

### **Important message about your SNAP benefits.**

You are receiving this notice because your household gets benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). We want to tell you about an important change that will impact some SNAP households on January 1, 2016. This change only affects households that have an able-bodied adult without dependent children (an "ABAWD"). An ABAWD is a person who is 18 to 49 years old, is not disabled and is not living with a dependent child under the age of 18.

Normally, an ABAWD is allowed to receive SNAP benefits for only 3 months during a 36-month period. This is called the ABAWD time limit. The ABAWD time limit does not apply if the ABAWD satisfies ABAWD work requirements or qualifies for a special exemption.

The ABAWD time limit has not been in effect in Connecticut since 2009. Because the unemployment rate in Connecticut has improved, the ABAWD time limit will start again in some parts of the state beginning on January 1, 2016. **Starting January 1, 2016, any ABAWD in your household may get SNAP benefits for only 3 months out of a 36-month period unless he or she either meets the ABAWD work requirements or is exempt from the ABAWD time limit, as described below.**

An ABAWD can meet the ABAWD work requirements by:

- Working at least 80 hours a month; **or**
- Participating in a work program at least 80 hours a month; **or**
- Working and participating in a work program for a combination of at least 80 hours a month; **or**
- Participating in a workfare program

An ABAWD is **exempt** from the ABAWD time limit and the ABAWD work requirements if he or she is:

- Under 18 years old; **or**
- Age 50 or older; **or**
- Living in a SNAP household with a child under 18 years old; **or**
- Physically or mentally unfit for employment; **or**
- Pregnant; **or**
- Exempt from general SNAP work requirements. This includes people who are: under 16 years old or 60 years old or older; physically or mentally disabled; complying with the work requirements of another program; responsible for a child under 6 years old; already working more than 30 hours a week; participating in a drug or alcoholic rehab program; or enrolled as a student at least half time; **or**
- Living in one of the following 82 Connecticut towns that still has a high unemployment rate: Andover, Ansonia, Ashford, Barkhamsted, Beacon Falls, Bethlehem, Bloomfield, Bozrah, Branford, Bridgeport, Bristol, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Chaplin, Clinton, Colchester, Columbia, Coventry, Cromwell, Derby, Eastford, East Haddam, East Hampton, East Hartford, East Haven, East Lyme, Griswold, Groton, Hamden, Hampton, Hartford, Killingly, Lebanon, Lisbon, Manchester, Mansfield, Meriden, Middlebury, Middletown, Milford, Monroe, Montville, Naugatuck, New Britain, New Hartford, New Haven, Newington, New London, Norwalk,

Norwich, Old Saybrook, Plainfield, Plainville, Plymouth, Pomfret, Portland, Preston, Prospect, Putnam, Salem, Seymour, Shelton, Southbury, Southington, Sprague, Stafford, Sterling, Stratford, Thomaston, Thompson, Vernon, Voluntown, Wallingford, Waterbury, Watertown, Westbrook, West Haven, Wethersfield, Windham, Windsor, Wolcott, and Woodbury.

If an ABAWD in your household receives SNAP benefits for 3 months during a 36-month period while not exempt from the time limit or while not meeting work requirements, then the ABAWD's SNAP benefits will stop. The ABAWD can become eligible for benefits again by:

- Working at least 80 hours in a 30-day period; **or**
- Participating in a work program for at least 80 hours in a 30-day period; **or**
- Working and participating in a work program for a combination of at least 80 hours in a 30-day period; **or**
- Participating in a workfare program; **or**
- Becoming exempt from the time limit.

If your household includes an ABAWD who regains eligibility in one of these ways and he or she later stops meeting the ABAWD work requirements, you must notify DSS immediately. We may be able to give the ABAWD 3 more months of benefits if you do so.

If you have any questions regarding this notice, contact InfoLine at 2-1-1 or the DSS Benefit Center at 1-855-626-6632.

If you need help finding a job, call or go to your local American Job Center or your local community action agency. A list of American Job Center locations can be viewed online at <https://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/ajc/FactSheets.htm>. You can also find out more about contacting these agencies by calling InfoLine at 2-1-1.

Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and have a TTD/TTY device can contact DSS at 1-800-842-4524. Persons who are blind or visually impaired can contact DSS at 1-860-424-5040.