

FoodShare



WISCONSIN

A Recipe for Good Health



FoodShare Basic Work Rules for FoodShare Applicants and Members Ages 16 Through 59

What are the FoodShare basic rules?

Federal rules require FoodShare applicants and members that are ages 16 through 59 to follow FoodShare basic work rules. When you complete a FoodShare application or renew your benefits, you are agreeing to follow the FoodShare basic work rules and are registered for work.

FoodShare basic work rules are different from the FoodShare work requirement for some adults ages 18 through 64 who do not have any children aged 13 and under living in the home.

If you do not follow FoodShare basic work rules, and you do not have an exemption, you will not be able to get FoodShare benefits for a period of time. This is called a sanction period.

If you need to follow basic work rules, you must:

- Provide your agency with your employment status or ability to work.
- Not quit a job of 30 or more hours per week voluntarily and without good cause (or a job with weekly earnings of \$217.50 or more).
- Not reduce your work hours to less than 30 per week without good cause (unless you are earning weekly wages of \$217.50 or more).
- Accept a job offer if you are offered a job that is a good fit.
- Meet the unemployment compensation program work requirements if you applied for or are getting unemployment benefits.

- Meet the Wisconsin Works (W-2) participation requirements if you are taking part in W-2.

What are the exemptions from FoodShare basic work rules?

You meet an exemption from following FoodShare basic work rules if **any** of the following are true:

- You are 16 or 17 years old and are not the primary person in the FoodShare household.
- You are 16 or 17 years old and are the primary person in the FoodShare household but are enrolled in school or in an employment and training program at least half-time.
- You are found to be unfit for work. This applies if:
 - You get temporary or permanent disability benefits from the government or a private source.
 - You are found to be mentally or physically unable to work by your agency.
 - You are verified as unable to work by a statement from a health care professional or social worker.
- You are enrolled in W-2 and complying with the W-2 participation requirements.
- You are the primary caregiver for a dependent child younger than age 6 (whether the child lives in your home or out of your home). However, if you and another person both have parental control of the child, only one of you can be exempt from the work registration requirements as the primary caregiver of that child.



- You are the primary caregiver for another person who cannot care for himself or herself (whether the person lives in your home or out of your home).
- You have applied for or are receiving unemployment compensation.
- You are regularly taking part in an alcohol or other drug abuse (AODA) treatment or rehabilitation program.
- You are working 30 or more hours per week or earning weekly wages of \$217.50 or more.
- You are enrolled at least half-time in a recognized school, training program, or institution of higher education.

You may need to provide proof to your agency if you meet one of these exemptions.

What if I do not follow basic work rules and do not meet an exemption?

If you do not follow basic work rules and you do not meet an exemption, you will not be able to get FoodShare benefits for a specified sanction period. This includes if you voluntarily and without good cause do any of the following:

- Turn down a suitable job offer.
- Quit a job of 30 or more hours per week (or a job with earnings equal to 30 or more hours per week at the federal minimum wage).
- Reduce your work hours to less than 30 hours per week (or your earnings to less than 30 times the federal minimum wage).
- Take part in W-2 but do not meet the W-2 program work requirements.
- Apply for or get unemployment benefits but do not meet the unemployment compensation program work requirements.

What if I lose an exemption?

If you lose an exemption, then you must follow the FoodShare basic work rules requirements. If you lose one of the following exemptions without good cause, you will not be able to get FoodShare benefits for a specified sanction period, unless you have another exemption:

- You are enrolled in W-2 and complying with the W-2 work requirement.

- You have applied for or are receiving unemployment compensation.
- You are working 30 or more hours per week or earning wages equal to 30 or more hours per week at the federal minimum wage.

How long is a sanction period?

The length of a sanction period depends on if you have had a sanction before.

- The first sanction period is one month long.
- A second sanction period is three months long.
- A third or subsequent sanction period is six months long.

Can I end a sanction period early?

You can end a sanction period early if you become exempt from the work registration requirements.

Once my sanction period ends, how do I get FoodShare again?

You will need to reapply. If you are part of a FoodShare group, you will need to let your worker know to update your case instead of having to reapply.

What does good cause mean?

Good cause means there is a situation beyond your control that prevents you from meeting the work registration requirements. If you do not have good cause, you may not be able to get FoodShare benefits for the specified sanction period. If you have good cause, you will be able to continue to get FoodShare benefits. Your worker will consider your situation to determine if there was good cause.

Some examples of reasons for good cause are:

- You did not accept a job offer, or you quit a job, because the job was not a good fit.
- You were fired or quit at the employer's demand.
- You were discriminated against by an employer based on your age, race, sex, gender, color, handicap, religious beliefs, national origin, or political beliefs.
- You left your job for another job, training, or school.
- You were not able to continue a job because you moved.

- Your personal health problems, or the health problems of others, did not allow you to continue your job.
- Your job hours were reduced by your employer without your permission.
- You quit a job to join a volunteer program such as AmeriCorps or AmeriCorps VISTA.
- You did not have transportation to get to the job.
- You did not have child care for a child younger than age 12.
- There were other situations beyond your control that the agency feels was good cause.

How can I learn more?

Learn more about FoodShare basic work rules at dhs.wisconsin.gov/foodshare/basic-work-rules.htm

For more details about the work registration requirements, contact your agency or refer to your Enrollment and Benefits Handbook, dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p0/p00079.pdf. To find your agency, go to dhs.wisconsin.gov/forwardhealth/imagency/index.htm, or call Member Services at 1-800-362-3002 (TTY and translation services are available).

Note: The FoodShare basic work rules requirements are different from the FoodShare work requirement for able-bodied adults ages 18 through 64. Refer to FoodShare Wisconsin: The Work Requirement for Adults Ages 18 Through 64 fact sheet (P-00710) for more details about this requirement. The fact sheet is available at dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p0/p00710.pdf.

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