ABAWDs & Workfare

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Acronyms

• ABAWD: Abled Bodied Adults without Dependents
• BFET: Basic Food Employment & Training Program
• CBO: Community Based Organization
• FNS: Food and Nutrition Services (Federal overseeing entity)
• SNAP: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Federal program)
Objectives

Upon completion of this session participants should be able to

• Differentiate between Work Registrants and ABAWDs.

• Evaluate how the requirements could affect their agencies programs and clients.

• Explain activities the client could do to retain their benefits.

• Discuss ideas for strengthening the network of providers to help ABAWDs at risk of losing their benefits.
REACH

Washington State Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) Time Limit & Requirements

Counties that have ABAWD Time Limits and Requirements for benefits.

Counties (and two cities) that do not have the ABAWD requirements.

Basic Food Recipient

Work Registrant

ABAWD

Non-exempt ABAWD
# Work Registrant VS ABAWD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements DO NOT apply to those who are:</th>
<th>General SNAP Work Requirements (WAC 388-444-0005)</th>
<th>Additional ABAWD Requirements (WAC 388-444-0030 and 0035)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Under the age of 16 or over the age of 60;</td>
<td>• Exempt from general SNAP work requirements;</td>
<td>• Under 18 or age 50 or over;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Physically or mentally disabled;</td>
<td>• Under 18 or age 50 or over;</td>
<td>• Receiving Food benefits with child under 18;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Complying with the work requirements of another program;</td>
<td>• Under 18 or age 50 or over;</td>
<td>• Physically or mentally unable to work;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Responsible for a child under the age of six;</td>
<td>• Under 18 or age 50 or over;</td>
<td>• Pregnant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Already working more than 30 hours X Federal Min Wage a week;</td>
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<td>• Participating in a drug or alcoholic rehab program</td>
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<td>• Students enrolled at least half time.</td>
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- Under 18 or age 50 or over;
- Receiving Food benefits with child under 18;
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## Work Registrant VS ABAWD

| Activities that meet the Requirements are: | General SNAP Work Requirements  
(WAC 388-444-0005) | Additional ABAWD Requirements  
(WAC 388-444-0030 and 0035) |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| - Register for work (this is done during the interview process, clients do not have to do anything);  
- Accept suitable employment if offered; and  
- Do not voluntarily quit a job of 20 or more hours a week or reduce work effort to less than 20 hours per week without good cause | - Working 20 or more hours a week, averaged monthly;  
- Participating in a work program for 20 or more hours a week;  
- Combination of working and participating in a work program for 20 or more hours;  
- Participate in workfare |
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<td>The penalties for voluntary job quit are as follows:</td>
<td>Ineligible for SNAP for the remainder of a 36-month period after exhausting the 3-months of time limited eligibility.</td>
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<td>- 1st time: 1 month</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- 2nd time: 3 months</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- 3rd time+: 6 months</td>
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The penalty for a failure to comply with the requirements is:
Additional Exemptions

UNABLE TO WORK:

• Client is stating they cannot work the average of 20 hours a week due to a disability or because they are chronically homeless.

15% Exemption:

• There are a limited number of exemptions allotted per fiscal year and consequences for not staying within these boundaries.

• Most exemptions are reserved for RISE participants who are not able to participate 20 hours a week. RISE is a study and so for the integrity of our data we must ensure that these ABAWDs keep their participation status.
Every ABAWD in the State is on the same **36-month timeline**

- **January 1st, 2015**
  - Start of 36 mo period

- **January 1st, 2016**

- **December 31st, 2017**
  - End of 36 mo period

- **Statewide exemption in place**
A “countable month” or a “non-qualifying month” is any month in which an ABAWD receives a FULL month of benefits while not fulfilling the ABAWD work requirement or is otherwise exempt.

Clients can receive 3 non-qualifying months. Then they must participate to regain eligibility. If they fail to participate again they can have ONE set of additional 3 months of benefits within the 36 month period.
State Approved E&T opportunities

- Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET).
- Resources to Initiate Successful Employment (RISE) pilot (King or Pierce counties).
- Programs included in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
- AmeriCorps programs
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Pathway
- Refugee with Special Employment Needs (RSEN) project
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

More to come!
What Can Providers Do

“Save my benefits!”

ABAWD clients must meet participation to keep their benefits. They may come to you to help them “save” their benefits.
What Can Providers Do

Refer to the Contact Center to be connected to the ABAWD Unit for Workfare referral.

1-877-501-2233
TTY 1-800-209-5446
or use 711
Workfare

Workfare is an optional program created to give Abled Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD) the opportunity to volunteer in their community to meet the ABAWD work activity requirements.
Workfare

What qualifies a Workfare site/ position?

• A nonprofit, public, or government agency.
• Does not replace full time or part time employee positions, or fill vacancies with unpaid workfare labor.
• Safe environment.
• Sign an agreement and communication placement requirements with DSHS.
Workfare

What are the Workfare host agency’s responsibilities?

• Provide supervised duties in which participants will learn vocational skills and gain work experience.
• Provide necessary documentation and reporting of attendance to DSHS.
• Furnish training, equipment and materials required for duties of the workfare position.
• Report documentation monthly.
• Report any issues or problems timely.
**Workfare**

**Steps to becoming a Workfare agency:**

1. Email statement of interest to Corinna.Adams@dshs.wa.gov

2. She will connect you to the Workfare Outreach staff who will email you back with more information and a Workfare Agreement (DSHS 09-866) and Workfare Site Information sheet. Any questions you have about Workfare and the volunteer positions will be directed to the outreach staff.
   - This is where you tell us what kind of position and how many.

3. Complete and return paperwork via email.

4. Agreements are processed through CSD Contracts in batches
   *Do not accept ABAWD Volunteers before receiving your executed contract.*
Workfare

Steps to becoming a Workfare agency:

5. When the contract is executed you will receive a formal message from the Contracts Unit with a signed agreement (both you and DSHS signatures).

6. The ABAWD Unit will then begin to refer clients that fit your needs to your agency.

7. Contact the ABAWD Unit with any questions or concerns.

8. At the end of the month fill out and verify the clients hours on the Basic Food Workfare Activity Report (DSHS 01-205).

Workfare

What DSHS/ the ABAWD Unit does:

• Refers ABAWD clients to Workfare sites based on their location, transportation, physical ability and interests.
• Sends clients a formal referral notice letting them know:
  o Which Workfare site they have been assigned to
  o When and how often they will volunteer
  o Who they report to
  o How many hours they are required to participate in Workfare to retain their benefits
• Tracks the number of volunteers sent to Workfare sites. Reports numbers to L&I for volunteer coverage.
  o DSHS pays for this coverage.
• Uses the Activity Reports to record client engagement for Basic Food eligibility
• Maintains a relationship with the Workfare Agency for client involvement
Workfare Hours

A client's required workfare hours per month is their monthly benefit amount divided by the state minimum wage.

Example:
Basic Food amount $150 ÷ $9.47 = 15.84 or 15 hours per month

**NOTE:**
The specialized ABAWD unit is responsible for calculating the Workfare hours an ABAWD must participate and their placement at a Workfare site.
Combining Activities

Sometimes an ABAWD client participates in a back to work training or does work part time, but not a total of 80 hours a month to meet participation.

Example:

Hans is an ABAWD. His basic food allotment is $150/month. Hans is participating in BFET VE 10 hours a week. In order to meet ABAWD work requirements he must participate at least 20 hours a week. His ten hours cover half of his participation.

He could chose to volunteer at a Workfare Site in order to meet the total participation hours to retain his Basic Food eligibility. His maximum workfare hours would be $150 ÷ $9.47 = 15 hours (rounded down). Hans is already meeting half of his participation requirement with BFET, so he would only need to volunteer half of his maximum workfare hours.

\[
\text{BFET} \quad 40 \text{ hours/Mo.} \quad + \quad \text{Workfare} \quad 7 \text{ hours/Mo.} \quad = \quad 47 \text{ hours of activities a month.}
\]
Initial Participation vs Regaining Eligibility

Look at the letter for clues.

- General correspondence letter letting the client know they must participate to stay eligible:
  - Client still has the opportunity to be involved with BFET or RISE and may self refer directly to a provider of their choice.
    - www.dshs.wa.gov/bfet
    - www.dshs.wa.gov/rise

- Termination notice for not complying with ABAWD participation requirements (used 3 non-qualifying months):
  - Client will have to participate in an activity *before* becoming eligible for food and therefore BFET/RISE again.
  - Refer back to DSHS for further assistance to become involved with Workfare.
Working Together

- If your agency is already a BFET provider, GREAT!  If not, please think about strengthening your ties with a local BFET provider to engage clients in Employment and Training opportunities that could lead to self-sufficiency.

- This is a new program, so suggestions and comments are welcomed!

*Coming Soon!*
[www.dshs.wa.gov/workfare](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/workfare)
Questions?
Resources

• [www.dshs.wa.gov/abawd](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/abawd)

• [SWBFETPolicy@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:SWBFETPolicy@dshs.wa.gov)