



Date: June 10, 2022

DMS Operations Memo 22-11

To: Income Maintenance Supervisors
Income Maintenance Lead Workers
Income Maintenance Staff
FSET Agencies

Affected Programs:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> BadgerCare Plus | <input type="checkbox"/> Caretaker Supplement |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FoodShare | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FoodShare Employment and Training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medicaid | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SeniorCare | |

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New Fixed Three-Year FoodShare Clock and Other Changes to Time Limited Benefits (TLBs) for Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs)

CROSS REFERENCE

- FoodShare Wisconsin Handbook [Section 3.16 Work Requirements](#) and [Section 3.17 Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents \(ABAWDs\)](#)
- FSET Policy Handbook [Section 6.3, FSET Participation Requirements](#)
- Process Help, [Chapter 71](#)
- 7 CFR [§ 273.24](#)

EFFECTIVE DATE

June 25, 2022

PURPOSE

This operations memo announces changes in applying time-limited benefits (TLBs) to Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs). Policy changes include the transition from a rolling FoodShare Clock to a fixed FoodShare Clock, changes to how ABAWDs may regain FoodShare eligibility after exhausting their three TLBs, and changes regarding countable TLBs and additional months received in other states.

BACKGROUND

FoodShare members between ages 18 and 49, who do not live with a child under 18 (also known as ABAWDs), and do not have a verified exemption, can only get FoodShare benefits for three months in three years unless they meet the FoodShare work requirement. These three months are referred to as countable months or time-limited benefits (TLBs). Under current policy, ABAWDs have a rolling 36-month clock with a begin date determined by when their first TLB month was accrued. See [FoodShare Wisconsin Handbook, Section 3.17.10](#) for full ABAWD policy.

Wisconsin DHS will transition from a rolling, individual 36-month clock to a fixed, state-wide three-year clock.

Note: The policies described in this memo do not override any temporary policies in place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

POLICY

Beginning on January 1, 2022, all FoodShare members aged 18 to 49 will have TLBs tracked using the same fixed FoodShare clock. CWW will be updated on June 25th to reflect this policy. All existing individual rolling FoodShare Clocks will be systematically ended as of December 2021.

NEW FIXED THREE-YEAR FOODSHARE CLOCK FOR ALL ADULT FOODSHARE MEMBERS

The new fixed FoodShare Clock began January 1, 2022, and ends December 31, 2024. All members eligible for FoodShare aged 18 to 49 are subject to the new FoodShare Clock. While all adult members will now have a FoodShare Clock, only those subject to the FoodShare work requirement during the three-year period may incur TLBs. See [FoodShare Handbook 3.17.1.9 Three Countable Months of Time-Limited FoodShare Benefits](#) for TLB policy.

The new fixed FoodShare Clock will establish the same three-year period for all FoodShare members regardless of the date the members were determined eligible or the date the members received their first TLB. A new three-year period will automatically start after each three-year period expires. When the next three-year period starts FoodShare members with TLBs and additional months will have their countable months reset to zero. The next three-year period will begin on January 1, 2025.

Example 1: Sally, aged 39, is an ABAWD and is determined eligible for FoodShare benefits on June 10, 2023. She does not meet her work requirement in July, August, or September of that year. Unless Sally verifies an exemption or begins meeting the work requirement, she will not be eligible for FoodShare benefits until the next three-year period begins on January 1, 2025.

Example 2: Greg, aged 30, is the primary caretaker of his 4-year-old son, Mike. Greg begins receiving FoodShare benefits in October, 2022. Greg's case in CWW includes information about the FoodShare Clock. The existence of the FoodShare clock does not affect Greg's benefits because he is not an ABAWD.

REGAINING ELIGIBILITY FOR FOODSHARE

If an ABAWD uses all three TLBs within the three-year period, they will be ineligible to receive FoodShare benefits unless they reapply for FoodShare and meet the FoodShare work requirement or

verify an exemption (see [FoodShare Wisconsin Handbook, Section 3.17.1.12 FSET Participation and FoodShare Eligibility for ABAWDs](#)). FoodShare applicants must meet the FoodShare work requirement for 30 consecutive days prior to their new filing date to regain eligibility. The 30 consecutive days may now occur at any time after losing eligibility and prior to the ABAWDs new filing date, even if they are no longer working at the time they apply. ABAWDs can also regain eligibility by verifying they will meet the work requirement within 30 days after the new filing date. ABAWDs who do not meet the work requirement will remain ineligible for FoodShare until the start of the next three-year period.

Example 3: Jose, aged 45, is an ABAWD and is determined eligible for FoodShare benefits on March 13, 2023. He does not meet his work requirement in April, May, or June of that year, exhausting all three of his TLBs. Jose is employed part-time (working 20 hours per week) on July 25 and reapplies for FoodShare benefits. Because Jose is now employed and is expected to meet his work requirement, he is determined eligible for FoodShare.

COUNTING OUT-OF-STATE TLB MONTHS

Adult FoodShare applicants or members may have received TLBs or additional months while living in another state. See [FoodShare Wisconsin Handbook, Section 3.17.1.17 Countable Months From Another State](#) for current policy. These must be counted as TLBs and additional months in Wisconsin if they occurred during the current period of Wisconsin's fixed three-year clock. Countable months must be verified if there is an indication that an adult applicant has received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in another state. However, verifying this information must not delay processing of the application or renewal beyond regular timeliness processing standards.

Example 4: Maria, aged 33, resided in and received SNAP benefits from the State of Illinois for three years. While living in Illinois, Maria exhausted three TLB months in February, March, and April of 2023. In July 2023, Maria moved to Wisconsin and applied for FoodShare benefits. Because the three TLBs accrued in Illinois occurred during Wisconsin's current FoodShare Clock three-year period, the three TLBs accrued in Illinois will be counted in Wisconsin once verified. To receive FoodShare benefits in Wisconsin, Maria must report and verify one of the following, in addition to meeting all other non-financial, financial, and verification requirements:

- She has met the work requirement for 30 consecutive days between May and July
- She will meet the work requirement within 30 days of her filing date
- She has an exemption.

ABAWDS LIVING IN IDENTIFIED GEOGRAPHIC AREAS OF HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT

Currently, the entire state of Wisconsin is considered an area of high unemployment through September 30, 2022 as explained in [Operations Memo 21-21](#). ABAWDs who live or lived in a geographic area where the FoodShare time limits are waived are not subject to TLBs. Starting June 25, 2022, CWW will now correctly classify these members as ABAWDs who are not subject to the time limit due to receiving an exemption for residing in these geographic areas.

CONTACTS

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