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GOVERNOR

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Federal work requirements for some SNAP recipients begin Nov. 1

Alger, Arenac, Iosco, Iron, Luce, Montmorency, Oceana, Roscommon counties and the city of Bay City impacted, now required to meet work requirements

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has been notified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) that updated federal work requirements for able-bodied adults ages 18 to 64 without dependents under 14 who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits will continue in Michigan and will be reinstated in eight counties starting Sunday, Nov. 1.

The federal work requirements will apply statewide except in Alcona, Cheboygan, Mackinac, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Presque Isle and Schoolcraft counties and the cities of Detroit, Eastpointe, Flint, Jackson and Saginaw, which are approved for the continuation of a federal waiver.

SNAP, a critical program for families and individuals across Michigan that helps them access food, is the nation's largest food assistance program and one of the most effective tools for reducing food insecurity. Nearly 13% of Michigan households, approximately 1.4 million people, receive SNAP benefits.

"The SNAP work requirements affect thousands of individuals who rely on food assistance to help meet basic needs. Our priority is ensuring that participants understand what these changes mean and where to find help," said Amy Epkey, acting director of MDHHS. "It's important that we work together to ensure that people have pathways to work, training and stability as well as the resources needed to maintain food security."

Per federal policy, able-bodied adults without dependents under the age of 14 (ABAWDs) may only receive food assistance benefits for up to three months within a 36-month period without meeting federal work requirements. This is known as time-limited food assistance (TLFA) work requirements. FNA can temporarily waive TLFA in areas with an unemployment rate above 10%.

What changed

Due to past Michigan unemployment rates, MDHHS received a federal waiver that paused work requirements for some able-bodied adults. As the economy shifts and due to changes to federal waiver requirements, MDHHS is required to implement TLFA work requirements for all regions no longer covered by the federal waiver.

As a result, the following locations that were previously approved for the TLFA waiver are now subject to the work requirement policy effective Nov. 1.

- **Counties:** Alger, Arenac, Iosco, Iron, Luce, Montmorency, Oceana, Roscommon
- **City:** Bay City

How to meet TLFA work requirements
A SNAP participant can meet the ABAWD work requirements by doing any of the following:

- Work 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.
- Participate in at least 80 hours a month in an approved Food Assistance Employment and Training program with Michigan Works! (only in select counties). For a referral to employment and training programs, SNAP participants should contact their local MDHHS office.
- Participate in community service by volunteering at a nonprofit organization.

For SNAP participants volunteering at a nonprofit organization or participating in workfare activity at a Michigan Works! agency, the number of participation hours required is determined by dividing the individual's household monthly food assistance benefit by Michigan's minimum wage.

Work requirement deferrals
A SNAP recipient may be excused from meeting work requirements if they meet any of the following federal criteria:

- Are physically or mentally unable to work.
- Receive Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance due to disability or blindness or receive Supplemental Security Income or State Disability Assistance.
- Are pregnant.
- Receive or are an applicant for unemployment benefits.
- Participate in a drug or alcohol treatment and rehabilitation program.
- Attend training or college at least half-time and meet the student eligibility criteria to receive food assistance.
- Care for an incapacitated person or a child under age 6 living in or outside of their household.
- Reside in a household with a child under age 14.
- Are an Indian, Urban Indian or California Indian.

SNAP recipients should contact their local MDHHS office with any questions regarding their benefits or check MI Bridges for updates. Additional details on work requirements can be found on the Work Requirements for Food Assistance web page.

To find additional food resources:

- **Dial 2-1-1 or visit** Find Help - Michigan 2-1-1 for free, confidential assistance and referrals to local food programs and support services.
- **Visit the** Food Bank Council of Michigan to locate nearby food banks and learn about additional hunger relief efforts.

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