E&T program and receives federal funding annually to operate and administer the program.

**In FY 2020, states received a total of \$111,760,173 in E&T 100% allocations and spent \$103,270,315 of those allocations (92%).**

**Twelve states received ABAWD pledge funding totaling \$20 million, however only \$16,129,407 was used (80%).**

**Total E&T 50% grant expenditures were \$245,898,174.**

To date, only nine states mandate E&T participation: Florida, Idaho, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Texas, and Utah.

Among these states, Florida, Mississippi, and Ohio only require ABAWDs to participate in an E&T program, rather than all work registrants.

**Are work requirements merely a work suggestion?**

How can  
states fix  
this?

There are more jobs than jobless people in 42 states, so without Federal permission:

1. Require all ABAWDs to participate in an E&T program.
2. Make E&T assignments mandatory for all work registrants.

# 2021 Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) Update

*While the administration insists its update to SNAP was well within its authority — based solely on a couple of lines in the 2018 Farm Bill — no member of Congress, in good conscience, would have permitted such a provision if they knew the spirit by which it was negotiated was hijacked.*

*...the update to the Thrifty Food Plan is not new, this historically cerebral issue has turned into a political firebomb. The Biden administration, without so much as a peep, increased SNAP benefits by an average of 21%. Not only does it reek of impropriety, but it also questions whether the three branches of government are indeed equal.*

*What was intended as a bipartisan exercise in good governance was manipulated to become the tool for partisan political appointees to eternalize welfare for all. Irrespective of the blatant disregard for congressional intent and the taxpayer, the cavalier attitude shown by these individuals is not unusual for an administration hellbent on ensuring the U.S. becomes the land of the unfree, home of the dependent.*

# TFP Update Flaws

Beyond the lofty price tag (\$254 billion) associated with the update, there are five major flaws to the process and calculation:

- The shift from household consumption surveys to the use of broad store scanner data from 2015-2016
- An increase in household caloric assumptions by roughly 600 calories
- The absence of cost neutrality
- The lack of public comment and Congressional scrutiny
- The assumption that an increased benefit will lead to the purchase of healthy foods.

# Hill Updates

The EARN Act

Hot Foods Debate

SNAP Choice Debate

Work

2023 Farm Bill

- Serving recipients through innovation and flexibility in program delivery
- Pursuing independence through employment and training
- Returning to and maintaining program integrity
- Improving access and promoting healthy foods and improved nutrition