



New SNAP Rule Does Not Impact North Carolina

On Dec. 4, 2019 the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued a new rule for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This new rule does **not** apply to North Carolina and does **not** impact people who receive SNAP benefits in the state.

What is SNAP (known as Food and Nutrition Services in North Carolina)?

It is a federal food assistance program that provides low-income families the food they need for a nutritionally adequate diet.

Can people without dependents receive SNAP?

Yes, for a limited time and under certain conditions. People ages 18 through 49 who are able to work, and do not have any dependents, need to meet (with some exceptions) both a general work requirement and an additional work requirement to get SNAP for more than three months in three years (the time limit). Work requirements can be met by:

- Working at least 80 hours a month. Work can be for pay, for goods or services (for something other than money), unpaid or as a volunteer
- Participating in a work program at least 80 hours a month. A work program could be SNAP Employment and Training or another federal, state or local work program
- Participating in a combination of work and work program hours for a total of at least 80 hours a month
- Participating in workfare for the number of hours assigned to you each month (the number of hours will depend on the amount of your SNAP benefit)

Prior to this new rule could states have less restrictive work requirements?

Yes, states could apply for a waiver to increase time limits in times of high unemployment.

What is the new rule?

The new rule imposes stricter criteria that states must meet to request a waiver for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) to receive SNAP benefits. It revises the conditions under which the USDA would waive, when requested by a state, the ABAWD time limit in areas that have an unemployment rate of over 10 percent or a lack of sufficient jobs.

Why doesn't the new rule apply to North Carolina?

The new rule only applies to states that have a waiver or apply for one in the future. North Carolina does not have a waiver nor is it allowed to apply for one. In 2015, the General Assembly enacted legislation (Session Law 2015-294) prohibiting the state from seeking a waiver to reduce to work requirements.

How can people in North Carolina apply for Food and Nutrition Services?

There are three ways to apply for Food and Nutrition Services (Food Stamps):

1. Apply online with [ePass](#).
2. Apply in person at your county [Department of Social Services \(DSS\)](#) office. It helps to fill out as much of the application as possible ahead of time.
3. Fill out a [paper application](#) and mail to or drop it off at your county [DSS office](#).

Call your county [DSS office](#) if one of these methods will not work for you. [Watch this video](#) to learn about applying online through ePass.