



## **ABAWD FACT SHEET**

### **ATTENTION: Maine Food Supplement Recipients and Applicants**

#### **Are you:**

- between the ages of 18 and 49,
- not living in a Food Supplement household with a child under age 18, and
- considered to be able bodied (not disabled and able to work)?

If you answered **yes** to these questions you are an ABAWD (Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents). ABAWDs have to meet work requirements to keep getting Food Supplement benefits. Once an ABAWD gets 3 months of benefits in a 36-month period without meeting the ABAWD work requirements the ABAWD's Food Supplement benefits will be closed.

#### **If you are an ABAWD, you must be:**

- working in a job an average of 20 hours each week; or
- volunteering for a community organization for the value of your benefit; or
- in a special Employment and Training program called FSET offered in some areas of the state. More information about FSET is at:  
<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/food-supplement-employment-and-training/index.shtml>.

#### **Exemptions:**

There are some exemptions from the ABAWD work requirement rule. You can be exempt if you are:

- under age 18, or age 50 or older,
- pregnant,
- medically certified to be physically or mentally unfit for employment,
- are taking care of a disabled individual,
- a parent of a child under 18 who lives with you,
- living with any child who is under 18 and is part of the Food Supplement benefit household, or
- a resident of certain Maine geographic areas that have been designated as exempt until August 31, 2020 due to having very high unemployment rates or insufficient numbers of jobs to provide employment.

**If you think you meet one of these exemptions that you have not already reported to OFI,** report it to OFI at # 1-855-797-4357. You will need to provide proof of your exemption to keep your Food Supplement Benefit from closing if you are meeting the work requirements.

**If you are already working 20 hours a week and have given that information to us, you do not have to provide proof every month.**

If you don't usually work 20 hours each week, or have hours that change, your Eligibility Specialist may tell you during your interview that you must provide proof of this to OFI every month or the month will count toward your three-month limit. If you were working an average of 20 hours, but have your hours cut, you must inform us within 10 days.

Here are some examples of acceptable verification for work:

- All paystubs from the previous calendar month for the job you are working.
- If you have a new job, a statement from your employer verifying the number of hours per week you work, hourly wage or salary, pay frequency, date 1<sup>st</sup> check will be received, and job title.

**If you are not meeting the ABAWD work requirements here are a few places to contact to look for jobs or get information on volunteering:**

- Maine DOL CareerCenters can help you find a job. Go to [www.mainecareercenter.com](http://www.mainecareercenter.com) to find out locations.
- Maine 2-1-1 – Information and referral helpline. For information on local organizations in your area that might be looking for volunteers. Go to [www.maine211.org](http://www.maine211.org) or dial 2-1-1 on phone.

**It is important to take action now to meet your ABAWD work requirements.** ABAWDS without exemptions can only get 3 months of benefits without meeting work requirements. You don't want to use up those 3 months in case there is an emergency in your household.

**Revised September 2019**