

How to Keep Your SNAP Benefits

SNAP Rules Have Changed

As of January 1, 2026, federal SNAP rules changed. One important change is that some adults must now complete **80 activity hours each month to keep their SNAP benefits**. Activity hours are sometimes called work requirements. Different activities can be combined to reach **80 activity hours each month**.

Activity hours may include

- ✓ Work (paid or unpaid)
- ✓ Volunteering or community service
- ✓ Job training
- ✓ Other approved workforce education programs

» **Many SNAP customers may have an exception from the requirements to complete activity hours.**

It is important to update your contact information and watch for SNAP notices and information sent to you. This guide explains what the new rules mean and what you need to do to keep your benefits.

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» Who Needs to Complete Activity Hours?

Some SNAP customers **may now need to complete activity hours**. These customers are sometimes called able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD) in SNAP policy.

You need to **complete 80 activity hours if all** of the following apply:

- ☒ You are **age 18 to 64**
- ☒ You are **physically and mentally able** to work
- ☒ You are **not** responsible for the care of a child **under age 14**
- ☒ You do **not** qualify for an exception

» Changes to Some Previous Exceptions

Some groups who were previously exempt may now need to meet activity hour requirements if they do not qualify for another exception.

» Examples may include

- Veterans who do not meet another exception
- People experiencing homelessness who do not meet another exception
- Young adults aging out of foster care

Adults are now included up to age 64.

If you are unsure whether these changes apply to you, contact HCA or visit **[HCA.NM.GOV/snapchanges](https://hca.nm.gov/snapchanges)** for guidance.

>> Who Does Not Need to Complete Activity Hours?

Many people **do not need to complete activity hours** under federal SNAP rules.

You do not need to complete activity hours if any of the following apply:

>> Age

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 65 or older

>> Health

- ☐ Pregnant
- ☐ Have a **disability** or receive **SSI**

>> Caring for Someone

- ☐ A child under age 14
- ☐ Someone in your home with a **disability**

>> Employment or Program Participation

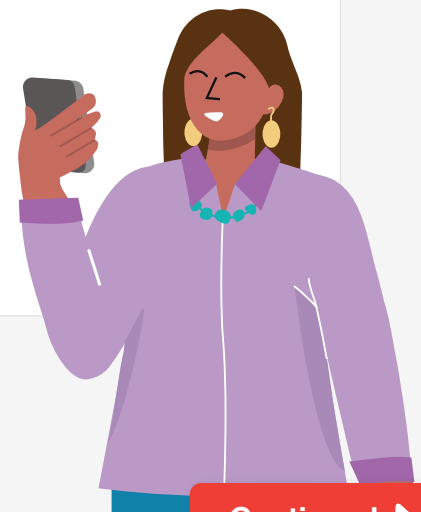
- ☐ Currently **employed** at least 30 hours per week
- ☐ Meeting **TANF** work rules
- ☐ Receiving **unemployment** benefits

>> Going to School

- ☐ Enrolled at least **half-time** in a qualifying school

>> Other

- ☐ In a **drug** or **alcohol** treatment program
- ☐ Meet certain **tribal** or **Native American** status rules



Continued ►

» Areas Exempt From Activity Hours

» The federal activity hour rule does not currently apply in these New Mexico areas:

- Luna County
- Laguna Pueblo
- San Felipe Pueblo
- Taos Pueblo
- Tesuque Pueblo

If any of these apply, report the exception and provide proof to keep your benefits.

» How to Report Your Exception



Online: YES.NM.GOV

Sign in and **click** “Report a Change,” **select** “Additional Changes,” and follow the instructions.



Phone: 1-800-283-4465



In person: Your local **Income Support Division** office

>> How to Complete Activity Hours

You can complete your activity hours in several ways. You may use one of the activities listed here, or combine any to reach 80 activity hours.



Work/Employment

- Full-time or part-time
- Self-employment
- Paid or unpaid
- Temporary or seasonal
- Work in exchange for goods or services



Volunteer or Community Service

- Volunteer with a nonprofit or community organization
- Community service arranged through a program
- Other approved volunteer activities



Job Training or Workforce Education

- Vocational or career training
- Apprenticeships or certification programs
- SNAP Employment & Training (SNAP E&T)
- Workforce or job placement programs
- Other approved workforce education programs

>> You Can Combine Activities

Example: Work: 40 hours, Volunteer: 20 hours, Training: 20 hours

✓ **Total: 80 activity hours**



Not sure if an activity counts? Call **1-800-283-4465** for help.

» Keep Records of Your Activity Hours

You do not need to upload proof every month. **Keep records of your activity hours** and provide proof when the state asks for it.

» You may need to provide proof at

- Initial SNAP application
- SNAP Renewal
- Any time your activity hours drop below 20 hours a week or 80 hours a month
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» How to Provide Proof of Your Activity Hours



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>> How to Regain Your SNAP Benefits

If you do not have an exception and you do not complete 80 activity hours in a month, that month is counted as a missed month. **If activity hours are missed in 3 months within a 36-month period**, your SNAP benefits will stop. The 3 missed months do not have to be in a row.

>> To Regain Your SNAP Benefits, You May Need to

- ✓ Complete **80 activity hours within 30 days**
- ✓ **Submit a new application** for SNAP

Your activity hours must be reported and verified. Once your benefits resume, you must continue completing activity hours each month unless you qualify for an exception.

>> Immigrant Eligibility Changes

Some lawfully present immigrants may no longer qualify for SNAP when they renew their benefits. Even if one household member is no longer eligible, that person's income and resources may still count when the state reviews the household's SNAP case.

Eligibility will be reviewed during SNAP renewal.

If you are not sure whether this change applies to your household, contact HCA or visit **YES.NM.GOV** for guidance.



Your SNAP Benefits Checklist

Use this checklist to help keep your SNAP benefits:

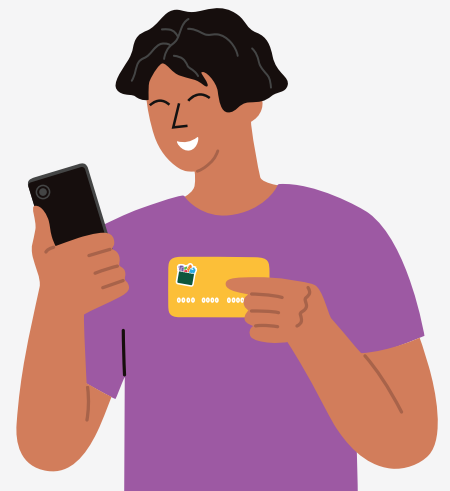
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- ☐ Check to see whether you need to complete activity hours
- ☐ Complete **80 activity hours each month** if required
- ☐ Report any exceptions and provide proof
- ☐ Keep records of your work, training, or volunteer hours
- ☐ Watch for letters from HCA about your SNAP case
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Need Help?

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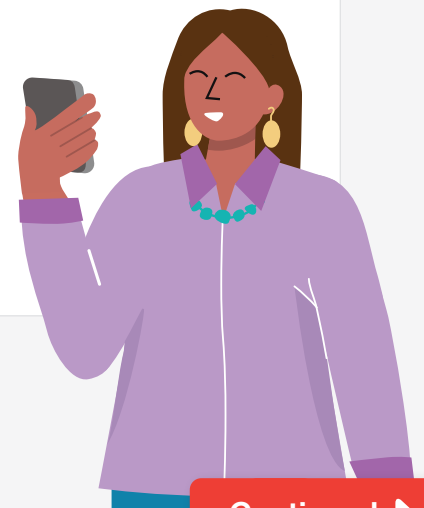
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