

SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) Desk Guide

Adults must participate in work or training activities to receive SNAP. However, many people are exempt from E&T rules. In addition, several counties have instituted a voluntary SNAP E&T Program. In these counties, the SNAP recipient decides whether or not to participate.

Exemptions from E&T rules

Anyone who is:

- under age 16 or age 60 or over
- age 16 or 17 and not the head of the household
- attending high school, training, or college at least half-time (*Note: college students between the ages of 18 and 49 must meet the student eligibility criteria.*)
- working at least 30 hours per week or earning weekly pay of at least 30 times the hourly federal minimum wage
- a migrant or seasonal farm worker under contract to begin work within the next 30 days
- meeting TANF work requirements
- receiving unemployment benefits
- participating in a drug or alcohol treatment program
- taking care of a child under 6 or an incapacitated person (can apply to multiple adults in a household if there are multiple children and different adult caretakers for each child)
- jointly applying for SNAP and SSI and awaiting an SSI eligibility determination
- physically or mentally unable to work (less documentation is required than for being disabled—generally doctor’s or other health care provider certification is sufficient)

If someone does not comply

Individuals who fail to comply with E&T rules without good cause (a valid reason) can be sanctioned (made ineligible for a specified length of time). E&T sanctions disqualify only the individual, not the whole household.

- For the first sanction, ineligibility lasts for at least one month (no sanction for applicants not receiving expedited SNAP benefits) and extends until the person complies with E&T rules,
- For the second sanction, ineligibility lasts for at least three months and extends until the person complies with E&T rules, and
- For the third and all additional instances, sanction ineligibility lasts for at least six months and extends until the person complies with E&T rules.

Types of E&T activities

Each SNAP office has a county-specific employment plan that describes E&T activities. These plans can include a combination of the following:

- educational activities related to employment
- financial literacy and personal finance instruction
- supervised job search and training
- job skills training
- job readiness
- self-employment programs
- work experience program (WEP)
- vocational education
- Subsidized employment and apprenticeships (including internships, customized training, transitional jobs, on the job training as defined under WIOA)

Hours required

Individuals who must comply with the E&T rules cannot be required to spend more than 120 hours per month participating in E&T activities.

For WEP participants: To calculate the number of hours an individual is required to complete each month, divide the amount of the SNAP benefit by the number of adult SNAP recipients in the household. Then divide by the minimum wage in effect for the area of the state in which the household is located:

	2023	2024
New York City	\$15.00	\$16.00
Long Island and Westchester	\$15.00	\$16.00
Rest of state	\$14.20	\$15.00

Example: a SNAP household in Albany County consisting of two adults receives \$516 in SNAP benefits each month:

\$516	÷	2	=	\$258	÷	\$14.20	=	18
SNAP Benefit		Adults				Minimum wage (2023) for Albany County		Hours required for each adult (rounded)

Mandatory case management

Due to a new provision, SNAP recipients who are placed, by the SNAP office, into a mandatory E&T assignment must also receive case management services and the assignment to at least one E&T work activity component.

Case management services include:

- completion of an employability assessment,
- development of an employment plan,
- monitoring the progress of the individual in the assigned SNAP E&T activity component, and
- coordination with service providers.

Good cause for failure to participate when there is no appropriate/available opening

In situations when there is not an appropriate and/or available opening for a mandatory E&T participant in the district's E&T program, the SNAP office must determine that the participant has good cause for failure to comply with the mandatory E&T requirement.

Good cause for a lack of an appropriate or available opening in an E&T program ends when the SNAP office identifies an appropriate and available opening and informs the participant.

Provider Determinations and Referral Process

Local SNAP E&T providers are responsible for determining if an individual is a good fit for a particular E&T component; called a provider determination.

SNAP E&T providers have flexibility to set the criteria used to make a provider determination and may use any information available to make the determination.

See *Maintaining SNAP Benefits and Recertification* in our SNAP Prescreening Guide for more information about this process.

Voluntary quit

“Voluntary quit” generally means “I chose to quit my job.” The rule disqualifies such people from receiving SNAP for a specified length of time (called a sanction period, which is counted in days). In reality, this usually arises when someone quits their job for some other reason, such as a decision to relocate, and immediately applies for SNAP. Applicants must prove that there was some valid reason for leaving the job. This will provide “good cause” and satisfy the rule.

Those without a valid reason for quitting their job may or may not be subject to a voluntary quit sanction. Many people are exempt from the voluntary quit rule.

For applicants: voluntary quit sanctions begin at the SNAP application date. The look-back period for voluntary quit extends to 30 days prior to application.

- For the first instance, ineligibility applies for a period of at least 30 days and extends until the person complies with E&T rules,
- For the second instance, ineligibility applies for a period of at least 90 days and extends until the person complies with E&T rules, and
- For the third and all additional instances, ineligibility applies for a period of at least 80 days and extends until the person complies with E&T rules.

See 18-ADM-08 for more information on voluntary quit sanction time frames.

Who can be sanctioned for a voluntary quit

Anyone who is:

- working 30 or more hours/week OR earning at least \$217.50/week who quits a job without good cause, or
- working 30+ hours/week who voluntarily reduces their work hours without good cause, if the person’s earnings fall below \$217.50/week.

Exemptions from voluntary quit sanctions

- being laid off or fired (for any reason)
- worked less than 30 hrs/week prior to quitting, unless the person earned more than \$217.50/week gross
- worked less than 30 hours/week prior to reducing their hours
- reduced work hours below 30 hour/week, but still earns at least \$217.50/week gross
- had been self-employed
- resigned at the employer’s demand
- was exempt from the work rules at the time of job quit (except for those who were exempt due to employment exemption)

See the NYS OTDA Employment Policy Manual for specific rules and policies, accessible online at otda.ny.gov/resources/employment-manual/