

ABAWD Work Requirements: What You Need to Know



The federal work requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) went back into effect on November 1, 2013 in Vermont. ABAWD individuals may only receive 3SquaresVT benefits for up to 3 months within 36 months without meeting the work requirements.

Who is an ABAWD?

An ABAWD is an able-bodied individual between the ages of 18 and 50 who has no dependents living with them.

Are there exceptions?

An individual is exempt from meeting the work requirement if he or she:

- Is medically certified as physically or mentally unfit for employment
 - *Note:* The mental or physical condition (s) must be documented and signed by a licensed medical practitioner and may include individuals eligible for SSI, AABD, social security disability, Medicaid disability, VA needs-based pension payments, and other benefits based on an inability to work.
- Is an unemployment applicant or recipient
- Participates in a drug or alcohol treatment and rehab program
- Is a student enrolled at least 1/2 time in higher education
- Cares for an incapacitated person
- Is pregnant
- Lives in Alburgh, Averill, Avery's Gore, Barton, Belvidere, Bloomfield, Bridgewater, Brighton, Brownington, Brunswick, Buels Gore, Burke, Canaan, Concord, Coventry, Derby, Dover, East Haven, Eden, Ferdinand, Glastonbury, Glover, Granby, Guildhall, Hancock, Holland Town, Ira, Irasburg, Isle La Motte, Jay, Killington, Lemington, Lewis, Lowell, Lunenburg, Maidstone, Mount Tabor, Newark, Newport City, Norton, Pittsfield, Richford, Sandgate, Searsburg, Sheffield, Stratton, Sutton, Victory, Warren's Grant, Warren's Gore, Waterville, Wells, and Westfield (valid 10/1/17 – 9/30/18)
- Lives with any minor in the home & in the 3SVT household (does not have to be your own child)

What are the three ways an ABAWD can meet the work requirements?

1. Work at least 20 hours per week in unsubsidized employment, averaged monthly



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What work training programs are available?

- Eligible work training programs will be available through the VT Department of Labor. Visit www.labor.vermont.gov or call (802) 828-4000 to learn more.

How does an ABAWD participate in work-for-benefits?

- ABAWDs can choose to “work for benefits” by volunteering at a non-profit to earn their 3SquaresVT monthly benefit. The number of hours required are determined by dividing the ABAWD’s household monthly 3SquaresVT allotment by VT’s minimum wage (\$10.00). ABAWDs can call 1-800-479-6151 to find out how many hours they must volunteer.
- ABAWDs must submit a completed form 218AR to ESD by the 13th of every month to avoid interruptions in benefits. Call 1-800-479-6151 to receive copies of the form.
- To find work-for-benefit opportunities in your area, dial 2-1-1 or connect with your local United Way or Volunteer Center.

How does an ABAWD prove he or she is meeting the work requirements?

- ABAWDs must show proof of completing work for benefits every month by turning in a completed 218AR by the 13th of the month prior.
- ABAWDs meeting the work requirements through unsubsidized employment and/or participation in a work training program should send documentation in the initial month of working or enrolling in a program, but do not need to provide proof each month.

What else should I know?

- ABAWDs can participate in a combination of unsubsidized employment and work training, but can not combine either with work-for-benefits to meet the minimum hour requirement.
- The 3 months of benefits available without meeting an ABAWD exemption is cumulative, so participants can use their 3 months at different times throughout the 36 months.
- If you have more questions, or think your client should be exempt from meeting the work requirements, call the Benefits Call Center at 1-800-479-6151 or contact Drake Turner at Hunger Free Vermont at 802-865-0255 or dturner@hungerfreevt.org.



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