

SNAP work rules: the 3-month time limit

Some adults can get SNAP for only 3 months in 3 years unless they work, volunteer or train at least 80 hours a month.

18 to 64

ages covered (it was 18 to 54)

80 hours

a month of work, volunteering or training

3 months

of SNAP in 36 months if you don't meet the rule

Who it applies to

- Adults **18 to 64** who can work. USDA calls them ABAWDs ("able-bodied adults without dependents").
- Since the 2025 law (H.R. 1), a child in your SNAP household exempts you only if the child is **under 14**.
- Veterans, people experiencing homelessness, and former foster youth are no longer exempt automatically.

What counts toward 80 hours

Paid work, gig work, unpaid work, volunteering, and approved training such as SNAP E&T. You can add them together. 20 hours a week is about 80 a month. Looking for a job on your own does not count by itself.

Waived areas: in a few areas with high unemployment, USDA has waived the time limit. Months you live there do not count. Ask your SNAP office.

What to do now

- 1 **Tell your SNAP office** if you are exempt, and give proof if they ask.
- 2 **Keep proof of your hours:** pay stubs and signed volunteer timesheets.
- 3 **Read every notice.** Your notices show which months counted against you.
- 4 **Missed hours?** If you were sick, had an emergency or lost your ride, tell your office and ask about "good cause."

You are exempt if you:

- Are under 18, or 65 or older
- Are pregnant
- Can't work because of a physical or mental health condition
- Have a child **under 14** in your SNAP household
- Are American Indian, Alaska Native, an Urban Indian or a California Indian
- Care for a child under 6, or for someone who can't care for themselves
- Work 30 hours a week, or earn at least **\$217.50 a week**
- Get unemployment benefits
- Go to school or training at least half-time
- Are in a drug or alcohol treatment program
- Follow your state's TANF (cash assistance) work rules

Lost SNAP? You can get it back.

- Do **80 hours** of work, volunteering or training in **30 days in a row**, then reapply. Or become exempt and report it, or wait for your 36-month period to end.
- Think your state got it wrong? Ask for a **fair hearing**. Ask by the date on your notice (usually about 10 days) to keep your SNAP during the appeal.
- Only the person who hit the limit loses SNAP. The rest of your household can keep theirs.



Free checker: does the time limit apply to you?

snapworkrequirements.com

Scan the code or type the address. Answer a few questions about your state, age and situation to see what to do next.