



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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Informational Letter

Section 1

Transmittal:	25-INF-05
To:	Social Services District Commissioners
Issuing Division/Office:	Employment and Income Support Programs
Date:	October 20, 2025
Subject:	Introduction of the ABAWD Related Document Templates
Suggested Distribution:	Employment Coordinators, Temporary Assistance Directors, SNAP Directors, Staff Development Coordinators, WMS Coordinators
Contact Person(s):	Employment and Advancement Services Bureau at (518) 486-6106 or EASBureau@otda.ny.gov
Attachments:	Attachment 1 - ABAWD Medical Statement (fillable electronic version) Attachment 2 - Monthly WIOA Job Search Record (fillable electronic version) Attachment 3 - Monthly WIOA Job Search Activity Record (print-ready version) Attachment 4 – Monthly ABAWD Education and Training Participation Record (fillable electronic version) Attachment 5 – Monthly ABAWD Volunteer Participation Record (fillable electronic version)

Filing References

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
25-ADM-03 23-ADM-08 22-ADM-01 21-ADM-05 20-INF-07 18-ADM-07 16-ADM-01		18 NYCRR 385.3	PRWORA of 1996 (P.L. 104-193) Sec. 6 of the Food Stamp Act Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA) of 2023 (P.L. 118- 5)	TA and SNAP Employment Policy Manual Section 358.3, Appendix A, Appendix B,	7 CFR 273.24

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
			FY2025 Reconciliation Law (P.L. 119-21)	and Appendix C	

Section 2

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Informational Letter (INF) is to introduce five document templates designed to support local social services districts (districts) in administering Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) policy and to provide comprehensive guidance on how to use them. The following document templates are now available to districts:

- ABAWD Medical Statement;
- Monthly Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Job Search Activity Record (fillable electronic version);
- Monthly WIOA Job Search Activity Record (print-ready version);
- Monthly ABAWD Education and Training Participation Record; and
- Monthly ABAWD Volunteer Participation Record.

More specifically, the ABAWD Medical Statement is designed to assist districts and clients in documenting criteria relevant to several ABAWD exemptions; the Monthly WIOA Job Search Activity Record is designed to help clients track their participation in ABAWD qualifying job search activities; the Monthly ABAWD Education and Training Participation Record is designed to help clients track their participation in ABAWD qualifying education and training programs; and the Monthly ABAWD Volunteer Participation Record is designed to help clients track their voluntary participation in ABAWD qualifying community service activities consistent with federal and State policy as outlined in the revised 25-ADM-03P - *Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) Time Limit Policy Update and Guidance* which is forthcoming.

II. Background

Under federal law and regulations, an ABAWD is a SNAP applicant or recipient, aged 18 to 64, who is able to work, does not reside with a child under the age of 14 in the household and does not meet any of the criteria for an exemption from the general SNAP work requirements and the ABAWD time limit. An ABAWD's eligibility for SNAP benefits is limited to three months of benefits in a 3-year period unless the person:

- meets the ABAWD work rules on a monthly basis;
- is exempt from the ABAWD time limit;
- resides in a district or an area within a district with a waiver of the ABAWD time limit;
- receives an ABAWD exclusion consistent with the district's ABAWD exclusion policy; or

- qualifies for an additional set of three consecutive months of SNAP benefits referred to as a “grace period”.

To retain SNAP eligibility beyond the three-month limit, ABAWDs must:

1. Spend at least 80 hours every month doing one or more of the following activities:

- Working (including “in-kind” work),
- Participating in a qualifying work/training program approved by the district,
- Participating in an employment and training program for veterans operated by the Department of Labor or the Department of Veterans Affairs,
- Participating in a program under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act or Trade Act which may include job search, job readiness, occupational skills training, and education activities,

OR

2. Participate in a Work Experience Program (WEP) or volunteer in a community service activity for the number of hours per month equal to the household’s SNAP benefit divided by the higher of the federal or State minimum wage.

For updated policies and procedures regarding the administration of the ABAWD time limit for SNAP applicants and recipients, please refer to 25-ADM-03P which is forthcoming.

III. Program Implications

Districts are encouraged to use the five document templates developed by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) as tools to assist them in administering the ABAWD time limit. The *ABAWD Medical Statement* is designed to streamline verification processes for several exemptions from the ABAWD time limit. The *Monthly WIOA Job Search Record* templates aim to help with tracking participation in job search activities under WIOA. The *Monthly ABAWD Education and Training Participation Record* aims to help with tracking participation in ABAWD qualifying education and training programs. The *Monthly ABAWD Volunteer Participation Record* aims to help with tracking voluntary participation in ABAWD qualifying community service activities. The five document templates are provided as samples, and districts are not required to follow the formal process for requesting a local equivalent should they choose to modify the templates to meet their local needs. However, districts are strongly encouraged to share any updated local versions with their designated Employment Services Advisor to ensure compliance with federal and State requirements. Further details on the use and purpose of each template are provided below.

ABAWD Medical Statement

The *ABAWD Medical Statement* is a streamlined, one-page tool designed to support districts in identifying individuals who are exempt from the ABAWD time limit due to a verified physical or mental health condition, pregnancy, or as a participant in a substance use treatment, rehabilitation, or counseling program.

The document template must be completed by a qualified healthcare professional, including but not limited to physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners,

psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, and licensed substance use treatment providers. It allows providers to:

- Indicate whether the individual is pregnant and provide the expected date of delivery,
- Confirm participation in substance use treatment and/or counseling,
- Certify whether the person has a temporary or permanent physical or mental limitation that prevents them from working 20 or more hours per week.

This document template does not require a diagnosis, but must include:

- An indication of whether the person has a limitation that prevents them from working 20 or more hours per week (80 hours per month),
- The expected duration of the condition (if temporary),
- The provider's signature and date of completion.

Districts may use this document template to support exemption status consistent with guidance regarding verification requirements outlined in the revised 25-ADM-03P which is forthcoming.

Note: Unless otherwise indicated in 25-ADM-03P which is forthcoming, districts are not required to verify an individual's ABAWD claimed exempt status and must accept an individual's self-attestation that they or another household member meets an exemption from the ABAWD time limit except in cases where the information is questionable. Districts must not consider information provided through self-attestation to be questionable without reviewing on a case-by-case basis. In situations where the district must verify questionable information related to an individual's ABAWD exempt status, the district is required to utilize all information available to it including data from other public assistance programs, before requiring the individual to provide documentary evidence or other sources of verification.

Monthly WIOA Job Search Activity Record

The *Monthly WIOA Job Search Record* templates are designed to assist ABAWDs in documenting their participation in job search activities under WIOA. These tools support full credit toward the 80-hour monthly ABAWD participation requirement when properly completed and verified. Both templates include a cover page with detailed instructions that explain the expectations and requirements for participating in WIOA job search.

Form Versions and Usage

- *Monthly WIOA Job Search Activity Record (fillable electronic version)*: Suitable for clients with internet access and the ability to complete and submit documents electronically (e.g., via email).
- *Monthly WIOA Job Search Activity Record (print-ready version)*: Designed for printing and manual completion, this version should be used by districts when issuing paper copies to clients for handwritten completion.

Both versions of the template include a front page which provides:

- An overview of the 80-hour participation requirement;

- Instructions for acceptable job search activities;
- Requirements for using the JobZone and/or New York State Job Bank websites; and
- Submission guidance.

WIOA Job Search - Qualifying Activities and Approved Websites

WIOA job search activities count fully toward the monthly 80-hour participation requirement for ABAWD purposes. This may include online job search, completing and submitting applications, attending interviews, preparing resumes, and following up with employers. To be considered WIOA job search, activities must involve the use of the following online resources:

- [JobZone](#): A comprehensive employment resource that offers resume-building tools, career assessments, job matching, training exploration, and an online work search record.
- [New York State Job Bank](#): A searchable database of statewide job listings that connects job seekers with employers.

Clients may also participate in additional job search services available at the local [Career Center](#), such as one-on-one assistance or resume workshops.

To meet the ABAWD requirements through WIOA job search, clients must record time spent looking for work, which may be done through self-attestation. Actual hours of participation in these activities must be documented monthly and entered into the Welfare-to-Work Caseload Management System (WTWCMS) under the WIOA Job Search work activity by the 15th of the month following the report month.

JobZone Overview

JobZone is an interactive career development and job search tool developed by the New York State Department of Labor to help job seekers make informed career decisions and connect with employment opportunities. It includes a wide range of features designed to support career exploration and job readiness.

Some of its key elements include:

- **Job Search and Job Matching:**
Users can browse thousands of current job openings across New York State, save job listings, and apply directly to job openings.
- **Resume and Cover Letter Tools:**
JobZone provides tools to create, edit, and store multiple resumes and cover letters. Templates are available to guide users in showcasing their experience effectively.
- **Career Exploration Tools:**
Users can access career assessments (e.g., interest profiler, skills survey), compare occupations, and research career pathways. The tool also offers features to identify transferable skills and link them to related job titles.
- **Labor Market Information:**
JobZone offers up-to-date regional labor market data, including employment trends, high-growth industries, wage information, and training program directories.

- Interview Preparation and Workshops:
JobZone includes resources for practicing interview techniques, developing soft skills, and viewing virtual job readiness workshops.

Please note that while JobZone offers an Online Work Search Record module to help document job search efforts, it does not track time spent on each activity which is required for ABAWD purposes. Additionally, some clients may find navigating the online system difficult.

Differences Between WIOA Job Search and SNAP Employment and Training (E&T)/ Public Assistance (PA) Job Search

Districts must clearly distinguish WIOA job search from job search conducted under the SNAP E&T or PA program:

- WIOA Job Search is a stand-alone qualifying work activity that counts fully toward the monthly 80-hour requirement for ABAWD purposes, provided that all activities are appropriately documented and reported.
- For ABAWD participation purposes, SNAP E&T or PA Job Search only counts as a subsidiary component as long as the number of hours spent in job search and/or job readiness training constitutes less than one-half of the total monthly hours. For example, to meet the 80-hour monthly ABAWD work requirement, an individual could participate in 39 hours of job search or job readiness training provided under the PA or SNAP E&T Program and at least 41 hours of paid employment or volunteer work.

This distinction is essential to ensure compliance with federal participation tracking and reporting requirements.

Monitoring ABAWD Participation

Districts play a critical role in ensuring that ABAWDs are appropriately supported in meeting the 80-hour participation requirement and that WIOA job search documentation is complete and accurate. To this end, district staff should:

- Inform clients of the WIOA job search requirements and the appropriate use of the *Monthly WIOA Job Search Activity Record* templates;
- Provide the correct version of the template based on client access and preferences;
- Confirm clients are using the approved job search websites;
- Accurately document client participation in WTWCMS; and
- Retain all submitted documentation in the case record.

ABAWD WIOA Partnerships

To help clients meet the ABAWD work rules, districts should also collaborate with their local Career Centers. This collaboration can involve strategies such as:

- Hosting joint job search orientation sessions to introduce clients to resources and support available through both agencies.
- Facilitating access to computer resources for clients who need to conduct online job searches and complete applications.

- Offering one-on-one job search coaching that includes guidance on using the approved online resources.

By coordinating services, districts and Career Centers can ensure ABAWDs have the resources and support they need to meet the ABAWD work requirements and maintain SNAP eligibility.

Monthly ABAWD Education and Training Participation Record

The *Monthly ABAWD Education and Training Participation Record* template is designed to assist ABAWDs in documenting their participation in education and training programs. This tool supports full credit toward the 80-hour monthly ABAWD participation requirement when properly completed and verified. Instructions for completion are explained at the top of the front page of the template.

This document template is designed to verify hours in education and training programs that encompass activities including, but not limited to, GED, Adult Basic Education, Job Readiness Training, English as a Second Language (ESL), Vocational or Technical Training, or Work-Based Learning (including internships, apprenticeships, on-the-job training). The education or training program may include job search as a component, but this template should not be used if job search is the program's only component. This template should also not be used to verify enrollment in high school or college. The template must be completed by appropriate staff at the education or training program who can attest to the hours a client participates in the program.

Monthly ABAWD Volunteer Participation Record

The *Monthly ABAWD Volunteer Participation Record* template is designed to assist ABAWDs in documenting their voluntary participation in community service activities. This tool supports full credit toward the prorated monthly ABAWD participation requirement for volunteer activity in a community service program, which is calculated in the same manner as WEP by dividing the household's monthly SNAP benefit by the higher of the federal or State minimum wage. Instructions for completion, including the calculation of the required hours and an example thereof, are explained at the top of the front page of the template.

The template must be completed by appropriate staff at the community service provider who can attest to the hours a client participates in the volunteer program. The provider of the community service program must be a non-profit or public organization and cannot be part of a candidate's campaign for public office. Clients may self-initiate their placement in a voluntary community service activity or may be referred by the district. Districts may not require a client to participate in community service.

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