

What is an ABAWD?

An ABAWD is an able-bodied adult without dependents who is age 18 through 49; physically or mentally able to work; does not live and eat with a child under age 18; is not pregnant; and is not otherwise exempt from food assistance work program requirements.

What does it mean to be an ABAWD for CalFresh?

Time limits are put in place for some people in the CalFresh program who do not meet special requirements. The time limit is for people who qualify as “Able bodied Adults Without Dependents,” also known as “ABAWDs.”

What are time limits and how do these affect a person identified as an ABAWD?

If you are an ABAWD you can get food assistance for only three months during a 36-month (3-year) period if you do not meet the requirements. Any month you do not meet the requirements will count toward the time limit as one of the three months.

What are the special requirements?

People who are ABAWDs must do certain work-related activities to stay eligible for CalFresh. You must be working or doing approved work activities for 20 hours a week or an average of 80 hours a month.

What should I do if I am unable to work?

Report the condition or situation that makes you unable to work, or you think you may be excluded from the ABAWD work requirements to your worker to see if you may be exempt.

What are the exemptions to the work requirements?

If you qualify for one of the exemptions below, you do not have to do the work activities to keep getting food assistance. You will need to tell your worker if you think you are exempt. The worker must approve your exemption and may ask for proof to do so.

Exemptions:

- You are Under 18 or over 49 years of age.
- Responsible for a dependent child or an incapacitated individual
- Reside in a CalFresh household where a household member is under age 18
- Physically or mentally unfit to work (even if temporarily) for one of the following reasons:
 - Receiving public or private disability benefits
 - Unfit or unable to work
 - Medically certified as physically or mentally unfit or unable to work
 - Unfit or unable to work due to chronic homelessness
 - Unfit or unable to work due to alcohol or drug addiction
 - Unfit or unable to work due to escaping domestic violence
- You are pregnant.
- You are working 20 hours a week.
- You are getting unemployment.
- You are in school at least half-time.

If I am identified as an ABAWD, will it change the amount of my SNAP benefits?

No. Being identified as an ABAWD does not change the amount of your food assistance benefits.