

ABAWD Work Requirements: What You Need To Know



The federal work requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) went back into effect on **April 1, 2015** in Wisconsin. ABAWD individuals may only receive FoodShare benefits (benefits on a Quest Card) for **3 months in a 36-month period** without meeting the work requirements unless an exemption is met.

Who is an ABAWD?

An ABAWD is an able-bodied individual between the ages of 18-49 who has no dependents living with them.

How can an ABAWD meet the work requirement?

Federal regulations will require ABAWD FoodShare applicants and recipients to comply with the following work requirements as a condition of FoodShare eligibility:

- Working a minimum of 80 hours per month, or
- Participating and complying with an allowable work program at least 80 hours per month, such as the FoodShare Employment and Training (FSET) program, Wisconsin Works (W-2), or certain programs under the Wisconsin Investment Act (WIA), or
- Both working and participating in an allowable work program for a combined total of at least 80 hours per month, or
- Participating in and complying with the requirements of a workfare program.

Are there exceptions?

FoodShare members who meet any of the following are considered exempt from the time limit on FoodShare benefits and do not have to meet the work requirement:

- In a FoodShare assistance group (FoodShare case) with a child under age 18,
- Primary caregiver for a person who cannot care for himself or herself,
- Primary caregiver for a child under age 6 who does not live in the home,
- Unfit for employment, which includes someone who is:
 - Is receiving temporary or permanent disability benefits from the government or private source,
 - Unable to work due to a physical or mental health condition as determined by the Income Maintenance agency,
 - Is verified as unable to work by a statement from a health care professional or social worker, or
 - Is experiencing chronic homelessness (lacks a fixed, regular nighttime residence and does not expect to have a regular nighttime residence in the next 30 days).
- Pregnant,
- Receiving or applied for unemployment insurance,
- Receiving transitional FoodShare benefits
- Regularly participating in an alcohol or substance abuse (AODA) program,
- Enrolled in an institution of higher learning at least half time or more, or
- Enrolled as a high school student age 18 or older, attending high school at least half-time.



Policy is subject to change. Contact your county Income Maintenance Consortium or the FoodShare Helpline for any updates.

Updated April 2016

ABAWD Work Requirements: Frequently Asked Questions



How does an individual prove (s)he is meeting the work requirement?

<i>Work Requirement</i>	<i>Examples of Allowable Verification</i>
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Paystubs • Employment Verification of Earnings Form • Statement from employer that includes gross earnings and hours worked
Work Program Participation (non-FSET)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement or letter from the work program that includes monthly participation hours

How does an individual prove (s)he is exempt?

<i>Exemption</i>	<i>Examples of Allowable Verification</i>
In a FoodShare assistance group with a minor under age 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement from the parent, legal guardian or landlord
Primary caregiver for another person (child under age six or adult who cannot care for himself/herself)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement from the parent or legal guardian • Custody agreement
Unfit for employment, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health conditions (disability, pregnancy, or other medical condition) • participation in an AODA (Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse) Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Exemption Form (MAS) • Statement or letter from a certified health care provider, social worker or AODA professional • Approval letter from the Disability Determination Bureau or SSA • Other acceptable written statement
Unemployment Compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment Compensation award letter
Enrolled in an institution of higher learning or high school at least half-time or more.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proof of enrollment

What work training programs are available?

FoodShare Employment & Training (FSET) is a free, voluntary program that helps FoodShare members build their job skills and find jobs. If you are an adult who receives FoodShare benefits, FSET may be able to help you! To enroll:

- Say “yes” when asked by your FoodShare worker if you are interested in FSET during your interview.

OR

- Call your Income Maintenance Consortium and ask to be referred to FSET.

Capital Consortium: 1-888-794-5556 (Adams, Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Juneau, Richland & Sauk)

Southern Consortium: 1-888-794-5780 (Crawford, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette & Rock)

Western Consortium: 1-888-627-0430 (Monroe & Vernon)

Second Harvest Foodbank is here to help!

Specialists are available to:

- Provide one-on-one application assistance
- Assist with providing verification of your work hours and income
- Refer to employment and training resources
- Assist with providing proper documentation needed to verify ABAWD exemption status

**Call the FoodShare Helpline at 1-877-366-3635
or visit GetAQuestCard.org**



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The FoodShare Helpline is a service of Feeding Wisconsin and its member food banks. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint alleging discrimination, write USDA, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call, toll free, (866) 632-9992 (Voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish).