

Department of Social and Health Services

Community Services Division

EA-Z Manual

Revision: # 1205

Category: **Basic Food Work Requirements - Work Registration, Basic Food Work Registration Exemptions**

Issued: January 13, 2023

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Summary

Revised chapters for new oral script and consolidated work requirements notice processes. Also made updates for clarity and accuracy.

Basic Food Work Requirements - Work Registration

Revised: January 13, 2023

Purpose:

WAC 388-444-0005 Am I required to work or look for work in order to be eligible for Basic Food?

Clarifying Information - WAC 388-444-0005

Exempt clients (per [WAC 388-444-0010](#)) are not required to register for work, so they are not work registrants. [Exempt clients may still voluntarily participate in Basic Food Employment & Training \(BFET\) services, and/or Employment Pipeline services.](#)

Non-exempt clients are people who receive Basic Food and must be registered for work. They are considered work registrants, and further divided into **two** groups:

<p>Work Registrants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients age 16 through 59 who do not meet an exemption listed in WAC 388-444-0010 must register for work and meet Work Registration requirements. • There are no time limits for non-ABAWD work registrants. • Participation in Employment & Training is voluntary in Washington State. • Work registrants who voluntarily quit a job or reduce their work hours below 30 hours a week without good cause will face a penalty. • DSHS registers the clients for work by completing the WORK Work Registration screen-page in ACES/3G.
<p>Work Registrants Who are ABAWDs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) are a subset of Work Registrants who must meet further requirements in order to remain eligible for benefits. • Able-bodied adults ages 18 through 49, without dependents, and without a physical or mental disability preventing them from working, and who live in an non-waived area, are required to participate in specific activities outlined in the ABAWD WACs to stay eligible for Basic Food and avoid the three month time limit. • ABAWD clients are referred to options to meet their participation requirements.

Worker Responsibilities - [WAC 388-444-0005](#)

1. During application, add a person or eligibility review, [or another change that impacts work registration](#), determine if members of the Basic Food household are non-exempt work registrants or exempt.
2. For any exempt work registrants, code the most appropriate exemption per current procedure.
3. For any non-exempt work registrant, determine if the client(s) is considered [ABAWD](#).
4. [If a WorkFirst household is sanctioned](#), determine whether or not the sanctioned persons are exempt from Basic Food work requirements. Disqualify non-participating members of the

TANF household from receiving Basic Food unless they are exempt under [WAC 388-444-0010](#).

5. Read the Work Registration Script(s), referring to any household members in the assistance unit that are work registrants. Perform any necessary referrals to employment and training opportunities.
- 4.6. Ensure the Consolidated Work Registration Notice populates in the letters for the household.

Basic Food Work Registration Exemptions

Revised ~~March 5, 2020~~ January 13, 2023

Purpose:

WAC 388-444-0010 Who is exempt from work registration while receiving Basic Food?

- Clarifying Information

Clarifying Information - [WAC 388-444-0010](#)

1. We apply and code personal exemptions (such as child under six, etc.) in all areas of the state. There is no geographic or regional exemption for Basic Food work registration.
2. The exemption for drug or alcohol addiction only applies when the participation in this program would prevent the individual from meeting the work requirement or participating in an employment/training program the required number of hours.
3. The exemption for employment or self-employment is applied if either situation occurs:
 - a. Client is earning 30 x Federal Minimum Wage (\$7.25 in 2023) a week averaged monthly.
 - b. Client is working over 30 hours a week averaged monthly.

EXAMPLE: A Work Registrant who is also ABAWD attends a methadone clinic once a month for a total of two hours in order to refill a methadone prescription. The client does not attend any additional counseling or treatment. This drug addiction treatment and rehabilitation program does not prevent the client from meeting the work requirements or participating in an employment or training program.

EXAMPLE: A Work Registrant who is also an ABAWD enters a specialized hospital for treatment for addiction. As part of the program, the client is expected to live at the hospital and receive treatment for the next 30 days. Since the client is enrolled in a program that does not allow the client to leave the hospital, this program prevents the ABAWD from meeting the work requirements or participating in an employment or training program.

4. We must register non-exempt persons who receive state-funded FAP benefits even though they cannot receive federally-funded ~~E&T~~ BFET services.

i. The one exception is WAC 388-444-0010(9). If the client does not have authorization to work in the United States they can be exempt from work registration rules.

- ~~2.5.~~ Caring for an incapacitated person exemption: The incapacitated person does not have to be related, or in the household.

- ~~3.6.~~ ABAWD is a small subset population of Work Registrants that have extra requirements; therefore, specific ABAWD exemptions (such as pregnancy or waived counties) under WAC 388-444-0035 that apply to those extra requirements do NOT apply to work registration in general. See ABAWD Chapter.

Worker Responsibilities - WAC 388-444-0010

1. Screen for work registration status:

- a. Determine the client's exempt or non-exempt status for work registration. See WAC 388-444-0010; and
- b. Code work exemption information on the ~~WORK screen~~ work registration topic page for every person age 16 and over.
- ~~c. Register non-exempt clients for work at the initial application and at recertification as described in the ACES Procedures—Work Registration.~~

2. Volunteering for BFET ~~or Employment Pipeline~~ Services:

All clients who receive federally-funded Basic Food (SNAP) benefits may volunteer for E&T services. As a volunteer they may:

- ~~a. Receive supportive services (see Basic Food Work Requirements Section D—BFET Reimbursement of Participant Expenses ~~F E&T Payments for Related Expenses~~); and~~
- ~~a.b. Meet eligibility requirements (see Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) Program); and~~
- ~~c. Not be disqualified for not cooperating with the program.~~

3. Verifying a Personal Exemption

- a. Accept a client's statement of employment status or job availability unless the information is questionable.
- b. To verify questionable information have the client provide:
 - i. Evidence of the claimed exemption; or
 - ii. The name and contact information of an acceptable collateral source who can be contacted for further verification.
- c. ~~The exemption for physical or mental inability to work (including when client claims to care for an incapacitated person) follows WorkFirst guidelines, which require a minimum of a 12-month duration.~~ If a client claims to be physically or mentally unable to work and the client's statement is questionable, verify the claim by:
 - i. Proof of permanent disability benefits issued by a public or private source; or
 - ii. A statement from a qualified professional or their staff; or
 - iii. A medical verification through DSHS form 10-353 [\(Documentation Request for Medical Condition and Residual Functional Capacity \)](#) or DSHS form 14-541 [\(ABAWD Requirement: Medical Report\)](#) [Find forms in English and other languages on our forms website: https://www.dshs.wa.gov/office-of-the-secretary/forms](https://www.dshs.wa.gov/office-of-the-secretary/forms)
 - iv. Do not refer to an SSI facilitator for purposes of Basic Food disability verification.

[NOTE: A client qualifies for the personal disability exemption if they are a veteran receiving 100% disability benefits.](#)

[NOTE: Washington Paid Family & Medical Leave \(PFML\), L&I, other Worker's Compensation or Private disability insurance benefits can be used as verification for this exemption.](#)

- d. For self-employment the client must provide records to show the hours and income worked. [\(See Self Employment Income chapter\)](#)
- e. An adult may claim a child under 6, as their exemption, if they have a majority (50% or more) parental responsibility to care for that child. In households with multiple adults, any adult that has a valid claim to majority parental responsibility for the child can claim the exemption. Allow the client to change their election of who is claiming the child under 6 as an exemption up to once per month if necessary; however, the change of election may not be utilized as a means to remove an individual's work registration food disqualification (by becoming exempt).