

ABAWD Definition

An Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) may need to meet the FoodShare work requirement to continue getting FoodShare for more than 3 months in a 3-year time period beginning January 1, 2025 until December 31, 2027, if all the following is true:

- Is able to work;
- Is not pregnant;
- Is between the age of 18 and 54
- Is not living with a child under age 18 who is part of the same FoodShare household
- Is not exempt

Exemptions to the ABAWD Work Requirement

You may be exempt and not need to meet the FoodShare work requirement if one of the reasons below applies to you. **An exemption must be reported to the Income Maintenance (IM) agency, but only needs to be verified if questionable by the IM agency.** If you think you may have one or more of these exemptions, check the box and your FSET case manager will help you report that to IM.

- Under the age 18 or age 55 or older
- Residing in a food unit with a child under age 18
- Pregnant
- Unable to work:
 - Receiving temporary or permanent disability benefits from the government or a private source.
 - Mentally or physically unable to work as determined by the IM agency, health care professional, or social worker.
- Homeless (in a temporary housing situation, such as transitional living arrangements and shelters, and includes staying temporarily (up to 90 days) at another person's residence).
- A Veteran (a member who served in the U.S. Armed Forces (Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, National Guard, and Armed Forces Reserve) and have been discharged or released under any condition).
- Former Foster Care youth aged 18 to 24 who were formerly in foster care, kinship care, subsidized guardianship or adoption assistance at the time when they turned 18 years old.
- Primary caretaker of a child under age six (6).
- Primary caretaker of a person who can't take care of themselves.
- Has applied for or is receiving unemployment compensation (UC).
- Regularly participating in an alcohol or other drug abuse (AODA) treatment or rehabilitation program. AA or other support groups are not treatment or rehabilitation programs.
- A person who is enrolled at least half-time in any recognized school, training program, or institution of higher education. A GED/HSED program does not qualify.
- Working 30 hours per week or earning wages equivalent of 30 hours or more per week at the federal minimum wage (i.e. \$217.50 or more per week).
- Complying with the Wisconsin Works (W-2) program requirements.



WOOD COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Empowering Individuals by Offering Opportunities



How to Meet the Work Requirement

If you are subject to the FoodShare Work Requirement, you can meet this requirement one of the following ways:

- Working at least of 80 hours per month;
- Taking part in an allowable work program at least 80 hours a month;
- Both working and taking part in an allowable work program for a total of at least 80 hours per month; or
- Completing a Workfare FSET work experience activity.

Work Includes

- Work in exchange for money;
- Work in exchange for goods or services (in kind);
- Unpaid work (i.e. volunteer work, community service);
- Self-employed at any wage; or
- Any combination of the above.

Allowable Work Programs

- Children First
- FSET
- Programs under Section 236 of the Trade act of 1974 (such as the dislocated worker program)
- Refugee Cash Assistance or Refugee Employment & Training Programs
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
- Wisconsin Works (W-2)

FSET is a great way to meet your work requirement!

FSET is always a voluntary program. If you are not meeting the FoodShare Work Requirement, you are automatically referred to FSET. FSET has many options for you to work towards your employment goals, while helping you meet the work requirement.

Can I just search for a job?

Job Search cannot be your only FSET activity to meet the 80-hour per month work requirement. Job Search activity can only make up less than half of your 80 monthly hours (so no more than 39 of the 80 monthly hours). You need to complete 80 hours of activity each month unless you choose a Workfare work experience. In FSET, that can include:

- Job Search & Job Search Skills (39 hours or less)
- Job Skills Training & Certificate Programs
- Degreed programs (2 years or less)
- GED/HSED
- Literacy Skills (including ESL)
- Driver's Education
- Career Planning
- Workshops and Job Readiness Activities
- Working

What is Workfare?

Workfare is an unpaid FSET work experience activity. Your required monthly hours for Workfare are calculated by dividing your total FoodShare monthly benefits by \$7.25. So, if you receive \$250 in FoodShare, your work requirement can be met by completing only 34 hours of Workfare in a month.

Tell your worker if you have Good Cause (allowable) Reasons for missing FSET activity including:

- Illness
- Illness of another household member serious enough to require your presence
- Unavailability of transportation
- Unanticipated emergency
- Employment or work program placement is no longer suitable if termination from a job or work program was outside of your control.
- Disenrolled and re-enrolled in FSET in the same month

**Note: only a maximum of 40 hours of good cause can be granted a month*

