

## Work Registration Requirements and ABAWDS

### Federal Fiscal Year 2021

Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents, or ABAWDs, are a subset of Basic Food recipients required to participate in specific employment-related activities to maintain their assistance per the Washington Administrative Code [388-444-0030](#). The Department of Social and Health Services annually requests waivers from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, or FNS, to identify counties or areas of the state requiring ABAWD participation dependent on unemployment rates in comparison to the national average.

#### Who is an ABAWD?

An ABAWD is an able-bodied adult who:

- Is age 18-49.
- Has no dependent children living with them.
- Is physically and mentally able to work.
- Has no exemptions from work registration ([WAC 388-444-0010](#)).

#### What are the work requirements?

To receive Basic Food Assistance beyond three months of non-participation, ABAWDs who are not exempt must:

- Work an average of at least 20 hours per week (80 hours per month);
- Volunteer in the community through an approved Workfare site monthly. The number of volunteer hours is based on the benefit amount.
- Participate in an employment and training program such as Basic Food Employment and Training, or BFET, volunteer in an unpaid work program or another state-approved program for an average of 20 hours per week (80 hours per month).

#### Is there an ABAWD Waiver?

Effective June 1, 2021, ABAWDS residing in all counties are exempt from these requirements.

#### What services are available for ABAWDs?

While ABAWDs are not required to participate to retain their Basic Food eligibility, we continue to provide employment and training opportunities through:

- [BFET](#).
- [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, or WIOA](#), services.
- Employment Pipeline Navigators.

DSHS staff can refer ABAWD clients to these services at their request anytime or during the eligibility review process. Call 877-501-2233, or for more information, please visit [www.dshs.wa.gov/abawd](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/abawd).