



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of
Health and Social Services

DIVISION OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE
Director's Office

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June 24, 2015

Dear Alaskan resident,

In 1996, federal law put work requirements in place for Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) receiving Food Stamps. An able-bodied adult is a person between the ages of 18 and 49 who is not disabled and has no dependents living with them. Like many states, Alaska was able to suspend these work requirements for the entire state beginning in 2004 due to the nationwide recession and high unemployment rates at the time.

Alaska is no longer able to suspend these work requirements for the entire state. Beginning January 1, 2016, able-bodied adults will be limited to receiving only three months of Food Stamp benefits in a 36 month period unless they are:

- Under 18 or older than 49 years of age; or
- Working an average of 20 hours per week; or
- Participating in an approved employment and training program a minimum of 20 hours per week; or
- A combination of both.

The three months of benefits available without meeting an ABAWD exemption is cumulative, so participants can choose when they want to use one of the three countable months during the 36 month timeframe.

A person who has used their three countable months may regain eligibility for Food Stamp benefits if any of the following occur:

- Works at least 80 hours in a 30 day period;
- Participates in an approved employment and training activity for 80 hours in a 30 day period;
- Any combination of work and participation in an approved work program for a total of 80 hours in a 30 day period;
- Becomes exempt from work requirements;
- The 36 month period expires and a new 36 month period begins. Alaska will start a new 36 month period on January 1, 2016.

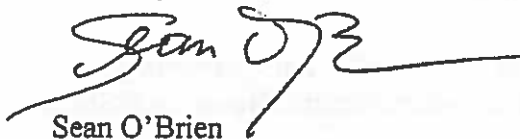
A person may be exempt from work requirements if they meet one of the following criteria:

- Medically (either physical or mentally) unable to work ;
- Pregnant;
- Residing in a household with a dependent child under 18;
- Responsible for the care of an incapacitated person (either a household member or non-household member);
- Receiving unemployment compensation;
- Participating in a drug or alcohol treatment program;
- Enrolled at least half-time in a school or training program;
- Living in an exempt area due to locally high unemployment rates.

Although a student may be exempt from ABAWD work requirements, the student must still meet student exemption criteria and all other applicable food stamp eligibility requirements.

If you need help with food, contact your local food bank and ask for the nearest distribution site. You may also seek additional services that may be available to you through your local public assistance office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean O'Brien", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sean O'Brien
Director of Public Assistance