

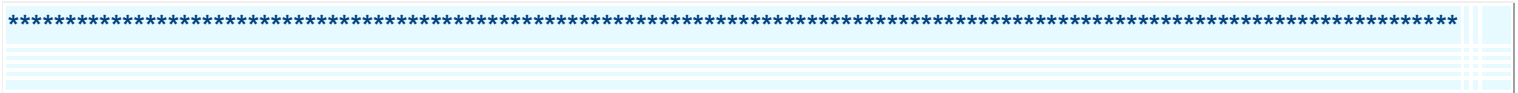
Department of Social and Health Services  
Olympia, Washington  
**EAZ Manual**

Revision # 1269  
Category ABAWDs- Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents  
Issued 2/28/2024  
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**Summary**

Updated clarifying information under [WAC 388-444-0035](#) to implement the February 2024 - January 2025 ABAWD waiver. This change revises Discretionary Exemptions to ABAWD participation, adding individuals living on the Muckleshoot tribal reservation as qualifying for the exemption.

Updated February 28, 2024  
See below for edited text:



**Clarifying Information - WAC 388-444-0035**

- A client is an Able Bodied Adult without Dependents (ABAWD) if they are able to work and have no children in their Assistance Unit (AU). ABAWDs may receive Basic Food benefits for three out of every 36 months if they aren't meeting work requirements and they don't qualify for an exemption.
- If a client is exempt from work registration rules under WAC 388-444-0010 they are exempt from ABAWD participation. However there are further exceptions that a client may meet under WAC 388-444-0035.

**NOTE:**

Some areas of the state may be waived from ABAWD time limits.

See the [ABAWD website](#) for more information about waived and non-waived areas.

**Children in the home**

- When an Assistance Unit (AU) includes a member under age 18, all adults in the AU are exempt from ABAWD participation regardless of their responsibility to care for the child. Sometimes the child may not be eligible due to alien status or failure to provide their Social Security number; this doesn't affect the ABAWD status of the adults in the home. If the child isn't on the AU, such as in a roommate situation where the adults purchase and prepare separately, the client is an ABAWD.

**NOTE:**

If there is a child in the AU there are no ABAWDs. However, this doesn't automatically exempt the adult(s) in the AU from work registration.

Correctly code the work screen to reflect the adult(s) work registration status.

**EXAMPLE:**

Dylan and his child Nathan receive Basic Food. Nathan is turning 18 in the month of May and is no longer in school. Both will become ABAWDs effective June 1st, unless otherwise exempt.

**EXAMPLE:**

Aunt Nicholle is caring for her niece Christina, who is seven years old, during the summer. Christina is a part of Nicholle's AU during these months. Christina is returning to her home September 13th. Nicholle will become an ABAWD effective October 1st, unless otherwise exempt.

**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Clients**

TANF clients aren't subject to ABAWD participation time limits because they have children or meet the pregnancy exemption for ABAWD participation. Do not code them as an ABAWD.

**Waived Areas**

ABAWD clients living in waived areas are exempt from participation. See more about this in the [Moving Between Non-Waived and Waived Areas](#) section.

**Discretionary Exemptions**

- Every Federal Fiscal Year the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) awards an amount of *discretionary exemptions* to each state. The state has the authority to determine how the exemptions can be used to exempt ABAWD clients from the time limit.
- Washington State will use discretionary exemptions to exempt mandatory ABAWDs:
  - [Living on the Snoqualmie tribal reservation.](#)
  - [Living on the Muckleshoot tribal reservation.](#)
  - Who wouldn't receive timely termination notice due to LEP translations.

## Participation Exceptions

ABAWD participation exceptions are reasons that an ABAWD client is not able to participate in work or work activities for 80 hours a month. When documenting, always select the exemption or exception that will last for the longest period of time. Exempt Area is only used when the individual lives in a waived county and doesn't qualify for a different exemption or exception.

- **Pregnancy**
  - Pregnancy is an exception to ABAWD participation. Once the client's due date is entered in the Expected Due Date field, the Work Registration page will automatically suggest the pregnancy exception.
  - When the due date has passed, workers will be responsible for updating work registration status of those in the household.
- **Paid Family Medical Leave**
  - Clients who receive PFML are considered temporary incapacitated whether it is for themselves or to care for a family member.
- **Veterans**
  - Veterans of the U.S. Armed forces or reserves (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Space Force, Coast Guard, and National Guard) qualify for an exception from the ABAWD participation rules regardless of discharge status.
- **Homeless**
  - Clients experiencing homelessness qualify for an exception to ABAWD participation. Clients may experience homelessness differently from others. Homelessness will also be consistent (but not limited to) [WAC 388-408-0050](#).
- **Foster Care Alumni**
  - Individuals who were in foster care on their 18th birthday and are 24 years of age or younger. ACES will recognize Foster Care Alumni receiving D26 medical as qualifying for the exception. Foster Care Alumni recently relocating to Washington may contact the Health Care Authority to have eligibility determined for D26 healthcare coverage.