

# SNAP ABAWD Time Limit Checklist

The federal SNAP time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) went back into effect January 1, 2016 in Pennsylvania. An individual considered an “ABAWD” may only receive SNAP benefits for a total of 3 full months within a 36-month period – unless s/he lives in a waived county or city, meets an “exemption”, or is engaged in qualifying work/volunteer activities. This checklist is to help you assist possible ABAWDs and to help determine if this SNAP time limit applies to an individual. Potential ABAWDs will begin to lose their benefits June 1, 2016.

## WAIVED COUNTY OR CITY

### Living in a waived area

Certain counties and cities in Pennsylvania will not reapply time limits due to still having high unemployment rates. If a person lives in one of the waived areas listed below, s/he is exempt from the time limits until further notice. The counties and cities listed below are only within Central PA Food Bank service territory. For a full listing of waived and un-waived counties and cities in Pennsylvania, visit <http://www.centralpafoodbank.org/SNAP>.

#### Counties

The following **counties** have had the 3-month SNAP time limit waived. If you live anywhere in one of these counties, SNAP time limits DO NOT apply.

Bedford	Bradford	Clearfield
Clinton	Columbia	Fulton
Huntingdon	Juniata	Lycoming
Mifflin	Potter	Sullivan
Tioga	Northumberland	

#### Cities

The following **cities** have had the 3-month SNAP time limit waived. If you live in one of these areas, SNAP time limits DO NOT apply.

Harrisburg	York
Lebanon	Williamsport

2017 UPDATE: Also the following smaller entities are newly exempt from the time limit (and folks in these areas should reapply): West Mifflin Borough (Allegheny Co.), Muhlenberg township (Berks Co.), **Chambersburg Borough (Franklin Co.)**, Whitehall township (Lehigh Co.), Bethlehem township (Northampton Co.), **Springettsbury township (York Co.)**.

## EXEMPTIONS

### Under age 18 or 50 or older

SNAP time limit rules only apply to those age 18-49

**CLIENT ACTION** → Provide proof of your age to your County Assistance Office (CAO). CAO’s should already exempt ABAWDs based on age. CAO’s should know when you turn 50 and become exempt. If they make a mistake, call your caseworker or the Customer Service Center at 1-877-395-8930 to let them know.

### Homeless

**CLIENT ACTION** → If you do not have a regular place to stay at night, are staying in a shelter, or are doubled up with family or friends temporarily, call your caseworker or the Customer Service Center at 1-877-395-8930. You may need to provide proof.

### In a substance abuse treatment program

**CLIENT ACTION** → Have a program director or your counselor fill out a **Medical Exemption Form** and send the form to your CAO. This form (PA 1921) can be found at <http://www.centralpafoodbank.org/SNAP>

**Physically or mentally unable to work 20 hours per week.**

Many “able-bodied adults without dependents” are not actually “able-bodied,” but your CAO may not know this if the person does not get a disability benefit. People can be exempt from the three-month time limit if they have a physical or mental condition that “reduces their ability to work.” Being determined to be unfit for work has a much lower standard of disability than is required to get SSI. It does not require a specific diagnosis or submission of medical test results.

CLIENT ACTION → Have a health care provider fill out a **Medical Exemption Form**. See <http://www.centralpafoodbank.org/SNAP> for a copy of the form (PA 1921) or speak with your caseworker.

The form can be signed by many health care providers, including:

- Doctor, doctor’s assistant or representative of a doctor’s office
- Nurse practitioner
- Psychologist
- Social worker
- Mental health counselor
- Any other medical provider whose services are paid for by Medical Assistance

**Receiving a disability benefit**

This category includes people who receive SSI, SSD, VA benefits based on a disability, Medicaid based on a disability, or certain disability retirement pensions. This also includes certain temporary disability benefits, such as Worker’s Compensation.

CLIENT ACTION → Your CAO has already exempted ABAWDs they know get a disability benefit. If you get a disability benefit and are not sure if your CAO knows about it, call your caseworker or the Customer Service Center at 1-877-395-8930 to report your disability benefit.

**Receiving unemployment benefits or have applied for unemployment benefits**

CLIENT ACTION → Your CAO should already know that you are receiving unemployment compensation. If they don’t, call your caseworker or the Customer Service Center at 1-877-395-8930 to report that you are getting or applied for unemployment benefits. They should be able to look up information about your unemployment case, so you don’t need to send them proof.

**Living with a child under age 18 who is part of your SNAP household**

This can be your own child or the child of a family member you live with.

CLIENT ACTION → DHS should know already if someone in your SNAP household is under 18. If a child moves into your household call the Customer Service Center at 1-877-395-8930 to report a change in your household size.

**Pregnant**

CLIENT ACTION → Call your caseworker or the Customer Service Center at 1-877-395-8930 to let them know you are pregnant. Have a health care provider complete a **Medical Exemption Form** (PA 1921) or send other proof of pregnancy to your CAO. This form can be found at <http://www.centralpafoodbank.org/SNAP>.

**Needed in the home to care for someone**

CLIENT ACTION → If you care for someone in your home who can’t look after themselves, call your caseworker or the Customer Service Center at 1-877-395-8930 to let your CAO know. Additional proof may be needed.

**❑ A student enrolled at least half-time**

Students in any educational or training program, enrolled at least half time as defined by the program, are exempt. Many college students who do not have children and are able-bodied are not eligible for SNAP at all because of SNAP rules about student eligibility. But if a student qualifies for SNAP, he or she should not be subject to the ABAWD time limit.

**CLIENT ACTION** → If you are enrolled in college or another educational program, at least half time, call your caseworker or the Customer Service Center at 1-877-395-8930 to report your student status. You will have to submit proof of your enrollment in school.

**❑ Experiencing domestic violence**

**CLIENT ACTION** → Call your caseworker or the Customer Service Center at 1-877-395-8930. You should not need to provide proof. If you must provide proof, ask for the **Domestic Violence Verification Form (PA 1747)**. You do not need a Protection from Abuse Order. The form can be found at <http://www.centralpafoodbank.org/SNAP>.

## **QUALIFYING WORK ACTIVITIES**

**❑ Working at least 20 hours per week on average, including self-employment or in-kind work**

If you are already working, participating in a qualifying work/training program, doing community service, or any combination of these activities, you are meeting the work requirement and should be able to continue getting SNAP beyond the three-month limit.

**CLIENT ACTION** → Call your caseworker or the Customer Service Center at 1 877-395-8930 to report your work hours. Then, send proof of your work hours to your CAO. Below are examples of documents you can send as proof of income:

- Last four weeks of pay stubs
- A signed and dated statement from your employer about your weekly hours and pay per hour
- Proof of your self-employment, such as tax returns or ledgers
- A signed and dated statement about your in-kind work including the number of hours worked each week

**❑ Participating in an eligible work training program for at least 20 hours per week on average**

**CLIENT ACTION** → Call your caseworker or the Customer Service Center at 1-877-395-8930 and tell them you are in a work training program, or that you want to sign up for one. If you are already in a program, send them proof of your participation in the program. This activity must be approved by your CAO.

**❑ Doing volunteer work or community service for 26 hours a month or less**

The number of required hours per month is the amount of your SNAP benefit divided by the minimum wage (\$7.25). Typically, this is 26 hours per month.

**CLIENT ACTION** → You can choose a community service site to volunteer at or you can see if your CAO can refer you to a site. If you are volunteering, fill out the **Community Service /Volunteer Participation Form** and send it to your CAO. It needs to be signed by staff at the community service site. The form can be found at <http://www.centralpafoodbank.org/SNAP>. If you need help finding a volunteer site, the CAO may be able to help. Call your caseworker or the Customer Service Center at 1-877-395-8930 and ask for an appointment at your local office.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

**For more information, including copies of all ABAWD forms:** Visit Central Pennsylvania Food Bank's website at <http://www.centralpafoodbank.org/SNAP>, Community Legal Services of Philadelphia's website at [www.clsphila.org/abawds](http://www.clsphila.org/abawds) or visit the Hunger Coalition's website at [www.hungercoalition.org/abawds](http://www.hungercoalition.org/abawds).

**DHS website:** <http://www.dhs.pa.gov>. (Search for ABAWDs.)

**DHS Contact Information:** Statewide Customer Services Center: 1-877-395-8930

**Legal services** (in case you can't get DHS to keep your SNAP benefits active): [www.palegalaid.net](http://www.palegalaid.net).

*\*Send forms and proofs to your local CAO by mail, fax or in-person.*