

# Operations Memorandum - Food Stamps

## OPS090203

February 27, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) Exemption to Time-Limited Participation  
**TO:** Executive Directors  
**FROM:** Joanne Glover, Director, Bureau of Operations

### Purpose

To inform County Assistance Offices (CAOs) that all ABAWDs are exempt from time-limited participation in the Food Stamp Program (FSP). This policy is effective retroactive from January 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010.

### Background

Operations Memorandum [080301](#) informed CAOs of the areas in Pennsylvania that qualified for a waiver of the time-limited participation in the FSP for ABAWDs because of high unemployment. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) approved the waiver through January 31, 2009.

The Department of Public Welfare (DPW) submitted a request to FNS and was approved for a 12-month statewide waiver because of the high unemployment rate in Pennsylvania. This waiver is effective February 1, 2009 through January 31, 2010.

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. One of the provisions of the Act related to the FSP is the suspension of the time limit for ABAWDs until September 30, 2010. In addition, effective October 1, 2010, all ABAWDs are eligible for three months of benefits.

### Discussion

To accommodate these changes, the system reference table TABW will be updated, effective March 2009, to convert all ABAWDs to the "EW" status code. The caseworker must enter the EW status code for all new ABAWD applicants.

The ABAWD clock will be reset for all ABAWDs currently coded EB 20, so any benefits received prior to March 2009 will not count against the three-month time limit during the current three-year period of January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2011 ([See OPS081206](#)).

A system-generated client message will be sent to all ABAWD recipients advising them of the waiver to time limits. CAOs will be notified by a Daily Status when the client message is mailed.

**Next Steps**

1. Share this information with all appropriate staff.
2. This Operations Memorandum becomes obsolete when the FS Handbook is updated.
3. Refer all questions to your Area Manager.