

## Health Advisory

### Medical Exemptions for SNAP Recipients

October 1, 2025

This Health Advisory addresses medical professionals' ability to assist patients who may be at imminent risk of losing their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp program) benefits. Recent changes by the federal government will subject additional people to the SNAP "work requirement," which limits SNAP to 3 months of benefits over a 3-year period, unless the recipient works, volunteers, or participates in an education or training program for at least 20 hours per week (or 80 hours each month) **or qualifies for an exemption.**

Since September 1, 2025, most Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD) must meet the work requirement. Starting on November 1, 2025, two new categories will be newly subject to the work requirement: (1) Individuals between the ages of 55-64; and (2) households with the youngest child over 14 years old. **SNAP benefits may be terminated in December 2025 if the new rules apply to a recipient. Medical providers are encouraged to determine whether patients qualify for an "ABAWD Time Limit Medical Exemption."**

The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services has published an [ABAWD Time Limit Medical Exemption Form](#) ("Exemption Form"). SNAP recipients qualify for an ABAWD Time Limit Medical Exemption if they are:

- Pregnant
- In drug/alcohol treatment or counseling program
- In mental health counseling program
- In vocational rehabilitation program; or
- Have a mental and/or physical illness or disability which reduces their ability to work

The Exemption Form should be returned to the patient's County Assistance Office as soon as possible **before December 2025**. Medical providers should also ask patients if they have received a **Pennsylvania Department of Human Services' Screening Form**.

The Exemption Form may be signed by **any medical personnel whose services may be reimbursed by Medical Assistance, including, but not limited to, the following:**

- Physician
- Physician's assistant
- Designated representative of the physician's office
- Nurse practitioner
- Osteopath
- Psychologist
- Drug and alcohol abuse counselor
- Mental health counselor
- Social worker
- Midwife
- Podiatrist
- Audiologist
- Physical therapist
- Occupational therapist
- Optometrist

For more information, please visit this website: [What you need to know about significant changes to SNAP benefits | Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services | City of Philadelphia](#)