

# **SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING**

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The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) program in South Dakota is administered by the Department of Social Services (DSS) and services are provided by the Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR). SNAP E&T provides participants opportunities to work with an Employment Specialist to gain skills, education, training, work, or experience that will increase their ability to obtain gainful, unsubsidized employment and meet state or local workforce needs.

To initiate eligibility determination, a [DSS-EA-301 Economic Assistance Application](#) is submitted to DSS. Once an application is received, DSS Benefits Specialists will complete an interview with the applicant. During the SNAP interview, the DSS Benefits Specialist will discuss opportunities and refer individuals to DLR for services. The Benefits Specialist will also assess the individual for potential exemptions from participation in SNAP E&T.

All eligibility, exemption, and SNAP information can be found in the [South Dakota SNAP Policy and Procedure Manual](#) on the DSS website.

## WORK REGISTRATION FOR SNAP APPLICANTS

DSS requires that all non-exempt adult SNAP recipients register for work and follow work registration requirements to receive SNAP benefits. The DSS Benefits Specialist must explain (to the head of household, adult SNAP household member, or other authorized representative) the work registration requirements, including voluntary quit or reduction of employment hours, rights and responsibilities, and the consequences for failure to comply when a household member is required to register for work.

DSS must register each household member who is:

- Physically and mentally fit; or
- Age 16 through 59; or
- Not otherwise exempt

Individuals who are required to work register with DSS are required to:

- Work register (this is completed when the SNAP application is signed)
- Provide sufficient information of job status and availability
- Accept a suitable job, if offered
- Continue the job, once hired
- Not voluntarily reduce job hours

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in the loss of SNAP benefits. A sanction may also be imposed by a DSS Benefits Specialist if an individual quit a job within 60 days prior to applying for SNAP and did not have good cause (See "[Observation of Potential Good Cause](#)" under the Communication Between DSS and DLR section of this policy).

Once work registered, E&T participants are referred to DLR by the DSS Benefits Specialist. The DLR Employment Specialist will then contact the participant to further explain the SNAP E&T program and schedule an initial meeting.

### ***Exemptions to Work Registration***

DSS Benefits Specialists will determine if an individual is exempt from participation in SNAP E&T. It is important for DLR Employment Specialists to be aware of these exemptions, as a customer's situation can change. If the DLR Employment Specialist is working with a participant who meets an exemption, the DLR Employment Specialist should contact the DSS Benefits Specialist to discuss.

General work registration exemptions include individuals who are:

- Under 16 years old or 60 years old or older
- 16-17 years old who are attending school at least half-time, or are enrolled in a training or employment program on at least half-time basis, or are a dependent child residing with a parent(s) or with an individual(s) with parental control
- Parents and caretakers of a dependent child under age 6
- Mentally or physically unfit
- Caring for the incapacity of another household member
- Receiving or have applied for Reemployment Assistance
- A resident or non-resident in a drug and alcohol center's treatment and rehabilitation program
- Employed and working at least 30 hours per week or receive weekly earnings equivalent to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours
- Self-employed and working at least 30 hours per week or receive weekly gross earnings equal to the federal minimum wages multiplied by 30 hours
- Students who are enrolled at least half-time in any recognized school, high school, training program, or institution of higher education
- Tribal Work Experience Participants
- Residents of Community Support Provider (CSP) Facilities

- Refugees participating in a recognized refugee training program
- Participating in the TANF WORK or Native Employment Work Programs
- Full-time Vista volunteers (only affects Minnehaha and Pennington counties)
- Pregnant women after the first trimester (only affects Minnehaha and Pennington counties)

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## ELIGIBILITY

The SNAP E&T program is currently available to participants in three counties: Minnehaha, Pennington, and Yankton counties; and to ABAWDs statewide.

### ***Minnehaha and Pennington Counties***

Individuals who are 18 to 21 years old, who are the head of household, live in Minnehaha or Pennington counties, and who are not otherwise exempt will be referred to SNAP E&T from DSS. This includes ABAWD and non-ABAWD participants.

### ***Yankton County***

All individuals in Yankton County can choose to take advantage of the opportunities available with SNAP E&T regardless of age, exemption, or ABAWD status.

SNAP recipients who are receiving Re-employment Assistance (RA) benefits or are mandatory Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) work registrants are not eligible for SNAP E&T. If an individual who would otherwise be eligible for SNAP E&T is receiving RA benefits, SNAP E&T will not be pursued but Title III Wagner-Peyser and Title I WIOA should be explored.

### ***ABAWDs Statewide***

Any ABAWD statewide can participate in SNAP E&T. ABAWDs have specific requirements that must be met to continue to receive SNAP benefits. For further information see [Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents section](#).

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## REFERRALS

Dependent upon location, DSS will refer eligible participants to DLR after determining SNAP E&T eligibility.

### ***Minnehaha and Pennington Counties***

Participants who have been selected to receive services with SNAP E&T can participate in any component.

### ***Yankton County***

Any SNAP recipient that would like to participate in SNAP E&T, regardless of an exemption should be work registered and referred to DLR. If an exempt individual would like to participate in E&T, they will need to be work registered. Work registration is completed with a DSS Benefits Specialist.

### ***Reverse Referrals***

A reverse referral may occur when the DLR Title III Wagner-Peyser or Title I WIOA application process indicates a participant is receiving SNAP benefits, which is verified by DLR. DLR will notify DSS if a reverse referral occurs so the participant can be identified appropriately. Though reverse referrals are most likely in Yankton County, they may also occur in other counties when exploring SNAP E&T eligibility.

### ***ABAWDs Statewide***

Individuals who meet ABAWD criteria, regardless of location, may receive SNAP E&T services. These individuals can complete Workfare or participate in qualifying components.

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## **ABLE-BODIED ADULTS WITHOUT DEPENDENTS**

Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD) criteria includes an individual who is:

- Physically and mentally fit; and
- Between the ages of 18 and 54; and
- Does not meet an exemption from work registration requirements; and
- Is not pregnant; and
- Is not receiving SNAP benefits for a dependent child(ren) under age 18.

Priority will be given to ABAWDs due to the nature of their time-sensitive benefits. An individual who meets ABAWD criteria is considered 'at risk' when they are in their third month of time-limited benefits. At-risk ABAWDs should be prioritized and be entered into a qualifying component to meet participation requirements in order to continue receiving SNAP benefits.

### ***Work Requirements***

An individual who meets ABAWD criteria may only receive SNAP benefits for three months in a 36-month period. To receive continued benefits, the individual must meet one of the criteria listed below:

- Work 20 hours per week, which can be averaged monthly for a total of 80 hours each month
- Participate in and comply with the requirements of a qualifying component 20 hours per week
- Any combination of employment and participation in a qualifying component for a total of 20 hours per week
- Participate in and comply with a workfare/community service site for the required monthly hours

### ***Exemptions from Work Requirements***

An exemption for the work requirements is determined by DSS and occurs when an individual meets certain guidelines making them exempt from time limit restrictions.

Waiver approval has been granted to South Dakota which exempts residents of Native American reservation areas with high unemployment rates and areas that have a declining employment-to-population ratio. Affected individuals in these areas are automatically exempted based on their geographic location.

Individuals are exempt from ABAWD requirements if they are:

- Under age 18 or over age 54
- Residing in a household that includes dependent child(ren) under 18 years of age
- Physically or mentally unfit for employment
- Pregnant, regardless of which trimester of pregnancy they are in
- Currently participating in secondary education
- Receiving or is awaiting a determination for Reemployment Assistance (RA) benefits
- Students at least half-time
- Caring for an incapacitated person in the household
- Regularly participating in a drug/alcohol treatment and rehabilitation program
- Mandatory Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) work registrants
- Refugee participating in a recognized refugee training program at least half time
- Receiving VA Disability benefits (regardless of the disability rating)

The Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 added the following three exemptions for ABAWDs for an undetermined amount of time:

1. **Homeless:** a homeless individual is defined as someone who lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence, including, but not limited to, an individual who will imminently lose their nighttime residence, or an individual whose primary nighttime residence is the following:
  - a. A supervised shelter designed to provide temporary accommodations;
  - b. A halfway house or similar institution that provides temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized.
  - c. A temporary accommodation for not more than 90 days in the residence of another
  - d. A place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation
2. **Veteran:** a veteran is an individual who served in the U.S Armed Forces, including an individual who served in a reserve component of the Armed Forces, and who was discharged or released therefrom, regardless of the conditions of release. A Veteran is also an individual who served as a commissioned officer of the Public Health Service, Environmental Scientific Services Administration or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.
3. **Former Foster Care:** an individual up to age 25 who was in foster care under the care of the State on the date of attaining 18 years of age, regardless of if the individual remained in extended foster care until the maximum age.

Other types of ABAWD exemptions include:

- Temporary ABAWD exemptions which can be granted for mental or physical reasons.
- Individuals who do not meet any of the exemption criteria may receive a work exemption from time limits for each month they are employed at least 80 hours a month times federal minimum wage or completing workfare (community service) for the required number of hours.
- Working at a job, self-employed, in-kind employed, participating in a Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAA) or Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program an average of 80 hours a month times federal minimum wage, are excluded from time limits for each month the hours of employment average 80 hours or more.
- If a participant has reimbursement needs that exceed the cap or requires something that cannot be provided through support services or coordination with other resources, the participant must be exempt from participation. The DLR Employment Specialist must discuss with the DLR and DSS Program Specialists before this determination can be made.

Once the individual no longer meets one of exemptions identified above, countable ABAWD months will resume the month following the month the exemption ends.

### ***Extended 3-Month Eligibility Period***

Once an ABAWD has received their initial three months of benefits, extended benefits may be granted for a three-month period. DSS may grant the extended three months if the individual:

- worked 80 hours a month in a continuous 30-day period; or
- met their required workfare hours in a continuous 30-day period.

If a DLR Employment Specialist believes a participant is eligible for the ABAWD extension, they should refer the individual to a DSS Benefits Specialist.

DSS will not grant the extension if the individual:

- Will be sanctioned
- Will not receive a benefit
- Will receive a voluntary quit sanction

ABAWDs who have used their 3 extended months of benefits will need to continue meeting work requirements to remain eligible to receive SNAP benefits.

### ***Regaining Eligibility***

An individual who meets ABAWD criteria and has exhausted their three countable months may regain eligibility at any time by:

- Meeting an exemption from ABAWD work requirements
- Working 80 or more hours in a consecutive 30-day period
- Participating in and complying with the requirements of a work program for 80 or more hours in a consecutive 30-day period
- Any combination of work and participation in a work program for a total of 80 hours in a consecutive 30-day period
- Participating in and complying with a workfare program:
  - Those who will begin working at a Workfare site must first meet the ABAWD work requirements within 30 consecutive days prior to the date of application to regain eligibility. This timeframe includes the 30-day period that immediately precedes the date of application (not including the application date itself). This does not mean the ABAWD work requirements must be met for the full 30 consecutive days, but rather anytime within the 30 consecutive days prior to the date of application.
- Reapplying when the 36-month time clock restarts

Eligibility must be maintained through an identified participation activity as outlined in the [Work Requirements](#) subsection of the Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents section above.

There is no limit to the number of times an ABAWD may regain eligibility.

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## **INTAKE AND ORIENTATION**

Every individual participating in SNAP E&T must be enrolled in Title III Wagner-Peyser and Title I WIOA. The completion of these enrollments may require more than one appointment.

The intake and orientation must include:

- Enrollment in Wagner-Peyser and, if possible, enrollment in Title I WIOA
- Initial Assessment
- Objective Assessment if enrolling into Title I WIOA
- Creation of an Employment Plan specific to the participant as outlined in Employment Plan [Policy 5.1](#)
- Explanation of and assessment for Support Services available (See Support Services section)
- Explanation of Youth Incentives to applicable participants (See Youth Services Policy 5.7)
- Placement into a participation component as identified in the Employment Plan
- If the participant is an ABAWD, you must discuss ABAWD requirements, qualifying components, maintaining SNAP eligibility, and the sanction process.
- Case notes of this discussion must be present.

If a participant has questions regarding their SNAP benefits that is not E&T related, refer the participant to a DSS Benefits Specialist.

## **Assessments**

When enrolling a participant into the Wagner-Peyser program, an Initial Assessment will be completed through conversation with each participant. Objective Assessments, also known as Employability Assessments for SNAP E&T, include further analysis of the initial assessment results and formal testing as it applies to the Employment Plan.

The initial and objective assessments will be completed during enrollment and will assist in determining the most appropriate component for each individual. Additional assessments may be utilized to help determine appropriate components.

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## **EMPLOYMENT PLAN**

An employment plan must be completed utilizing guidance outlined in Employment Plan [Policy 5.1](#).

Employment Specialists and participants must review and/or update the Employment Plans a minimum of once a month to reflect each participant's progressive steps toward employment and identify any new goals and objectives.

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## **CASE MANAGEMENT**

All SNAP E&T participants will receive intensive case management that is meaningful and provides support to participants to achieve their employment goals. Case management services can be provided in-person and/or virtually to best accommodate a participant's needs.

Case management services will guide the participant towards appropriate services and activities based on the participant's needs and interests, support the participant in the E&T program, and provide resources that help the participant achieve training and employment goals. Case management can include comprehensive intake assessments, individualized employment plans, progress reporting, and coordination with service providers.

Case management services must not be an impediment to a participant's successful participation in SNAP E&T. Case management is meant to support each individual participant, not hinder their progress, or create barriers that make it difficult for the participant to complete requirements of the E&T program.

As case managers, Employment Specialists are responsible to support each participant as they progress through the program. Employment Specialists can assess if a participant:

- May meet an exemption from the requirement to participate in an E&T program
- May have good cause for non-compliance with a work requirement

The case manager must inform the appropriate DSS Benefit Specialist of any of these circumstances within 10 days. The DSS Benefit Specialist can then determine if the individual meets exemption criteria.

Additionally, if the DLR Employment Specialist is unable to identify an appropriate and available opening in an E&T component for a participant, the DLR Program Specialist and DSS Program Specialist must be notified.

For further guidance, refer to Case Management [Policy 5.2](#).

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## PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

### ***Participants Who Do Not Meet ABAWD Criteria***

For participants who do not meet ABAWD criteria, the level of effort should be comparable to spending approximately 12 hours a month in a component(s). These non-ABAWD participants can participate in any component regardless of if it is qualifying or non-qualifying.

### ***Participants Who Meet ABAWD Criteria***

Participants meeting ABAWD criteria have a 20 hour per week or 80 hour per month participation requirement. Components may be considered qualifying or non-qualifying regarding ABAWD hourly participation requirements. A qualifying component includes activities where all hours can count towards an ABAWD's participation hours. A non-qualifying component includes activities where hours cannot count towards an hourly participation requirement unless meeting the 11/9 Rule. Case management hours can be accounted for under the component the participant is completing but may not be accounted for under Workfare.

### ***11/9 Rule***

The **11/9 Rule** means that a participant who meets ABAWD criteria is required to complete a total of 20 hours per week, with at least 11 of those hours in a qualifying component. The remaining 9 hours can be completed in a non-qualifying component. Currently, the only non-qualifying components are Job Search Training and Supervised Job Search.

Example: An ABAWD can participate in Education, a qualifying component, for 11 hours per week and Supervised Job Search, a non-qualifying component, for 9 hours per week but they may not participate in Supervised Job Search for 11 hours and Education for 9.

*This rule specifically applies to ABAWDs.*

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## COMPONENTS

A component is a training and/or education activity completed by a SNAP E&T participant. To participate in SNAP E&T, case management and a minimum of one component are required.

Monthly documentation is needed to verify attendance and/or participation for each component utilized.

### ***Education***

The education component includes a wide range of activities that improve basic skills and the employability of SNAP E&T participants. Short-term education and skills development opportunities that apply directly to employment can be accounted for under this component. Education is considered a qualifying component for ABAWDs if the participation averages 20 hours per week or averages 80 hours per month.

### ***Secondary Education***

Secondary Education programs include Adult Basic Education (ABE), basic literacy, English as a Second Language (ESL), high school equivalency (GED), or other secondary education programs.

For further information, refer to the following South Dakota WIOA policy:

- Youth Services [Policy 5.7](#)



### ***Occupational Skills Training (Post-Secondary Education)***

Occupational Skills Training (OST) is an organized program of study providing specific vocational skills leading to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate, or advanced levels.

Post-Secondary Education components can offer SNAP participants an opportunity to earn post-secondary credentials valued by employers and industry, including certificates and degrees, industry-recognized credentials, and licensures.

For further guidance and eligibility related specifically to OST, refer to Occupational Skills Training [Policy 5.27](#).

### ***Job Search Training***

A successful Job Search Training activity is designed to remove barriers to employment. For SNAP E&T, Job Search Training activities may include but are not limited to the following:

- Employability assessment
- Goal setting
- Development of a support group
- Self-image development

These types of activities will be a precursor to Supervised Job Search to ensure the customer is prepared and able to be successful as they look for employment. Weekly contact between the Employment Specialist and participant is essential to providing structured job search skills improvement and barrier removal.

Employment Specialists and participants develop Employment Plans a minimum of every four weeks to reflect each participant's progressive steps towards employment. The Employment Plan must include:

- A weekly meeting for each participant to meet with their Employment Specialist to assist in skills development to become ready for job search.
- Support and resources to troubleshoot any current barriers.
- An outline of activities to be completed that are appropriate to the participant's situation.

Job Search Training is not a qualifying component for ABAWDs but can be used in conjunction with other qualifying components if the Job Search Training follows the 11/9 Rule.

### ***Supervised Job Search***

Supervised Job Search is an intensive, structured activity to assist participants in searching for meaningful employment. Supervised Job Search is not a qualifying component for ABAWDs but can be used in conjunction with other qualifying components if the Supervised Job Search follows the 11/9 Rule.

For SNAP E&T, Supervised Job Search activities can include, but are not limited to:

- Developing a personal marketing strategy
- Tough question anticipation techniques
- Resume and cover letter development
- Interviewing techniques
- Telephone canvassing
- Basic sales techniques
- Development of appropriate work behavior and attitudes

Supervised job search can be completed in person or virtually, whichever meets the participant's needs. Locations must allow the participant access to the tools they need. A variety of locations may be approved for supervised job search may if the location is suitable, meets the participant's needs, and the participant has access to the tools and materials they need to perform supervised job search. All locations will be approved on a case-by-case basis. Criteria used to establish if a site is approved will include but is not limited to internet access, accessibility to virtual tools or physical

buildings, and the accessibility of staff supervision. Weekly contact between the participant and Employment Specialist is required and will provide an opportunity to review job search activities, provide feedback on job search activities, troubleshoot issues, and discuss next steps.

Employment Specialists and participants develop Employment Plans a minimum of every four weeks to reflect each participant's progressive steps towards employment. The Employment Plan must include:

- A weekly meeting for each participant to meet with their Employment Specialist to assist in job searching and application completion
- Development of resumes and cover letters
- A minimum number of weekly job contacts appropriate to the participant's situation
- Additional monthly activities, which can include any service appropriate to the individual's goals as outlined in the Employment Plan. Such activities should be documented in SDWORKS with the appropriate service code

Future meeting dates and times between the individual and DLR staff should be recorded in the Employment Plan. The Employment Plan must include the participant's employment and training goals and be signed by the participant when it is created and each time it is updated. Refer to the Employment Plan [Policy 5.1](#).

All Supervised Job Search activities, including job contacts, must be completed and submitted ***no later than 12 p.m. CT every Thursday***. Review all submitted job contacts and activities with the participant during the weekly meeting to identify training needs and activity suggestions. A copy of the Job Search Tracking Sheet [Form 66](#) is required to record activities. Activities from each completed log must be documented in case notes and uploaded into SDWORKS. Discuss any concerns regarding the participant's job search activities with the participant and document in case notes.

### ***Workfare (Community Service)***

Workfare, or Community Service, is performing a public service in exchange for an individual's SNAP benefits. Community service sites can be any public or private non-profit, governmental, or religious organization. Workfare is primarily utilized for ABAWDs to complete their monthly participation requirement to maintain eligibility and continue receiving SNAP Benefits.

Workfare is considered a qualifying component for ABAWDs if they participate for their required number of hours, which is their benefit amount divided by the Federal or State Minimum Wage, whichever is higher. Fractions of hours of obligation may be rounded down. Workfare is an activity completed to benefit the community; it is not designed for personal development.

DLR Employment Specialists must complete the [DSS-EA-285 Employment Training Agreement](#) with the participant and volunteer site. Any hours completed prior to the completion of this form will not be countable.

DLR Employment Specialists are responsible for:

- Establishing and monitoring job sites
- Interviewing and assessing eligible recipients
- Assigning eligible recipients to appropriate job sites
- Monitoring participant attendance
- Making initial observations of good cause for noncompliance and report to DSS

The household's hours of obligation for any given month may not be carried over into another month.

If there is more than one person in the household completing workfare, determine workfare requirements by dividing the allotment (the household's SNAP benefit amount for any given month) by the number of individuals completing workfare, regardless of total number of individuals in the household. Next, divide the result by the Federal or State minimum wage, whichever is higher. The resulting number, rounded down, is each participant's workfare requirement.

If an individual reports they are already volunteering at a community organization, the DLR Employment Specialist must contact the organization to explore the potential of utilizing them as a workfare site. If the site chooses not to participate in the workfare program, the hours cannot be used for participation and the Employment Specialist should contact SNAP Program staff for guidance.

### ***Worker's Compensation***

If a SNAP case is pending or approved, workfare participants are covered under the DSS Worker's Compensation Part B disability policy to protect the participant and the State from liability issues that may arise due to an on-the-job injury.

If a participant does not currently have a pending or approved SNAP case, such as an ABAWD looking to regain SNAP eligibility, they cannot be covered by the DSS Worker's Compensation Part B disability policy. Some options for the participant would be:

- Search for a Workfare site that carries their own Worker's Compensation coverage
- Complete the process of enrolling in Title I through DLR and be placed in a paid or unpaid work experience

### ***Work-Based Learning***

The purpose of work-based learning is to improve the employability of those who cannot find unsubsidized, gainful employment. A work-based learning program must not provide any work that has the effect of replacing the employment of an individual not participating in the employment or training experience program and provide the same benefits and working conditions that are provided at the job site to employees performing comparable work for comparable hours. Work-based Learning is a qualifying component for ABAWDs.

Work-based Learning includes activities outlined in Title I policies including:

- Job Shadow in Youth Services [Policy 5.7](#)
- On-the-Job Training [Policy 5.28](#)
- Pre-apprenticeship in Youth Services [Policy 5.7](#)
- Work Experience [Policy 5.36](#)
- Registered Apprenticeships [Policy 5.51](#)

### ***Workfare vs. Work-Based Learning***

Workfare must be performed in a public or non-profit setting and meets ABAWD work requirements as a qualifying component. The number of hours of Workfare an ABAWD is required to complete is determined by their SNAP benefit amount divided by Federal or State minimum wage, whichever is higher. This means an ABAWD may only be required to complete 24 hours per month, or 6 hours per week, to satisfy the participation requirement.

Work-based Learning can be performed in a public, non-profit, or for-profit setting and is considered a qualifying component. However, ABAWDs participating in Work-based Learning must meet the 20 hour per week requirement.

### ***Employment***

Employment is not considered a component as it pertains to SNAP E&T. For ABAWDs, employment hours are countable towards required participation hours as outlined in the ABAWD section above. ABAWD participants should be placed in another activity for their remaining participation hours, and that activity should be a qualifying component if it is the majority of the hours needed.

### ***Individuals No Longer Participating in an E&T Component***

If at any time an E&T participant chooses to no longer participate in SNAP E&T, they may still receive services from other workforce programs in accordance with eligibility and policy.

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## LAPTOP LENDING PROGRAM

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) has a Laptop Lending Program with computers available on a first come, first served basis. Priority will be given to SNAP E&T participants completing an Occupational Skills Training (OST) activity. However, laptops may be loaned to any SNAP E&T participant who would benefit from the use of a laptop while completing a component that supports their training and employment goals.

Laptops may be checked out for a maximum of 30 days, with the option to renew monthly if receiving SNAP benefits and actively engaged in a component. During the time a participant has a laptop in their possession, monthly contact must be made between the Employment Specialist and participant to monitor progress and offer support.

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## SUPPORT SERVICES

Support Services through SNAP E&T will be offered to assist participants to successfully complete their component(s). Support Services must be used to assist participants in preparing for and obtaining employment or advancement opportunities. Support services can be used to pay expenses already incurred by a participant or in advance for anticipated expenses occurring in the next 30 days. Payments can be paid to a vendor or directly reimbursed to a participant.

All potential support services are determined on a case-by-case basis and must be discussed with and approved by a DLR Job Service Manager (in Minnehaha and Pennington Counties) or SNAP E&T Program Specialist (Statewide). All payment maximums are per program year, which is July to June.

SNAP E&T Support Services may include, but are not limited to:

- Dependent Care Costs – Going rate up to \$1,000 after other resources have been explored and exhausted
- Work Clothing – up to \$250 maximum
- Workfare Allowance – \$25 each month Workfare is completed
- Job Related Education – actual cost of approved fees and equipment rental up to \$500 maximum
- Tools – up to \$250 maximum
- Transportation – \$350 maximum
- Other – up to \$250 maximum

There may be times when a support service is needed, but the amount necessary is outside of the guidelines listed. In these cases, it is best practice to discuss with the Labor Program Specialist to see if it is an allowable support service.

If a participant in Minnehaha or Pennington County is required to participate (those who are 18 to 21 years old and are the head of household) and has reimbursement needs that exceed the guidelines or requires something that cannot be provided, the participant must be exempt from participation. If the Employment Specialist makes this determination, the information must be communicated with the DSS Benefits Specialist. The DSS Benefits Specialist may also make this determination, and in most cases the participant would not be referred for participation.

If exploring Title I WIOA Support Services, refer to Support Services [Policy 5.34](#).

### ***Dependent Care Costs***

Dependent care costs should only be utilized if an individual is not eligible for Child Care Assistance, has needs above what Child Care Assistance covers, or has an emergent need. As childcare may be necessary for a participant to complete components, there may be other costs associated with childcare that can be paid for with support services.

This could include a deposit for a child(ren) to begin care. All other situations will be handled on a case-by-case basis and should be discussed with the DLR Labor Program Specialist or the DSS Program Specialist.

If a dependent child aged 13 or older requires childcare, certain criteria must be met. This would include one who is physically and/or mentally incapable of caring for themselves or is under court supervision. Contact DLR Labor Program Specialist or DSS Program Specialist in these situations.

A SNAP household member providing childcare cannot be reimbursed for providing childcare.

### ***Work Clothing***

Work clothing items such as uniforms, shoes, boots, or interview clothing can be purchased as necessary for a participant to interview for, obtain, or keep employment.

### ***Workfare Allowance***

While participating in Workfare, a participant will automatically receive a \$25 monthly allowance. These payments are issued directly to a Way2Go card.

Workfare participants should also be assessed for all other support service needs.

### ***Job Related Education***

Job related education should only be utilized to pay for one-time educational expenses. These can include payments for:

- GED testing or related fees
- Payment for adult education registration fees
- Equipment rental if required for training or employment
- Books and supplies as required for training or employment
  - Book rental must be explored and pursued before assisting with book costs

### ***Tools***

Support services can assist participants with purchasing tools required to complete their component or if required by an employer.

### ***Transportation***

Transportation assistance may be provided to assist the participant to get to employment, training, education, work experience, job service, job search or other places that support E&T activities in the Employment Plan. Transportation assistance may be paid in advance to assist a participant in completing their component.

The maximum limit is \$350. This is not a minimum or flat funded amount; the amount is based on individual need.

### ***Minor Auto Repair***

Minor repairs to a participant's mode of transportation can be allowable. Keep in mind that a repair cannot be made to a vehicle that exceeds the current value of the vehicle as obtained on Kelly Blue Book.

Three estimates must be obtained by the participant and submitted to the Employment Specialist. Verification of current vehicle registration and insurance must also be obtained. This option must be reviewed with the DLR Job Service Manager or Labor Program Specialist prior to authorizing.

### ***Other***

There will be times when an identified need may not fit into one of these specified categories but would support the participant to successfully complete their component. For these types of supports, the Other category may be used. Consult with the DLR Job Service manager to discuss these types of participant needs to gain pre-approval.

If a participant has been loaned a laptop through the E&T Laptop Lending Program, the Wi-Fi and/or the cost associated with clearing the laptop and any repairs will be entered under the Other support service category as well.

### ***Employment Review Upon Case Closure***

Once employment is found and a case closes due to income, a 30-day follow-up must be completed.

Information gathered includes:

- If the participant is still employed
- Current wage and hours
- If benefits are offered
- If assistance is needed to look for work if not employed or look for a different opportunity if employed

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## **FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE**

Participants who have been selected for SNAP E&T services in Minnehaha and Pennington counties can be subject to a sanction, which can affect a participant's SNAP benefits, if they fail to participate as outlined in the [Participation Requirements](#) section. Employment Specialists must carefully consider the participant's situation prior to starting the sanction process for participants in the referral population in Minnehaha and Pennington counties.

Additionally, participants who were not referred must still be contacted to attempt to work with the participant to resume participation. The Notice of Failure to Participate is used for the referral population in Minnehaha and Pennington counties, participants in Yankton County, and ABAWD participants statewide, including those who do not meet criteria for the referral participant population.

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## **GOOD CAUSE**

Good cause includes circumstances beyond the individual's control that prevents them from meeting SNAP E&T participation requirements.

Good cause should be explored for participants in Minnehaha or Pennington counties and ABAWDs statewide if participation was affected due to circumstances outside of their control. If good cause is found, participants who missed hours would be considered to have fulfilled their participation requirement if the absence from work or the SNAP E&T program, is considered temporary and no sanction would be placed.

Examples of good cause can include, but are not limited to:

- Illness
- Illness of another household member requiring the presence of the participant
- Household emergency
- Unavailability of transportation
- Unavailability of childcare
- Situations where there is not an appropriate and available opening within the SNAP E&T program to accommodate a participant in Minnehaha and Pennington counties

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## COMMUNICATION BETWEEN DSS AND DLR

DSS Benefits Specialists and DLR Employment Specialists will communicate a minimum of once per month via phone, email, or in-person. This communication is for DSS Benefits Specialists and DLR Employment Specialists to stay apprised of pertinent information relating to the participant's situation.

### ***Unsuccessful Contact Attempt to a Referral***

After DLR attempts to follow up with a referred individual about E&T opportunities and contact can't be made, DLR will communicate this with DSS only if the work registration code needs updated.

### ***ABAWDs***

For participants who meet ABAWD criteria, DLR Employment Specialists will provide DSS Program Specialist with submitted time sheets, wage verifications, paystubs, and/or job contact sheets for verification of a participant's activities, hours, or income by the 5th day of the following month.

### ***Participants in Yankton County***

DLR Employment Specialists must notify the DSS Benefits Specialist when a participant's engagement in a SNAP E&T component ends only if the work registration code needs updated.

### ***Reverse Referral***

Employment Specialists will notify appropriate DSS staff if a participant is requesting services but was not referred via the MAND.F list, so that the participant may receive services through SNAP E&T.

### ***Observation of Potential Good Cause***

DLR staff must report exemptions and other good cause information (such as a hardship or change in circumstance if the participant reports it to the DLR Employment Specialist) to DSS Benefits Specialists. This information assists DSS Benefits Specialists in determining what action to take with a potential noncompliance situation.

DSS must provide good cause to the participant if there is not an appropriate and available opening in an E&T program. This instance of good cause applies to both SNAP E&T components and case management services and will be in effect until an appropriate and available opening is found.

Good cause must also be provided if an individual's need for support services exceeds the caps that are in place. This determination can be made by DLR or DSS at any time.

### ***Household Changes***

Anytime an individual provides updated contact or household information, this must be communicated with the DSS Benefits Specialist. This information can include updated telephone number, email address, physical or mailing address, and any disclosed changes to household composition.

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## DOCUMENTATION

Clear and concise information is required to be documented in case notes for SNAP E&T cases. Documentation must be updated monthly at a minimum, and more often depending on case management and the participant's participation and component requirements.

All documentation obtained to verify a participant's engagement in E&T components must be collected and uploaded to SDWORKS by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the following month. Ensure all documentation is complete, legible, and uploaded correctly.

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## PROVIDER DETERMINATIONS

A Provider Determination occurs when DLR notifies DSS that a participant is not a good fit for participation in SNAP E&T. Provider Determinations may apply to all SNAP E&T participants. DLR and DSS will work together to ensure provision is implemented with fairness and integrity.

DLR can move an E&T participant from any component to another component where the individual is better suited without needing a Provider Determination. In these instances, the DLR Employment Specialist must inform the DSS Benefits Specialist of the participant's enrollment in a new component.

Before exploring a Provider Determination, contact the DLR Labor Program Specialist or LIFT Team Manager.

### ***DLR Responsibilities***

DLR Employment Specialists may move an E&T participant from any component to another component where the individual is better suited without needing a Provider Determination.

DLR may make a Provider Determination at any point after a referral has been made by DSS.

Before a Provider Determination is made, a meeting should be scheduled with the DLR Labor Program Specialist or LIFT Team Manager to discuss the specifics of each situation.

If advised by the LIFT Team Manager or DLR Labor Program Specialist to proceed with a Provider Determination, complete the following:

- DLR Employment Specialists must inform DSS SNAP Program Specialist within 10 days of making the determination and include:
  - The circumstances surrounding determination decision
  - A suggested next step for the individual

### ***DSS Responsibilities***

- DSS must notify participants with a Provider Determination within 10 days of receiving the information from DLR
- It is possible that, upon review of Provider Determination by DSS, a participant may be referred back to DLR. In this case, Employment Specialists must be prepared to assist the participant in completion of an appropriate E&T component and provide case management.

### ***Provider Determination for an Individual who meets ABAWD criteria***

A participant that meets ABAWD criteria will accrue countable months toward the 3-month time limit the next full benefit month following the month DSS informs the participant of the Provider Determination. This happens unless the ABAWD fulfills the ABAWD work requirement, is exempt, or receives good cause.

Example provider determination process:

1. January 23<sup>rd</sup>, the E&T provider makes a Provider Determination
2. February 2<sup>nd</sup>, DLR informs DSS of the determination
3. February 10<sup>th</sup>, DSS informs the individual
4. If the participant meets ABAWD criteria, February would not be a countable month, but March could be if the individual does not meet the ABAWD work requirement that month.



## FILE REVIEWS

SNAP E&T case files are incorporated into the file review and data validation process outlined in Oversight and Monitoring [Policy 6.7](#).

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## FAIR HEARINGS

Fair Hearings regarding the SNAP E&T Program will be conducted by DSS pursuant to established regulations. SNAP E&T Employment Specialists may be required to be a witness at such hearing. For further guidance, view coordinating section in the [DSS SNAP Manual](#).

### ***Issues Subject to a Fair Hearing***

The DSS Administrative Hearing Officer will hear and decide SNAP E&T Program fair hearing requests. DSS will provide a fair hearing to any household disputing an action of DSS which affects the participation or benefit level of a SNAP household. SNAP E&T issues subject to fair hearing include, but are not limited to, disputes regarding failure or refusal to appear for assessment or interviews, failure or refusal to accept employment, terminating employment, reducing hours, denial of supportive services or otherwise failing or refusing to participate in the SNAP E&T Program without good cause.

### ***Documentation***

The documentation that the DSS Benefits Specialist and the SNAP E&T Employment Specialist collect in the file and document in case note becomes the primary source of evidence during a fair hearing. With proper documentation, questions that arise during the hearing should be answered with documented evidence. It is also important to document things that are considered proper procedure or typical office practice. If not documented, this information may not be of use during a hearing.

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