

# Reinstatement of the ABAWD Work Provisions effective 10/1/2013

## Questions and Answers

1. **Question:** On STAT/WREG, what date goes in the FSET orientation date line? (Our understanding of WF1 is that we won't get an actual date. That will be sent by E&T.)

**Answer:** Communicate with your Employment & Training Provider in your county to determine the date that should be put in the FSET Orientation date field. The FSET Orientation Date field is NOT a mandatory field but a warning edit will come up. This warning edit will not prohibit a new version of SNAP eligibility. WF1 was updated before the end of September 2013. SNAP E&T Referrals sent before WF1 was updated will require additional steps by the ES providers to enroll the non-exempt ABAWDs.

2. **Question:** On STAT/JOBS, is there a certain way we should code ABAWD hours vs. regular hours?

**Answer:** The STAT/JOBS panel does not need to be updated each month for the ABAWDs who are working. ABAWDs who are six-month reporters must be told of their additional requirement to report when their work or job activities fall below 20 hours per week (80 hours per month). This information is found in CM section 0007.15.03 – Unscheduled Reporting of Changes - SNAP

3. **Question:** We have an ABAWD who is working 20 hours a week. Do we refer this ABAWD to our SNAP E&T Provider effective 10/01/2013?

**Answer:** No referral to the Employment Service (ES) Provider is needed unless the work hours drop below 20 hours a week, averaged monthly or at recertification, whichever comes first.

Employment of 20 hours per week does not exempt the ABAWD from the SNAP work registration requirement, but it does exempt him/her from the additional ABAWD requirements. This ABAWD is meeting the 20 hours per week work requirement and he/she will avoid using 1 of her 3 entitled months.

4. **Question:** Refugees receiving RCA are exempt from ABAWD provisions. When RCA ends and they have not found a job should the ABAWD be sent to the SNAP E&T provider in the county they live in?

**Answer:** When the RCA cash is closed and if the ABAWD meets no other ABAWD exemptions they must be referred to the ES provider in the county they live in.

5. **Question:** Are eligibility workers responsible for tracking the work hours of ABAWDs?

**Answer:** Yes, ABAWDs are responsible to report to their eligibility worker when their work hours drop below 20 hours per week, averaged monthly regardless of being a six month reporter or a change reporter.

If a county is working with their ES Provider, the ES Provider tracks the countable non-work activities for the ABAWDs and sends changes through a Status Update.

6. **Question:** Why don't I receive a pop-up window for the WF1 referral?

**Answer:** There are 3 possible reasons for not receiving a pop-up window for the SNAP E&T referral.

- 1) When there is a "Y" in the Defer FSET No Funds field on the STAT/WREG panel no SNAP E&T Referral will not be sent due to this coding for no SNAP E&T (FSET) funds.
- 2) The ABAWD could be a volunteer and be active and open on the WF1 system and then a WF1 referral cannot be sent on an open case.
- 3) There is an old active referral in the WF1 system due to a previous inadvertent referral to WF1.

A PF11 must be done to patch this issue.

7. **Question:** What if our county does not have any money to refer ABAWDs to our SNAP E&T Provider, how should the STAT/WREG panel be coded in MAXIS?

**Answer:** There are 11 counties that will not be operating a SNAP E&T program in MN for FFY 2014.

These counties are:

Benton, Dakota, Fillmore, Freeborn, Mahnomon, Olmsted, Ramsey, Rice, Scott, Stearns, and Winona. In addition there are 4 exempt counties and 7 exempt reservations that are exempt from the SNAP E&T program. Please see the SIR announcement from 9/11/2013 for a list of these counties and reservations. After 10/1/2013 see POLI/TEMP section TE02.05.69 – ABAWD SNAP E&T EXEMPT COUNTIES and TE02.05.7- ABAWD SNAP E&T EXEMPT RESERVATIONS.

On the STAT/WREG panel code the following fields for the ABAWDs:

- FSET Work Reg Status field '30' Mandatory Work registrant.
- Defer FSET No Funds field a 'Y'
- ABAWD status field code 10 which is an ABAWD coded month.

ABAWDs in these counties will need to report directly to their eligibility workers the activities that they have participated in each month and if the allowable work activities total 20 hours a week averaged monthly, that month will not be a counted ABAWD month.

8. **Question:** Can code 22 on the STAT/WREG panel be used when a SNAP recipient is appealing the denial of their SSI application?

**Answer:** Code 22 on the STAT/WREG panel for the FS Work Registration/FSET Participation Status can be used for those SNAP applicants/recipients are appealing their SSI denial.

9. **Question:** In Bulletin #13-01-04 it indicates that SNAP recipients who apply for SSI are exempt from work registration and SNAP work participation, is this correct?

**Answer:** Yes, this is correct. This includes ABAWDs who appeal status for SSI.

10. **Question:** How does a person become eligible for the 2<sup>nd</sup> three month period of eligibility and use code 11 in the ABAWD status field on the STAT/WREG panel.

**Answer:** ABAWDs who have exhausted/used up their 3 countable months may regain eligibility at any time by meeting the ABAWD work requirements for 30 consecutive days or meeting an exemption from the ABAWD work requirements. Once the ABAWD has been working for 30 days for 20 hours per

week averaged monthly, they are eligible to reapply for SNAP. If the ABAWD has lost that job then they will be eligible to use the 2<sup>nd</sup> three month period. This 2<sup>nd</sup> three month period runs consecutively for 3 months.

OR if an ABAWD was participating in a work program or workfare program, the consecutive 3 months must start when the SNAP E&T provider determines the ABAWD is no longer in compliance with the work program.

11. **Question:** Explain how the referral will be generated from MAXIS to WorkForce 1(WF1)?

**Answer:** At present, this is a one-direction interface. MAXIS sends information electronically to WF1, but WF1 does not send information electronically back to MAXIS. The important piece of the process is the "electronic" referral. Once a referral is sent, ES Workers are able to work with that participant on their system. Future changes in STAT data or ELIG approvals send information through the interface alerting the ES Provider that changes occurred to their participant's MAXIS case. These are called status updates in WF1.

### **The SNAP E&T Referral**

Referrals are sent for clients fitting the WF1 criteria as determined by MAXIS background logic. For SNAP, a referral is sent if the following things are coded in MAXIS. The STAT/WREG panel should have the following values:

> FSET Work Reg Status = 30 (Mandatory FSET participant).

AND

> **Defer FSET/No Funds = N**

AND

> ABAWD Status = **06**, 08, 10, or 11

AND

> STAT/UNEA Type is not coded with a 03 or 14 for that person.

For SNAP, referrals are sent to WorkForce One after approving ELIG results.

After the ELIG approval, Eligibility Workers are automatically brought to the WORK panel to select an ES Provider.

### **Selecting a Provider**

Choose an ES Provider found on the WORK panel in the pop-up selection window.

If an incorrect provider is chosen, a new one cannot be sent by the eligibility worker.

The eligibility worker should CASE/NOTE this occurrence since INFC/WORK will only display where the referral was originally sent.

### **Importance of the Referral**

ES Providers have no way of opening a case for participants without a referral. They cannot record participation hours, track services, track activities, get credit for serving the participant and/or placing them in a job if a referral is not sent from MAXIS.

Not getting a referral can result in a negative impact on the ABAWD due to the time limits

SNAP approvals are necessary to send referrals to the ES Providers.

### **Understanding INFC/WORK**

INFC/WORK has 2 faces that sometimes confuse people. First time on a case you see it in edit mode, you select which provider the referral should go to. If you come back to the panel, it is in display mode only and information cannot be updated and you are unable to create another referral. Information shown on INFC/WORK lists the Reference Number, Name, PMI, Provider Number, and the date the referral was sent. A list of ES Providers is found by placing the cursor on the ES Provider selection field and hitting PF12. A history of referrals is not available on INFC/WORK. The program referred on and the comments sent on the original referral will not display on the panel. Behind the scenes DHS staff can view this information.

### **Why won't a SNAP E&T referral go to the ES provider?**

The biggest culprit for SNAP is the coding on STAT/WREG. Most often there is a "Y" in the Defer Funds field.

When a case is REINed, it will not trigger another referral as there was no break in eligibility. If you get a request for a referral on someone who was reinstated, tell the ES Counselor that there has been no break in eligibility/benefits and that they should re-open their program instead of starting a new one with a new referral.

If FIAT is used to change a case from ineligible to eligible a referral will not go out. In these situations if a referral is needed, the FW will need to complete a PF11.

### **SNAP E&T Orientation**

If your ES Provider wants the SNAP E&T Orientation letter to be sent by the MAXIS system, complete the "FSET Orientation Date" field on the WREG panel with the date the SNAP recipient is scheduled for their SNAP E&T Orientation. The date of the SNAP E&T Orientation must be after 10/1/2013. **Check with your ES counselor/provider to determine the date, time and place to insert in the letter. Until further communication, please see SIR announcement posted 10/02/13.**

SPEC/LETR has been updated to accommodate the SNAP E&T Orientation letters. The Eligibility worker must enter the following information in the SPEC/LETR for the SNAP/FSET Orientation:

- Non-exempt ABAWD's name
- The date/month/and year of the SNAP E&T Orientation. NOTE: This date must be after 10/1/2013.
- The time including AM or PM of the SNAP E&T Orientation.
- The location of the SNAP E&T Orientation
- Phone number of the SNAP E&T Counselor/Provider
- The name of the ES Counselor that will be conducting the SNAP E&T Orientation.

## **Employment & Training Questions:**

12. **Question:** What do we do with the ABAWDs who do not show for Orientation?

**Answer:** ABAWDs who do not show up for the Orientation and who do not contact your ES Provider prior to the scheduled orientation will need to be **sanctioned**. See CM section 0028.30.06 – Type/Length Of SNAP E&T Sanctions. DHS is working on revising the DHS-3227 form: Notice: Failure to Comply – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program which will be the form that the ES Provider sends to the ABAWD and the worker.

The sanctions for failure to attend the SNAP E&T Orientation are the following:

- FOR THE 1ST OCCURRENCE: Loss of SNAP for 1 month or until compliance, whichever is longer.
- FOR THE 2ND OCCURRENCE: Loss of SNAP for 3 months or until compliance, whichever is longer.
- FOR THE 3RD AND ANY SUBSEQUENT OCCURRENCE: Loss of SNAP for 6 months or until compliance, whichever is longer.

13. **Question:** Are Employment Service Providers responsible for tracking the work hours and countable work activities for ABAWDs?

**Answer:** If a county is working with their ES Provider, the ES Provider tracks the countable non-work activities for the ABAWDs and sends changes through a Status Update.

14. **Question:** Will the ABAWD have until the end of the month to cooperate or until the 10 day cut-off?

**Answer:** The ABAWD will have until the end of the month prior to the effective date of SNAP closing to cooperate with the SNAP E&T orientation/work requirements.

15. **Question:** Bulletin 10-01-04 on page 3 talks about the countable work activities so must the ABAWD be enrolled in WIA in order for their hours to be counted?

**Answer:** ABAWDs may fulfill the ABAWD work requirements by participating in a work program for 20 hours a week. Work programs include WIA activities, activities under section 236 of the Trade Act, and SNAP E&T activities or equivalent State or local programs. ABAWDs enrolled in WIA may also be enrolled in the Creative Job Search activity. Creative Job Search is not a countable activity for ABAWDs.

16. **Question:** Can ABAWDs use the Trade Adjustment Act, Dislocated workers and other co-enrolled programs for their ABAWD hours?

**Answer:** Call Steve Erbes at 651-259-7539 for specific details of what can be counted and what cannot be counted for TAA activities and other E&T activities.

17. **Question:** What if the county worker sent the ABAWD SNAP E&T referral prior to October 1, 2013?

**Answer:** Employment Service Providers should not **decline** or send back any SNAP E&T referrals received prior to October 1, 2013.

18. **Question:** What does an Employment Counselor do when receiving a SNAP E&T referral from an exempt ABAWD that I was working with before 10/1/2013?

**Answer:** If you have a voluntary client now that obtains part-time employment and they desire to continue to look for full-time work it is the option of the ES Provider to continue working with them. DEED recommends continued contact with the ABAWD and communication with the eligibility worker.

19. **Question:** What does an Employment Counselor do when receiving a SNAP E&T referral from an exempt ABAWD before or after 10/1/2013?

**Answer:** Contact the eligibility worker that sent the referral to discuss why the SNAP E&T referral was sent for an exempt ABAWD. It is possible that information on the MAXIS system about disability or the ABAWDs age was not notice when the referral was sent.

20. **Question:** CM states that clients can earn additional months by participating in WIA and TAA as well as Work Experience. In the ABAWD PowerPoint you addressed Work Experience but not WIA or TAA and you added Workfare. What is Workfare and are WIA and TAA still work activities that we can count to earn additional months?

**Answer:** Workfare means that all non-exempt ABAWD unit members can share the hourly obligation over the course of a month. The 20-hour requirement does not apply to workfare. The SNAP E&T provider determines the hourly requirement for workfare by dividing a unit's SNAP allotment by the higher of the applicable Federal or State minimum wage. In Minnesota, the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 is higher than the state minimum wage of \$6.15. This calculation produces the number of work hours required per month. SNAP E&T provider cannot require or allow the unit member to volunteer to work beyond that maximum

Example 1: A one-person ABAWD SNAP unit receiving \$200 benefits per month is limited to a maximum of 27 hours per month ( $\$200/7.25 = 27.58$  or 27 hours).

Example 2: A two-person ABAWD SNAP unit receiving \$200 in SNAP benefits per month is limited to a maximum of 27 hours per month ( $\$200/7.25 = 27.58$  or 27 hours). The SNAP E&T provider may distribute the hours between the two unit members. The specifics on the distribution of the hours must be defined in the SNAP E&T employment plan.

Workfare requires a worksite agreement, supervisor and time sheet submission in order for the Injury Protection Program to cover any on-site injuries. For counties that are exempt and for those counties who are not operating a SNAP E&T program, Workfare is not available.

An ABAWD's participation in WIA or TAA services continues to be a countable work program activity. See Questions #12 and #13 above for more information about WIA and TAA services.

21. **Question:** When SNAP recipients are coded as “22” applying for SSI, will SNAP ES Providers/employment services enroll them?  
**Answer:** No, SNAP recipients who are applying for SSI or appealing the denial of their SSI application are exempt from Work Registration and the ABAWD work requirements.
22. **Question:** What happens if all of our ABAWDs cannot get in for a SNAP E&T Orientation by October 31, 2013?  
**Answer:** SNAP E&T Providers must keep in mind that ABAWDs only have 3 months of SNAP benefits that they can receive before their SNAP case is closed or they are removed from the SNAP case beginning October 1, 2013. Make every effort to get the non-exempt ABAWDs in for a SNAP E&T orientation as soon as possible. Group orientations for SNAP E&T are acceptable as long as an Employment Plan is developed and signed by the ABAWD.

**Document History**

Date	Topic	Action	Reason
10/02/2013	ABAWD Q&A document created and posted on SIR	Assist Eligibility Workers and ES Providers with the ABAWD provisions	N/A