



SUBJECT: Partnering to Support Able-bodied Adults through the Public Workforce System as the Public Health Emergency Ends

DATE: June 8, 2023

TO: Commissioners and Directors of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
State Workforce Administrators
WIOA Liaisons
Workforce Development Boards
American Job Center Programs

Dear Colleagues:

In response to the end of the public health emergency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) are partnering to encourage State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) agencies and State and local workforce agencies and boards to develop shared strategies that will better connect SNAP participants, particularly those who are subject to time limited benefits, to employment and training opportunities through programs in American Job Centers (AJCs).

In March 2020, Congress passed and the President signed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), which temporarily suspended the SNAP time limit for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs). Normally, ABAWDs may only participate in SNAP for three months in any 36-month period unless they are working or participating in an employment and training activity for 80 hours per month or complying with a workfare program. This suspension of the time limit will expire on June 30, 2023, and many of these individuals may lose benefits on October 1, 2023, unless they obtain satisfactory employment or participate in a qualifying job training or workforce program.

FNS and ETA share a common goal: to help people—particularly those in historically underserved communities, which include many SNAP participants—find sustainable employment. Both the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, underscore the importance of connecting low-income and other historically underserved individuals to meaningful training activities, breaking down barriers which may otherwise limit their success in the workforce.

One resource available to States to help people who will become subject to the SNAP time limit maintain their SNAP eligibility is the SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) Program, which is intended to help SNAP participants gain skills, training, or work experience to help them secure a good job and reduce their need for nutrition assistance. FNS is committed to helping States expand and strengthen their existing E&T programs, and to think strategically about the role other workforce development programs can play in responding to the needs of people subject to the SNAP time limit (ABAWDs).

Additionally, WIOA Title I services offered through the AJCs can be a particularly important resource for ABAWDs. Participation in workforce programs under WIOA Title I is considered a qualifying activity for the purposes of helping ABAWDs maintain SNAP eligibility. Furthermore, expanding SNAP participants' access to employment and training services such as those offered under WIOA Title I and the Trade Act is critical to helping them gain access to good jobs and greater economic security in the long term.

The SNAP E&T and WIOA Title I programs provide important access and opportunities to historically underserved job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, to prepare for, obtain,

retain, and advance in high-quality jobs and in-demand careers. FNS and ETA encourage you join us in this effort to ensure that SNAP participants can obtain the skills and credentials needed to secure employment and increase their earnings. We encourage you to reach out to us or your FNS or ETA representatives to learn more about how to develop shared workforce strategies to support time-limited recipients.

Sincerely,



Stacy Dean
Deputy Under Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services



Brent Parton
Acting Assistant Secretary
U.S. Department of Labor
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