



**CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES  
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**Statewide News Release**

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## **Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) Changes in Eight Counties**

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (April 22, 2016)** — Approximately 9,000 able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs), who live in Bullitt, Hardin, Jefferson, Fayette, Daviess, Henderson, McCracken and Warren counties will lose Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits on May 1 because they failed to either comply with federal work requirements or participate in an Employment & Training (E&T) program.

These individuals were first notified of the change in federal policy in November 2015 when they received a letter explaining the new rules of compliance that would take effect with the expiration of the ABAWD waiver in their county of residence. They were also provided forms to begin the E&T process that were required to be completed and returned to their local Department of Community Based Services (DCBS) office by December 10, 2015. Additional notices and requests for information have been sent over the past five months to remind these individuals of the need to comply with the reinstated federal requirements.

This time limit for SNAP benefits does not apply to people who are: unable to work due to physical or mental health reasons, pregnant, caring for a child or incapacitated family member, or exempt from the work requirement. SNAP benefits are only being discontinued for the ABAWD, not for any other individuals living in their household.

From 2008-2015, Kentucky and dozens of other states received a statewide waiver from these federal ABAWD requirements. As the economy has recovered, that federal waiver will no longer cover ABAWD recipients in eight Kentucky counties - Bullitt, Hardin, Jefferson, Fayette, Daviess, Henderson, McCracken and Warren. The other 112 counties in the Commonwealth remain eligible for the waiver so ABAWDs in those counties are not affected at this time.

The federal government defines ABAWDs as individuals between the ages of 18 and 49 who have no disabilities, no dependents and no other exemptions. ABAWDs must notify the Commonwealth when their paid or unpaid work hours drop below the required 80 hours per month or 20 hours per week. ABAWDs participating in E&T programs must register and report their job search progress every 30 days.

The 1996 federal welfare reform law limits ABAWD eligibility for SNAP benefits to a total of three months in any 36-month period, unless the individual meets a federal work requirement of 80 hours per month, or is otherwise exempt. ABAWDs who need assistance meeting this work requirement may participate in a SNAP employment and training (E&T) program to maintain their eligibility and learn the skills they need to get a job.

If anyone feels their SNAP benefits may be cut off inappropriately, they may contact the SNAP Call Center at 1-855-306-8959, the Ombudsman toll free at 1-800-372-2973, or the TTY line at 1-800-627-4720.

*The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.*