

CHANGE NOTICE FOR MANUAL

DATE: November 26, 2025

MANUAL: Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Certification Manual

TO: County Directors of Social Services

CHANGE NO: #02-2025

SUBJECT: ABAWD Exemption Provisions of the H.R. 1 Reconciliation Bill

EFFECTIVE: December 1, 2025

I. BACKGROUND

The purpose of this change notice is to announce updates to the Food and Nutrition Services Policy Manual that implement modified ABAWD exemption criteria due to the amendments of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 enacted by H.R. 1, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act of 2008 (OBBB).

In addition, USDA published final regulations on December 17, 2024, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Program Purpose and Work Requirement Provisions of the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023*, which clarified procedures for screening for exceptions to the ABAWD time limit, and clarified requirements for verifying exceptions. The final rule is codified at 7 CFR 273.24(k) and 7 CFR 273.24(l). Revisions to FNS Manual § 260 address USDA's regulations on both screening and verifications.

FNS Policy Manual § 260 ABLE-BODIED ADULTS WITHOUT DEPENDENTS (ABAWD) has been substantially revised and updated to implement these statutory amendments and regulation changes based on USDA guidance. Given the substantial revisions to FNS § 260, specific changes will not be specified below. FNS § 260.00 presents a general overview of the changes to the modified ABAWD exemption criteria, as well as a summary of the screening and verification regulations implemented therein.

The Department is also revising FNS Policy Manual § 240.03.J to clarify the definition of an incapacitated person for purposes of the caretaker exemption for the general work registration requirements. The requirements for verification of this exemption have also been revised.

II. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please be advised of the updated requirements for applications, changes, and recertifications, which will take effect on December 1, 2025. For your convenience, we have attached the required manual sections.

If you have any questions, please submit them to the Continuous Quality Improvement Specialist (CQIS) dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian P. Hogan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Brian Patrick Hogan
Deputy Director of Nutrition
Division of Child and Family Well-Being

Attachments (2):
FNS 260 ABAWDS
FNS 240 Work Registration