



HOW ABAWDs CAN REGAIN SNAP BENEFITS

Due to federal policy changes, some SNAP customers must meet expanded federal work requirements. Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) started losing SNAP benefits on May 1, 2026, if they weren't meeting or exempt from the new federal work requirements.* IDHS is providing this information to legislators so that you are able to assist your constituents as they navigate recent SNAP changes.

Even if they lost benefits, there are two main ways ABAWDs can regain eligibility:

- 1. Meet work requirements or qualify for an exemption:** As long as they continue to meet all other SNAP eligibility criteria, ABAWDs can regain eligibility at any time by demonstrating they meet the work requirements for a 30-day period or by qualifying for and submitting an exemption. In either instance, customers can re-apply for and regain their benefits.
- 2. Re-enroll at benefit reset period in 2027:** The ABAWD time limits reset every three years, next on January 1, 2027 (and again January 1, 2030). ABAWDs can re-enroll in SNAP at each reset, without meeting the work requirements or having an exemption, if they meet all other eligibility criteria. However, ABAWDs will be disenrolled again after three months of receiving SNAP benefits within a three-year period while not meeting the work requirements or qualifying for and submitting an exemption after re-enrollment.

*It's possible for a SNAP customer to lose benefits even if they are completing activities that would meet the work requirement. If a customer doesn't submit paperwork to show they were meeting, they will lose their eligibility for SNAP benefits. This is the first time some SNAP customers are required to submit paperwork under these new federal requirements.

How can a SNAP recipient find out if they are an ABAWD?

Customers can find out if they are an ABAWD, check if they are already meeting work requirements, see whether or not they are exempt from the new requirements – and find the proper form to declare an exemption – by using the screener [here](#). The State also sent notices by mail and text messages to SNAP recipients who are or will be subject to the new work requirements, using contact information on file.

What are the options to meet new work requirements?

Customers who must meet the new requirements can also find out how to meet them by working, volunteering, and/or participating in a training or education program and can find resources at SNAPWorkRequirements.illinois.gov.

Communications Toolkit

The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) has put together a communications toolkit with important resources and information for ABAWDs. This includes social media posts, newsletter content, and flyers to distribute. [Click here](#).

Thank you for your partnership as we continue to reach out to families and communities across Illinois.
