



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

**ROY COOPER** • Governor

**KODY H. KINSLEY** • Secretary

**SUSAN G. OSBORNE** • Assistant Secretary for County Operations  
for Human Services

**Date:** February 01, 2022

**Dear County Directors of Social Services:**

**Attention:** Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Managers and Supervisors

**Subject:** FNS – COVID-19 Voluntary Quit and Good Cause Policy Clarification

**Priority:** Information

**I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has provided guidance regarding how to determine if a Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) recipient has good cause for not meeting the FNS general work requirement in situations related to COVID-19. If an FNS recipient voluntarily quits employment pertaining to COVID-19 workplace safeguards, vaccination, and/or testing requirements, make certain that good cause determinations for not meeting the general work requirement are in accordance with FNS policy.

**II. POLICY PROCEDURES**

**A. FNS recipients who voluntarily quit a job with good cause**

FNS recipients ages 16 through 59 are required to meet the general work requirements that are outlined in manual section 240.03. FNS recipients must be work registered unless meeting an exemption. FNS recipients who are subject to the work requirements cannot voluntarily quit employment without good cause while participating in the FNS program.

If an FNS recipient voluntarily quits employment in regard to vaccination and/or testing requirements, evaluate the circumstances and determine whether good cause was met. Good cause must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis but not limited to the following:

1. Circumstances beyond the FNS recipients' control, such as illness, or illness of another household member requiring the assistance of the recipient.
2. If the employer did not offer an accommodation for the FNS recipient with a medical or religious reason for not following the vaccination and/or test requirements.

**NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES • ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES**

LOCATION: 820 S. Boylan Avenue, McBryde Building, Raleigh, NC 27603  
MAILING ADDRESS: 2420 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2420  
www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-527-6300 • FAX: 919-334-1265

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

3. Employment becomes unsafe regarding health and safety in regard to the spread of COVID-19.
4. Lack of adequate childcare for children at the age six but are under age 12.
5. Household emergency
6. Inaccessibility of transportation
7. Employer is not following OSHA standards

Refer to manual section 255.03 for additional good cause reasons.

**B. FNS recipients who voluntarily quit a job without good cause.**

Disqualify the FNS recipient if it is determined the recipient voluntarily quit without good cause. The FNS recipient will be disqualified as follows:

1. First Offense - One month
2. Second Offense - Three months
3. Third and Subsequent Offenses - Six months

The disqualified FNS recipient may gain eligibility at the end of the disqualification penalty, as outlined in manual section 255.01.

If you have any questions, please submit them to Operational Support Team (OST) at [dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov).

Sincerely,



Carla West, Senior Director for Economic Security  
Division of Social Services, Economic and Family Services

CLW/vd

**EFS-FNSEP-12-2022**