DSHS
WASHINGTON STATE
Department of Social and Health Services

Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD)

Basic Food Eligibility Requirements: What You Need to Know to Keep Your Benefits

Your benefits are time limited if you are not working

We consider you an Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) for Basic Food because you're aged 18–64, able to work, and have no children under 14 years of age in your household. You can only receive Basic Food benefits for three out of every 36 months if you aren't meeting work activity requirements.

How to keep your Basic Food benefits

You must do one or more of the following activities to keep your benefits for more than three months:

- Work at least 20 hours a week or 80 hours a month on average. Employment can be regular or self- employment. It can also be verified monthly hours earnings for income-in-kind or volunteering with a state, local, religious or community non-profit organization.
- Participate in an approved state or local employment or training program such as:
  - Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET). For more information go to www.dshs.wa.gov/bfet;
  - Programs included in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). For more information go to https://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/community-services-offices/wioa; or
  - AmeriCorps https://servewashington.wa.gov/americorps/.
- Complete volunteer work through the Workfare program each month. The number of Workfare hours needed to satisfy participation requirements is based on the household's benefit amount divided by local minimum wage https://www.lni.wa.gov/workers-rights/wages/minimum-wage/.

Barriers to participation

Contact us if you're unable to participate at least 80 hours a month because you:

- Are physically or mentally disabled.
- Receive benefits from Labor & Industries (L&I), Veterans Administration Disability, or private disability insurance.
- Care for a person who can't care for themselves because of age or disability.
- Participate in a chemical dependency treatment or rehabilitation program.
- Applied for or receive unemployment benefits.
- Are enrolled in school at least half-time.
- Are pregnant.

Things you must report by the 10th of the following month

You must tell us if:

- You can't complete the required number of participation hours in a month due to unexpected circumstances.
- Your work drops below 20 hours a week.
- Your household's income goes over the limit in WAC 388-478-0060.
- You or a member of your household receives substantial lottery or gambling winnings in a single game equal to or above the limit in WAC 388-470-0005(8).

You can find more information about ABAWD requirements at www.dshs.wa.gov/abawd.

Call us at 1-877-501-2233 if you have questions, need assistance connecting to a training program, or need to report changes.

You can visit us at www.washingtonconnection.org to apply for benefits, submit a review, or report changes.