

2015 ABAWD Fact Sheet – An Indiana Success Story

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, signed by President Clinton in 1996, includes work requirements for SNAP recipients who are Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD). In 2009, a waiver of the participation requirement was instituted in Indiana due to the nationwide recession and high unemployment.

On May 18, 2015 FSSA sent nearly 50,000 letters (49,576) to all ABAWDs informing them of changes to program compliance requirements beginning July 1. Letters were reviewed / approved by USDA Food & Nutrition Service (FNS), the Federal agency which administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and FSSA Communications. (Note - letters were sent to all individuals who are classified as ABAWDs, including individuals who are working to ensure they were aware of upcoming program changes.)

In June 2015, the FSSA vendor that was contracted to provide training services began sending appointment notices to ABAWDs who were currently out of compliance with the 20 hour per week work / training requirement. From the nearly 50,000 letters (49,576) that were sent, 2,448 recipients had been meeting the required hours. The remaining 47,128 that were out of compliance were referred to ResCare and received appointment notices. Initial appointments were scheduled over a five week period, beginning the first week of July.

During the months of July and August 2015, initial appointments started and continued through August 7th. "No-show" letters were sent, followed by telephone calls, all of which were conducted within 7-10 days after the missed appointment for the purpose of attempting to reach all missed orientation appointments.

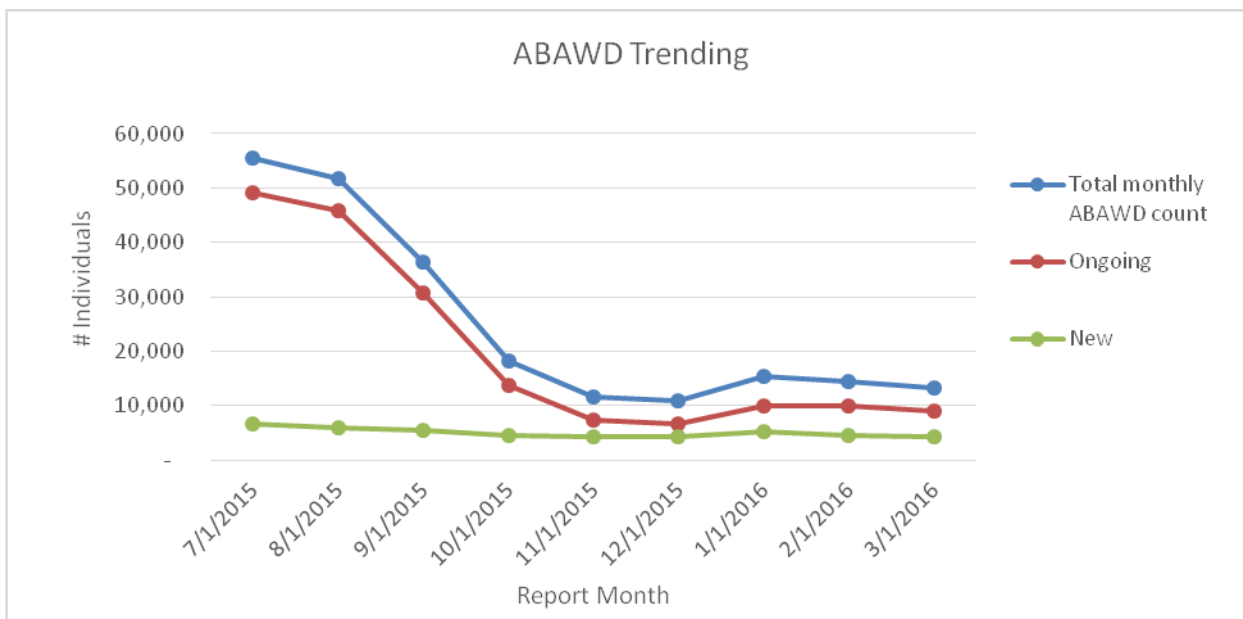
In November 2016, the FSSA began initiating program sanctions against any individuals found to be in non-compliance.

SNAP ABAWD recipients who choose not to attend the IMPACT Orientation received a letter that was generated the day after their missed appointment, acknowledging the fact that the recipient had missed their appointment and outlining the consequences for non-participation. The letter included information on how to reschedule a new appointment.

The IMPACT program Call Center also made attempts to contact these SNAP ABAWD Recipients one week after their missed appointment, offering to reschedule a new appointment on-the-spot. In these cases, notification letters are sent to the recipient reminding them of the agreed upon date, time, and place.

RESULT:

After implementing the work requirements for ABAWD members, the number of ongoing ABAWD recipients of SNAP benefits decreased 86.5% from July 2015 to December 2015. This decrease in ABAWD SNAP participation was a reduction of more than 42,000 members.



This graph represents July 2015 count of SNAP ABAWD population at time of State-wide implementation of ABAWD requirement as of July 2015. ABAWD requirement is to participate in work or work related activities at a minimum of 80 hours per month. ABAWD is allowed 3 months of non-compliance before termination of SNAP benefits.

November 2015 count – first month of reduction in numbers due to the termination or removal from SNAP benefits for non-compliant ABAWDs (after 3 non-compliant months – Aug, Sept, Oct 2016). High Numbers of ABAWD individuals were terminated from assistance due to low show rates for appointments and non-compliance in meeting the 80 hour per month work requirement.

January 2016 and thereafter – once the initial wave of non-compliance and removal from SNAP benefits, we began to reach steady state count of ABAWDs in both non-compliance and new ABAWDs applying and being determined eligible for SNAP benefits.