

# Operations Memorandum - Food Stamps

## OPS081206

December 26, 2008

**SUBJECT:** New Three-Year Period for Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs)  
**TO:** Executive Directors  
**FROM:** Joanne Glover, Director, Bureau of Operations

### PURPOSE

To announce the new three-year period affecting ABAWDs, effective January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2011.

### BACKGROUND

Federal regulations at 7 CFR §273.24 provide that ABAWDs, age 18 through 49, are not eligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program for more than three countable months in a three-year period, unless they are:

- meeting the Federal work requirement; or
- exempt as listed in the Food Stamp Handbook (FSH) Section 575.28; or
- living in a waived area; or
- meeting an exemption under the 15 percent exemption option, as elected by the Department of Public Welfare (DPW).

**NOTE:** Partial months are not included in the three months.

### **Prior Three-Year Period**

Operations Memorandum 05-12-07 informed CAOs of the prior three-year period effective January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2008.

### **New Three-Year Period**

The new three-year period is effective January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2011.

### DISCUSSION

<b>QUESTION</b>
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Will the State Employment and Training (E&T) 15 percent exemption option continue?

**RESPONSE**

Yes, the State E&T work exemptions remain in effect and continue to remain applicable to the ABAWDs who have exhausted their initial three months in a three-year period of time-limited benefits or regained eligibility and who live in non-waived areas.

**Implementation Instructions**

**Qualification Codes Conversion:**

**QUESTION**

What will happen to Food Stamp (FS) qualification code 09 and 21?

**RESPONSE**

FS recipients in non-waived counties that are identified with an FS Eligibility Status Code of "EB" and an FS Qualification Code of 09 and 21 will be converted to EB/20 by a batch process. This ensures that they will receive their three months of EB/20 time limited benefits before using the 15 percent exemption slots or the regained eligibility period.

**QUESTION**

How will the individuals affected be notified of the changes?

**RESPONSE**

Waived and Non-Waived Areas:

- Applicants

The CAOs must give applicants a copy of the attached client notice (see [Attachment A](#)) and an explanation of the policy. Continue to print copies of the attachment for usage until the new notice is available on docushare with the new three-year period dates.

- Recipients

All ABAWDS active in December 2008 will receive a client mailer (see [Attachment A](#)) informing them of the new three-year period and that FS benefits may be time-limited.

Inactive ABAWDs in Non-Waived Areas:

Inactive ABAWDs living in a non-waived area whose FS benefits stopped or who may have been removed from a household's benefits after May 31, 2008 will receive a client mailer (see [Attachment B](#)) informing them of the new three-year period.

**QUESTION**

Will there be any changes to the ABAWD clock?

**RESPONSE**

No. The worker Alert #027 will continue to be generated to all households that contain an ABAWD 45 days prior to the future close date. The Advance Notice (162-A) with reason code 660 will continue to be sent to the individual. The budget closing will occur with the next payment date deadline (prior to the fourth month) if an ABAWD individual is not exempt or meeting a work requirement.

**NEXT STEPS**

1. Share this information with all appropriate staff.
2. Implement these changes effective January 1, 2009 for both applicants and recipients.
3. Give all applicants a copy of the Attachment A client notice at the time of interview.
4. Maintain this Operations Memorandum until the appropriate FSH pages are updated.

Attachments