

**Texas Workforce Commission**

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program  
Employment and Training Guide**

**October 2011**

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# Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training Guide

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## Overview of Guide

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) requires Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) to plan for services to be delivered using an integrated approach. Integrated service delivery is more than just a good practice—it is a way of looking at how services are delivered and finding ways to ensure Workforce Solutions Offices meet employer and job seeker needs. For a discussion of integration concepts, see TWC’s *Report on Senate Bill 280* at <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/news/ipp280.pdf> and <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/news/integrationrpt/pdf>.

Workforce Solutions Offices provide services that are designed to lead to employment. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) services are an important part of this process because they serve both employers and job seekers and provide job-matching tools that all Workforce Solutions Office staff can use.

## Purpose

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The purpose of this guide is to:

- provide information about SNAP E&T policies and procedures;
- provide guidance and instruction on assisting SNAP E&T participants to prepare for and obtain employment; and
- highlight how SNAP E&T supports the Boards’ goals.

## Objectives

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The objectives of this guide are to:

- improve linkages between the needs of employers and job seekers;
- ensure service consistency;
- establish a base for quality assurance; and
- communicate expectations for service outcomes, limitations, and funding.

## Target Audience

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The target audience for this guide is:

- Workforce Solutions Office staff;
- Board staff; and
- TWC staff.

## Parts of the Guide

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The numbering system for the guide is based on alphabetical divisions, with numerical subdivisions.

**Part A:** Policy and Requirements

**Part B:** Operations

**Part C:** Appendix

**Part D:** List of Revisions

## Changes to Content

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TWC maintains the SNAP E&T Guide online at [www.twc.state.tx.us/boards/guides/guides.html](http://www.twc.state.tx.us/boards/guides/guides.html) to provide access to current statewide policy and guidance information.

Updates to the guide will be issued through WD Letters and Release Notes, which will indicate that the guide has been revised to incorporate new information. Part D of the guide, List of Revisions, contains the revision date, the section revised, and a brief explanation of the specific revision.

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# SNAP E&T

## Part A – Policy and Requirements

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### Goal of SNAP E&T

The goal of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) is to assist SNAP recipients by improving their ability to obtain regular employment and reduce their dependency on public assistance.

### A-100: GENERAL POLICY INFORMATION

#### *A-101: Background*

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The following sections provide a brief history of SNAP E&T and changes in policy resulting from federal and state laws.

##### **A-101.a: Legislative Authority**

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The Food Stamp Act of 1964 (Public Law [P.L.] 88-525) created the Food Stamp Program to allow families in need to have a nutritionally adequate diet using government-issued coupon allotments. The original Food Stamp Program did not include work-related provisions.

Congress amended the Food Stamp Act in 1971 (P.L. 91-671), establishing certain work search requirements for food stamp recipients. Specifically, the amendment denied eligibility to any person between the ages of 19 and 60 who refused to:

- register for work;
- fulfill *inquiry-about-employment* requirements; or
- accept a job at a specified pay level.

If the head of household voluntarily quit work without good cause, the household was ineligible to receive food stamp benefits.

The statute also exempted from work requirements any person who:

- complied with work registration requirements set by the state;
- was employed a minimum of 30 hours per week; or
- received weekly earnings at a specified rate.

The amended Food Stamp Act did not mandate states to provide employment assistance. Texas voluntarily provided job search assistance for mandatory food stamp recipients.

The Food Security Act of 1985 (P.L. 99-198) created FSE&T and required each state to implement it. The intent of the statute was to ensure that able-bodied food stamp recipients engaged in meaningful work-related activities that led to paid employment and decreased dependency on public assistance. This Act defined FSE&T components as job search, workfare, work experience, and training. The statute also gave states the option of exempting people from FSE&T requirements because of individual circumstances, the remote location of work opportunities, or unavailability of child care.

The Hunger Prevention Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-435) made further changes to the Food Stamp Program. The Mickey Leland Domestic Hunger Relief Act of 1990 authorized demonstration initiatives to test the feasibility of combining FSE&T and Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) services. In 1993, the Mickey Leland Child Hunger Relief Act (P.L. 103-66) established a limit on the dependent care reimbursement amount paid to mandatory work registrants.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) (P.L. 104-193) and the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 included significant changes to the Food Stamp Program. PRWORA imposed a new work requirement on food stamp recipients between the ages of 18 and 50 who have no dependents—known as Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs). To remain eligible for SNAP benefits for more than three months in any 36-month period, ABAWDs must be:

- engaged in work (paid or unpaid) for at least 20 hours per week; or
- participating in FSE&T.

The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 (P.L. 105-33) required states to target 80 percent of their 100 percent federal FSE&T grant funds to services for ABAWDs.

The Farm Bill (P.L. 107-171), signed into law on May 13, 2002, significantly altered the FSE&T funding provisions of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. §2025) for Federal Fiscal Years 2002 through 2007.

Section 4121 of the Farm Bill:

- reauthorized FSE&T;
- set the basic amount of unmatched federal funding;
- provided an additional amount of funds to reimburse states that guarantee to serve all ABAWDs before their three months of benefits in any 36-month period expire;

- eliminated the requirement that states target 80 percent of their 100 percent federal funds for services to ABAWDs; and
- removed the \$25 cap on FSE&T participant reimbursements for transportation and other expenses necessary for participation in FSE&T.

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act (FCEA) of 2008, enacted June 18, 2008, amended the Food Stamp Act of 1977, now named the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008. The amendments included changing the name of the Food Stamp Program to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), which administers the federal program, has changed the name of the state Food Stamp Program to SNAP. To align with the federal and state name changes, TWC has changed the name of Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSE&T) to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T).

Effective October 1, 2009, Texas implemented an FCEA provision giving states the option of providing up to 90 days of allowable job retention services and support services to SNAP recipients who participated in SNAP E&T activities and then entered full- or part-time employment. See B-115 for additional information on job retention.

### **A-101.b: History**

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In April 1987, the Texas Department of Human Services (TDHS) contracted with the Texas Employment Commission (TEC) for the delivery of employment services to mandatory work registrants. TDHS and TEC renewed the contract yearly, and established an interagency agreement addressing services for both FSE&T and JOBS (now SNAP E&T and Choices, respectively).

The 74th Texas Legislature, Regular Session (1995), enacted House Bill (HB) 1863, which moved the state toward an integrated system by consolidating job training and employment and training services into the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). This included moving programs administered by TEC to TWC, and transferring FSE&T from TDHS to TWC. HB 1863 also created a locally designed, integrated workforce development system that allows Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) with approved plans to administer FSE&T and other employment and child care services under contract with TWC. TDHS continued to determine food stamp eligibility.

HB 2292, enacted in 2003, moved food stamp eligibility and other services for low-income individuals from TDHS to the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC).

## **A-101.c: SNAP E&T Funds**

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The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) under the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) administers SNAP E&T and approves state plans describing services to be provided and the planned use of funds. Funding for SNAP E&T in Texas falls into three categories:

### **1. 100 Percent Federal Grant**

FNS allocates the 100 percent federal grant authorized by Congress to fund the administrative costs of planning, implementing, and operating SNAP E&T services. Boards must use federal grant funds only for providing SNAP E&T activities to eligible SNAP recipients (i.e., mandatory work registrants and exempt recipients who voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T). Boards must not use 100 percent federal funds for support services (e.g., transportation).

Effective October 1, 2009, Boards may use the 100 percent federal grant funds to provide allowable SNAP E&T activities such as job search, education, and training for up to 90 days to assist SNAP recipients with retaining full-time employment (see B-115).

Because no additional federal funds will be allocated for job retention services or support services, Boards must work within their existing allocation.

Before using SNAP E&T funds to provide job retention services or support services, Boards must ensure that careful planning and consideration is taken in determining the available funds for outreach and regular SNAP E&T services to ABAWDS and General Population.

*Note:* SNAP E&T activities are also referred to as “regular SNAP E&T services” in B-115 and B-406, regarding job retention services and support services, respectively.

### **2. State and Federal Funds (50/50)**

In addition to the 100 percent federal grant, states have the flexibility to access federal matching funds to provide services at a 50/50 matching rate. The Texas Legislature appropriates State General Revenue funds to supplement services that Boards provide through the 100 percent federal grant, with state funds matched by FNS on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

Texas accesses these federal funds each federal fiscal year to allow Boards to provide SNAP E&T activities to eligible SNAP recipients (i.e., mandatory

work registrants and exempt recipients who voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T).

Effective October 1, 2009, Boards may use 50/50 funds to provide allowable SNAP E&T activities such as job search, education, and training for up to 90 days, to assist SNAP recipients with retaining full-time employment (see B-115).

Section 16(h)(3) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 states that USDA must reimburse state agencies for costs associated with transportation and other expenses that are reasonable, necessary, and directly related to participation in SNAP E&T. The 50/50 funds are also to be used to provide these support services to SNAP recipients participating in SNAP E&T, or for job retention to provide up to 90 days of assistance with retaining full- or part-time employment (see B-115).

In Texas, SNAP E&T dependent care costs are funded with Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) funds. SNAP E&T funds are not used.

### **3. ABAWD-Only 100 Percent Federal Funds**

FNS provides additional 100 percent funds for states that commit to offering ABAWDs qualifying SNAP E&T activities—such as education, training, or workfare—that permit them to remain eligible for SNAP beyond the three-month time limit. ABAWD-only 100 percent federal funds cannot be used for support services (e.g., transportation).

Boards must ensure that ABAWD-only funds are not used to provide any type of job retention services or support services.

#### ***A-101.c(1): Use of SNAP E&T Funds for Incentives***

Boards must ensure that SNAP E&T 100 percent federal grant, 50/50, and ABAWD-only funds are not used to provide any type of incentives (i.e., monetary or non-monetary) to SNAP recipients participating in SNAP E&T.

Boards choosing to provide incentives to SNAP recipients for any reason must ensure that alternative funding sources are used.

#### **A-101.d: Ensure Offer of SNAP E&T Activities for ABAWDs**

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Boards must ensure that all ABAWDs (not meeting work requirements\*) in full-service counties are offered a SNAP E&T activity within 10 calendar days from the date of referral from HHSC. This means an outreach letter

must be sent to the ABAWD within 10 days of the ABAWD's appearance in The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST) outreach pool and must contain the following information about the SNAP E&T activity:

- Time
- Date
- Location
- Activity (e.g., job search)
- Consequences for not responding to the outreach letter

\*See definition of *ABAWDs not meeting work requirements* in A-102.

The intent of the 10-day notification is to ensure that Texas Workforce Solutions Office staff serves ABAWDs as quickly as possible—not merely to notify them that they are scheduled to be served at some point in the distant future.

Therefore, Boards must ensure that there is no delay in scheduling an ABAWD's appointment. It is recommended that ABAWDs be scheduled for SNAP E&T activities within one month of the date of outreach. A delay in scheduling an appointment within this time frame could result in ABAWDs losing their SNAP benefits.

ABAWDs are limited to three months of SNAP benefits (in a 36-month period) unless they are working or participating in SNAP E&T activities. HHSC determines whether to continue or discontinue an ABAWD's SNAP benefits beyond the three-month limit based on notification from a Workforce Solutions Office that the ABAWD is participating. Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff sends this notification—the Work Requirement Verification form (Form H1822)—to HHSC within two weeks of initial participation in SNAP E&T activities. See A-203.a for additional information on Form H1822.

#### **A-101.e: SNAP E&T Rules**

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TWC's SNAP E&T rules at 40 Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Chapter 813, are based on established laws and policies. This ensures that SNAP recipients have the assistance and support needed, through participation in SNAP E&T activities, to obtain employment. The SNAP E&T rules are located on the TWC Website at <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/twcinfo/rules/ch813.doc>.

## ***A-102: Definitions of SNAP E&T Terms***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

**ABAWDs (Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents)**—SNAP household members who are determined by HHSC to be mandatory work registrants and are:

- classified as an able-bodied adult;
- at least 18 but less than 50 years of age;
- without dependents;
- subject to limitation on the receipt of SNAP benefits for three months out of 36 months if the ABAWD does not work at least 20 hours per week or participate in employment and training activities, as specified in 7 U.S.C. §2015(o)(1)(A)–(C).

**ABAWDs meeting work requirements**—SNAP household members who are:

- classified as able-bodied adults;
- at least 18 but less than 50 years of age;
- without dependents; and
- employed at least 20 hours per week, or participating in employment and training activities other than those funded under SNAP E&T (i.e., self-initiated WIA or TAA) at the time of the initial SNAP certification at HHSC; or
- not employed at least 20 hours and not meeting work requirements at the initial SNAP certification, but are successfully participating in SNAP E&T activities after two weeks of initial enrollment in SNAP E&T services. (Workforce Solutions Office staff notifies HHSC of successful participation using Form H1822.)

*Note:* At the initial SNAP certification—or after notification is received from Workforce Solutions Office staff—HHSC staff enters a **Secondary SIG Code D** in the electronic case filing system to indicate that the ABAWD is meeting the work requirement. The Secondary SIG Code D is then displayed in SAVERR. For TIERS customers, a description displays to indicate an ABAWD is meeting work requirements based on one of the above criteria.

**ABAWDs not meeting work requirements**—SNAP household members who meet the criteria outlined above, are not employed at least 20 hours per week, and prior to certification for SNAP benefits are not participating in any self-initiated employment and training activities, such as those funded by:

- the Workforce Investment Act (WIA); or
- the Trade Act of 1974.

ABAWDs not meeting work requirements at the time of SNAP certification will be required to participate in SNAP E&T activities. Failure to comply will result in loss of SNAP benefits.

*Note:* At the initial SNAP certification, HHSC's Systems for Applications, Verifications, Eligibility, Referral and Reporting (SAVERR) and the TWIST *SNAP E&T History* tab display a Secondary Status-in-Group (SIG) Code C to indicate that an ABAWD is not meeting work requirements. The Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS) will not display a SIG Code C, or any other description, at this time.

**Assessment**—an in-depth evaluation of employability, educational history, vocational and educational skills, work experience, family circumstances, and support services needs.

**CFR (Code of Federal Regulations)**—CFR is the compilation of general and permanent rules published in the *Federal Register*. Each CFR volume is divided into numbered titles. Title 7, issued for USDA, contains the SNAP E&T regulations.

**Dependent**—an individual under 18 years of age who is not the head of household.

**Employment planning meeting**—a meeting or orientation, conducted one-on-one or in a group setting, that provides SNAP recipients with an introduction to SNAP E&T services and activities.

**Exempt recipient**—a SNAP recipient who is part of the SNAP E&T General Population, is not required to participate in SNAP E&T services, and must not be sanctioned for failure to cooperate with SNAP E&T requirements as set forth in §813.2 of TWC's SNAP E&T rules.

**Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)**—a department of USDA responsible for administration of SNAP E&T.

**Full-service counties**—counties in which:

- all mandatory ABAWDs are served;
- SNAP E&T General Population is served based on available funding;
- mandatory work registrants are sanctioned (i.e., SNAP benefits are denied) for failure to cooperate with SNAP E&T requirements;
- exempt recipients can volunteer to participate in SNAP E&T services but must not be sanctioned for failure to cooperate with SNAP E&T requirements.

**Good cause**—a determination made by Workforce Solutions Office staff that a mandatory work registrant's lack of participation is warranted by illness, court appearance, no available transportation, etc.

**Job Retention Services**—activities such as job search, education, and training that are provided for up to 90 days to SNAP recipients who participated in regular SNAP E&T services, entered full-time employment, and meet the requirements outlined in B-115. These services will assist SNAP recipients to retain employment by:

- improving basic skills;
- increasing employability;
- aiding progress up a career ladder; and
- enabling them to gain better employment.

**Job Retention Support Services**—transportation, work-related, or other support services that are:

- reasonable, necessary, and directly related to retaining the SNAP recipient’s job; and
- provided for up to 90 days, after SNAP recipients who participated in specific regular SNAP E&T activities enter full- or part-time employment.

**Mandatory work registrant**—a SNAP household member who is required to register for SNAP E&T services and is:

- classified as part of the SNAP E&T General Population (not exempt); or
- an ABAWD.

**Minimum-service counties**—counties in which:

- any SNAP recipients (mandatory or exempt) can volunteer to participate in SNAP E&T services, and whom Boards may serve based on available funds;
- outreach is not conducted; and
- SNAP recipients (mandatory or exempt) who voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T services must not be sanctioned for failure to cooperate with SNAP E&T requirements.

**Noncooperation**—A lack of response to outreach notices or a failure to participate in SNAP E&T activities in accordance with the employment plan.

**Outreach**—the process of informing mandatory work registrants of a scheduled appointment to begin SNAP E&T services.

**Participant**—a SNAP recipient participating in SNAP E&T.

**Sanction**—the denial of SNAP benefits for a mandatory work registrant who fails to respond to outreach or fails to cooperate with SNAP E&T requirements without good cause.

**SNAP E&T activities**—allowable Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training work activities, as specified in §813.31 of TWC’s SNAP E&T rules, which include the following:

- Job search
- Vocational training
- Nonvocational education
- Work experience
- Workfare (ABAWDs only)

**SNAP E&T General Population**—includes mandatory work registrants and exempt SNAP household members who are:

- at least 16 but less than 60 years of age; and
- not classified as ABAWDs.

**SNAP recipient**—an adult, or teen household member at least 16 years of age, in a family who receives SNAP benefits; includes exempt recipients and mandatory work registrants.

**Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)**—the state agency responsible for determining individuals' eligibility for SNAP benefits and referring them to the Workforce Solutions Offices for SNAP E&T services.

**Time-limited SNAP eligibility**—three months of SNAP eligibility in a 36-month period for ABAWDs who are not working at least 20 hours per week (paid or unpaid) or participating in employment and training activities, as specified in 7 U.S.C. §2015(o)(1)(A)–(B).

**Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)**—provides funding for training, job search allowances, and relocation allowances to participants certified by the U.S. Department of Labor, as appropriate. Workers engaged in making a product can be certified if foreign imports or a production shift to a country with which the U.S. has a free trade agreement contribute significantly to their layoff. Participants also may be eligible to receive weekly support payments called Trade Readjustment Allowances while in training.

**Volunteer**—a SNAP recipient who is not required to participate, but who voluntarily participates in SNAP E&T services, including:

- exempt recipients in full-service counties;
- exempt recipients and mandatory work registrants in minimum-service counties; and
- ABAWDs employed at least 20 hours per week in a full- or minimum-service county.

**Workfare**—A work-based activity that consists of placement of an ABAWD with a public or private nonprofit entity in an unpaid job assignment. To obtain the number of work hours per month, the ABAWD's monthly household SNAP allotment amount is divided by the number of ABAWDs in the SNAP household (when there are multiple ABAWDs in the household), which is then divided by the federal minimum wage.

## ***A-103: SNAP E&T Responsibilities***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

In Texas, the following five entities are responsible for SNAP E&T requirements:

- HHSC State Level
- TWC
- HHSC Local Level
- Boards
- Workforce Solutions Offices

SNAP E&T mandatory work registrants' and exempt recipients' responsibilities are listed in A-103.f of this guide.

### **A-103.a: HHSC State-Level Responsibilities**

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HHSC state-level staff:

- administers SNAP;
- issues HHSC rules and policies governing SNAP eligibility; and
- performs reporting and monitoring functions for state and federal purposes.

### **A-103.b: TWC State-Level Responsibilities**

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TWC:

- issues rules, policies, and guidelines for SNAP E&T;
- contracts with Boards to provide SNAP E&T services;
- provides technical assistance to Board staff and Workforce Solutions Office staff; and
- performs reporting and monitoring functions for state and federal purposes.

### **A-103.c: HHSC Local-Level Responsibilities**

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HHSC local-level staff:

- determines eligibility for SNAP benefits statewide;
- determines work registration or exemption status for SNAP E&T services;
- refers SNAP recipients to Workforce Solutions Offices for SNAP E&T services;

- provides the household SNAP allotment amount to Workforce Solutions Office staff for ABAWDs entering a workfare activity;
- acts on requests from Workforce Solutions Office staff to reconsider the work registration status;
- acts on the Workforce Solutions Office's report of noncooperation with service requirements; and
- refers SNAP recipients who wish to resume participation following noncooperation to the Workforce Solutions Office for SNAP E&T services.

#### **A-103.d: Board Responsibilities**

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Boards ensure that:

- outreach is conducted for all ABAWDs in full-service counties within 10 days of appearance in the SNAP E&T outreach pool;
- outreach is conducted in full-service counties for the SNAP E&T General Population, as funding permits;
- Workforce Solutions Offices provide SNAP E&T activities and support services to:
  - all ABAWDs in full-service counties;
  - ABAWDs in minimum-service counties, as funding permits; and
  - SNAP E&T General Population in full- or minimum-service counties, as funding permits;
- monitoring of service requirements and activities is ongoing and frequent;
- Workforce Solutions Offices determine good cause in accordance with §813.13 of TWC's SNAP E&T rules and A-300 of this guide;
- SNAP E&T activities are conducted in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act;
- placement in work-based services does not result in the displacement of currently employed workers or impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements; and
- memoranda of understanding are developed for workfare sites.

#### **A-103.e: Workforce Solutions Office Staff Responsibilities**

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Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- conducts employment planning meetings to provide SNAP recipients with an introduction to SNAP E&T services and activities;
- develops an employment plan;
- schedules appointments for and enrolls mandatory work registrants or exempt recipients who voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T activities;
- assists with job search and job readiness activities;

- determines good cause in accordance with §813.13 of TWC’s SNAP E&T rules and A-300 of this guide;
- determines good cause before or after a penalty is initiated in TWIST (but before a penalty has been imposed by HHSC);
- arranges child care services as needed for the SNAP E&T General Population;
- provides support services including reimbursement of transportation expenses, as needed;
- develops workfare work sites for ABAWDs;
- monitors participation in all SNAP E&T activities;
- informs HHSC of an ABAWD’s participation in SNAP E&T activities within two weeks of initial participation;
- informs HHSC of employment, need for reconsideration of work registration status, and noncooperation with service requirements;
- determines good cause for nonparticipation; and
- enters all actions into TWIST (e.g., all appropriate documentation of services).

#### **A-103.f: SNAP E&T Mandatory Work Registrants’ and Exempt Recipients’ Responsibilities**

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Mandatory work registrants and exempt recipients who voluntarily participate:

- report to Workforce Solutions Offices to begin SNAP E&T activities;
- report to employers when referred;
- report to Workforce Solutions Office staff for subsequent meetings concerning SNAP E&T activities;
- complete and return to the Workforce Solutions Office all forms and reports concerning SNAP E&T activities;
- participate in SNAP E&T activities for 30 hours per week; and
- accept bona fide offers of suitable employment.

#### **A-104: Appeals of SNAP E&T Activities and Support Services Decisions**

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Workforce Solutions Office staff providing SNAP E&T services must inform SNAP recipients who will be participating in SNAP E&T services of their rights to appeal a decision related to SNAP E&T activities and support services. Boards must establish policies to inform individuals of their right to file an appeal if a

determination adversely affects the type and level of services provided by the Board or its designee.<sup>1</sup> This can be accomplished by:

- verbally informing SNAP recipients who will be participating in SNAP E&T activities of their appeal rights during employment planning meetings;
- distributing materials, including leaflets and brochures, during employment planning meetings, that inform SNAP recipients who will be participating in SNAP E&T activities of their rights to appeal at the Workforce Solutions Office; and
- posting signs regarding the right to appeal at the Workforce Solutions Office.

However, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff provides SNAP recipients who will be participating in SNAP E&T activities with the Workforce Solutions Office's address, name of a contact person, and a specific time period for filing an appeal.

SNAP recipients who will be participating in SNAP E&T activities also can appeal a decision under the hearings process in TWC's Integrated Complaints, Hearings, and Appeals rules at 40 TAC, Chapter 823 (<http://www.twc.state.tx.us/twcinfo/rules/ch823.pdf>).

## ***A-105: Discrimination Complaints***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

SNAP recipients alleging discrimination on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, or physical or mental disability have a right to file a written complaint of alleged discriminatory acts within 180 calendar days from the date of the alleged discriminatory act. Recipients must submit complaints to the following address:

Texas Workforce Commission  
Equal Opportunity Department  
101 East 15th Street, Room 242-T  
Austin, Texas 78778-0001

Boards must ensure that Board staff or Workforce Solutions Office staff advises SNAP recipients who express an interest in filing a discrimination complaint of their rights to file a complaint and of the complaint procedures.

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<sup>1</sup> As required by TWC rule §802.1(f) and as detailed in WD Letter 10-07, Board members must take such actions in an open meeting.

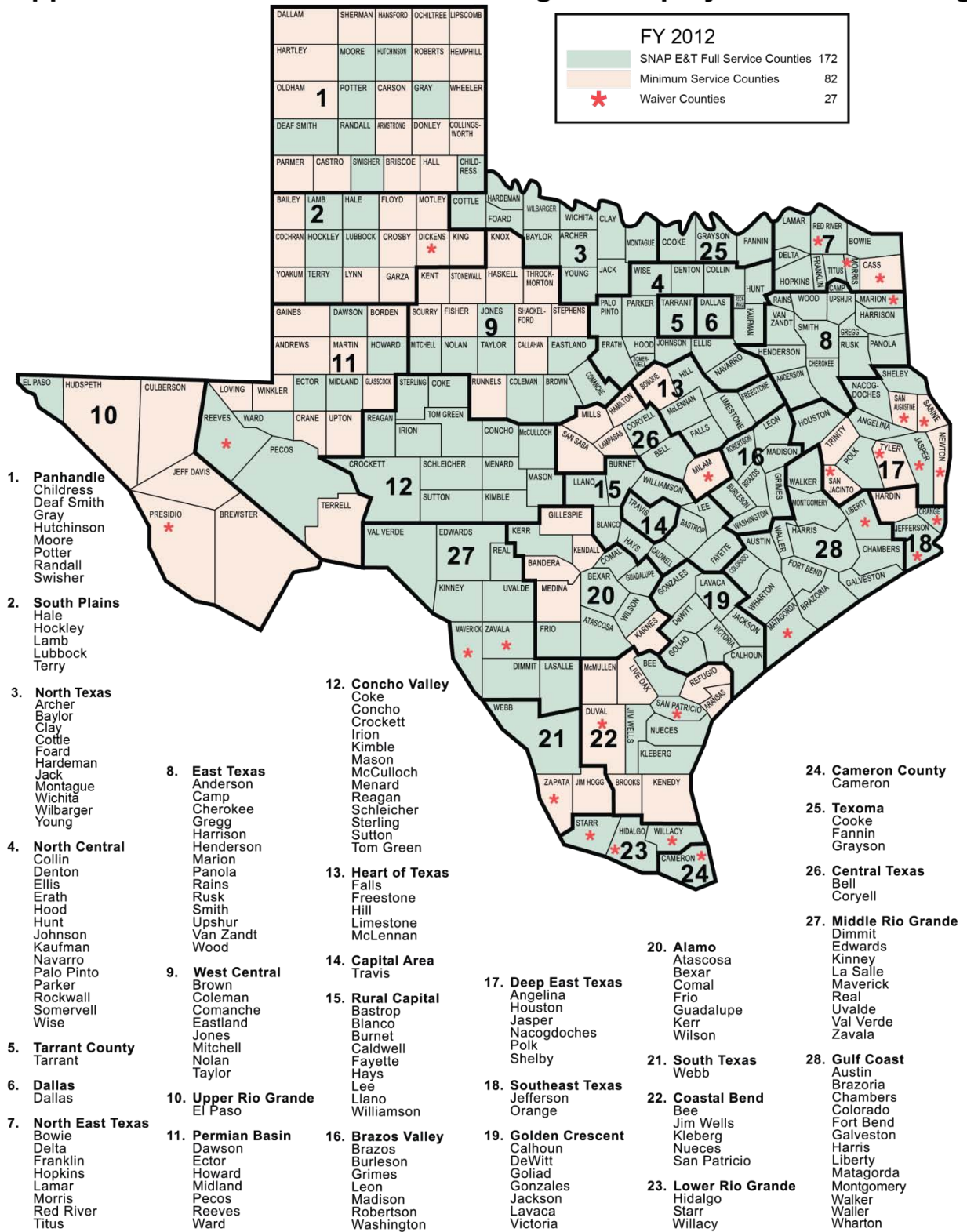
## ***A-106: Geographic Coverage***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

For Fiscal Year 2012 (FY'12), there are 172 SNAP E&T full-service counties in Texas, and 82 minimum-service counties. Boards wishing to expand into additional counties must submit a written request to TWC. The following map displays the SNAP E&T counties for FY'12.

# Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training



## **A-200: SNAP RECIPIENTS ELIGIBLE FOR SNAP E&T SERVICES**

### ***A-201: SNAP Recipients Eligible for SNAP E&T Services***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

The following categories of SNAP recipients are eligible for SNAP E&T services:

- Mandatory work registrants
- Exempt recipients

### ***A-202: Mandatory Work Registrant Criteria and Corresponding Work Codes***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

At the initial SNAP certification and at each recertification, HHSC staff informs SNAP household members ages 16 through 59 of the requirement to register for SNAP E&T services if the household member:

- is employed fewer than 30 hours a week (Work Code 2);
- is not employed (Work Code 3);
- has a job but is temporarily laid off (Work Code 4); or
- has served a penalty for noncooperation and is again eligible for SNAP E&T services (Work Code R).

SNAP recipients who meet one of the above criteria are mandatory work registrants.

*Note:* Work codes associated with each mandatory work registrant criterion above are displayed in HHSC's SAVERR. The work codes are also displayed in TWIST under the *SNAP E&T History* tab. HHSC's TIERS does not display work codes, but does display a work registration status description and work registration reason. For example, if HHSC determines that a SNAP recipient is a mandatory work registrant because he or she is not employed, the work registration status description shows "mandatory registrant," and the work registration reason shows "registered, not working."

Boards must be aware of the following:

- On March 8, 2010, TWC revised its SNAP E&T outreach procedures to place SNAP recipients assigned Work Code 5 (registration postponed, expedited services) in the TWIST outreach pool.
- HHSC assigns Work Code 5 during the emergency SNAP benefits interview if it cannot determine the SNAP recipient's work registration status or complete the

work registration process. During or at the end of the initial month, HHSC assigns the SNAP recipient a mandatory work code unless the recipient is otherwise exempt or SNAP benefits are denied.

- Although individuals with Work Code 5 are not registered, they are assigned secondary SIG C if they meet the ABAWD criteria during the emergency SNAP benefits interview. SIG C indicates the ABAWD is not meeting work requirements. This starts the ABAWD's benefits' clock at the first full month of the time-limited benefits, despite the postponed work registration.
- Work Code 5 has been added to TWIST Scheduler for the ABAWD and SNAP E&T General Population fund sources. In addition to outreaching ABAWDs with mandatory Work Codes 2, 3, 4, or R, Boards must ensure that ABAWDs with Work Code 5 are outreached within 10 days of their appearance in the TWIST outreach pool.

Boards may outreach and serve SNAP E&T General Population recipients assigned Work Code 5, as funding permits.

If an ABAWD or SNAP E&T General Population recipient assigned to Work Code 5 fails to respond to outreach or does not cooperate with activities set forth in the employment plan, Boards must ensure that a sanction request is initiated to HHSC within three days of noncooperation.

### **A-203: ABAWDs**

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Mandatory work registrants who are at least 18 but less than 50 years of age and without dependents are classified as ABAWDs.

An ABAWD residing in a full-service county can receive only three months of SNAP benefits in a 36-month period unless the ABAWD is:

- employed at least 20 hours per week; or
- successfully participating in SNAP E&T (or other allowable services such as WIA or TAA).\*

\*Successful participation means the SNAP recipient is participating in SNAP E&T only, or is coenrolled in SNAP E&T and WIA or TAA services, for a minimum weekly average of 30 hours. Failure to participate results in denial or reduction of SNAP benefits.

### **A-203.a: Form H1822 Work Requirement Verification**

The Work Requirement Verification form (Form H1822) is used only for notifying HHSC of an ABAWD's participation in SNAP E&T activities. Workforce Solutions Office staff is responsible for contacting HHSC to obtain SNAP allotment information for ABAWDs participating in workfare (see Note in B-108.e [Workfare]).

Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff sends Form H1822 to HHSC once an ABAWD has successfully participated in SNAP E&T activities for two weeks after initial enrollment in SNAP E&T services. Sending this form ensures the ABAWD will not be in jeopardy of losing his or her SNAP benefits.

There are two versions of Form H1822:

1. For ABAWDs residing in TIERS areas (contains HHSC's return address at the bottom).
2. For ABAWDs residing in SAVERR areas (Boards must return this version to the ABAWD's local HHSC office.)

For TIERS customers, upon recertification, HHSC staff mails Form H1822 to the ABAWD, who must take the form to the local Workforce Solutions Office to be completed by Workforce Solutions Office staff and returned by fax or mail to HHSC. (The HHSC address is provided at the bottom of the form.)

For SAVERR customers, upon recertification, the HHSC advisor provides Form H1822 to the ABAWD, who must take the form to the local Workforce Solutions Office to be completed by Workforce Solutions Office staff and returned to the local HHSC office.

A copy of each version of Form H1822 is included in Part C of this guide.

### **A-203.b: ABAWDs in Minimum-Service Counties**

ABAWDs residing in a minimum-service county are not required to participate in SNAP E&T services, but can volunteer as funding permits.

### **A-203.c: ABAWDs Who Meet Work Requirements through 20 Hours of Employment**

ABAWDs who are employed at least 20 hours per week upon certification for SNAP benefits meet SNAP E&T ABAWD work requirements. These

SNAP recipients are not placed in the TWIST SNAP E&T outreach pool, but can volunteer for SNAP E&T services in any county, as funding permits.

Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff does not initiate a sanction request if an ABAWD is meeting the work requirement through 20 hours of employment and volunteers for SNAP E&T services but later decides not to cooperate. However, close all SNAP E&T services, support services, and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* immediately. No further action is required.

### ***A-204: SNAP E&T General Population***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Mandatory work registrants are part of the SNAP E&T General Population if they are:

- at least 16 but less than 60 years of age; and
- not classified as ABAWDs.

SNAP recipients in the SNAP E&T General Population who are mandatory work registrants are required to participate in SNAP E&T services for a minimum weekly average of 30 hours if they reside in a full-service county (as funding permits). If the SNAP recipient is outreached and fails to cooperate with SNAP E&T services, he or she must be sanctioned.

#### ***A-204.a: Federal Exemptions***

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In addition to determining a SNAP recipient's work registration status, HHSC determines whether the SNAP recipient will be eligible for a federal exemption.

SNAP recipients eligible for a federal exemption are known as *exempt recipients*. These recipients are part of the SNAP E&T General Population but are not required to participate in SNAP E&T services. However, with the exceptions set forth in A-204.a(1), they can volunteer and participate in SNAP E&T services, as funding permits.

**A-204.a(1): Federal Exemption Criteria and Corresponding Work Codes**

SNAP recipients are exempt from SNAP E&T work registration if they meet one of the following federal exemptions:

- Age 15 or younger (Work Code A) (see Note)
- Age 16 or 17 and not the head of household (Work Code A)
- Age 16 or 17 and attending school or an employment and training program on at least a half-time basis (Work Code A) (see Note)
- A student age 18 or older who is enrolled at least half-time in school, a training program, or an institution of higher education (as defined by the institution) (Work Code S)
- A regular participant (residential or outpatient) in a drug addiction or alcoholic treatment and rehabilitation program (Work Code J)
- A parent or other adult SNAP household member responsible for the care of a child or children under age six (Work Code G) [More than one adult in a SNAP household can receive an exemption from participation in SNAP E&T if each of those adults is responsible for the care of a child under age six.]
- Physically or mentally unfit for employment (Work Code E)
- Three-to-nine months' pregnant (Work Code D)
- Employed or self-employed at least 30 hours per week, or receiving earnings equal to 30 hours per week multiplied by the federal minimum wage (Work Code P)

*Note:* SNAP recipients with Work Code P meet federal exemption criteria if the recipients:

- accept a job offer of at least 30 hours per week; and
- are scheduled to begin work immediately, or within 30 calendar days of the date the employment is reported.

Recipients are not required to participate further in SNAP E&T activities after they have accepted employment, but can voluntarily participate until the job begins. If the recipient chooses not to participate, Boards must ensure that a sanction request is not initiated. Additionally, Boards must ensure that a reconsideration request is sent to HHSC as soon as Workforce Solutions Office staff has been informed of the recipient's full-time employment. See B-108.f.

- Age 60 or older (Work Code F)
- A parent or other household member caring for a disabled person of any age living with the household (Work Code H)
- Living in a full- or mid-level Choices county and nonexempt under Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or living

in any county and has an open Choices case (Work Code Q) (see Note)

- Receiving unemployment insurance (UI) benefits or has applied but has not yet been notified of eligibility (Work Code N)

Boards must be aware that the following exempt recipients cannot receive SNAP E&T services:

- **SNAP recipients age 15 or younger, or ages 16 or 17 and attending high school (Work Code A)**—If a SNAP recipient age 15 or younger, ages 16 or 17 and not the head of household, or ages 16 or 17 and attending high school, requests SNAP E&T services, inform him or her that youth services are not available through SNAP E&T. Refer the SNAP recipient to another funding source that provides services to youth, such as WIA.
- **TANF recipients (Work Code Q)**—If a TANF recipient requests SNAP E&T services, inform the recipient that he or she needs to participate in Choices services. SNAP E&T funds must not be spent on TANF recipients.

***A-204.a(2): SNAP Exemption Policy for Adults Caring for Children Under Six Years of Age***

On February 22, 2008, HHSC issued Texas Works Bulletin 08-13, which includes guidance on a clarification made by FNS that more than one adult in a SNAP household can receive an exemption from participation in SNAP E&T if each of those adults is responsible for the care of a child under age six. Because HHSC's exemption policy could affect the provision of services to SNAP recipients participating in SNAP E&T, it is recommended that Boards review page six of HHSC's Texas Works Bulletin 08-13, located at [http://www.dads.state.tx.us/Handbooks/texasworks\\_bulletins/02-22-08.pdf](http://www.dads.state.tx.us/Handbooks/texasworks_bulletins/02-22-08.pdf).

In particular, Boards must be aware of the following examples, contained in Texas Works Bulletin 08-13, which describe how HHSC's Texas Works Advisors are to apply the exemption policy for SNAP households with two children under six years of age. Corresponding SNAP E&T scenarios and the procedures that fall under Board purview follow each HHSC example.

***HHSC Example 1***

The SNAP household consists of John and Jill Jones and their two children, Joe, age two, and Joy, age four. John can claim an exemption for caring for one child and Jill can claim an exemption for caring for the other child.

## SNAP E&T Scenario 1

At the time the new exemption policy went into effect, John was a mandatory work registrant participating in SNAP E&T services and Jill was exempt because she was caring for two children under age six. John has now informed Workforce Solutions Office staff that he is caring for one of the two children.

### Board Requirements under SNAP E&T Scenario 1

Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- completes Form H1817, SNAP E&T Information Transmittal, and requests that HHSC reconsider John's work registration status;
- records the reconsideration in TWIST under the *Good Cause* tab;
- enters into TWIST *Counselor Notes*:
  - the date Form H1817 was sent to HHSC; and
  - whether a copy is on file at the Workforce Solutions Office; and
- closes all services, support services, and the TWIST *SNAP E&T Program Detail*.

Because HHSC staff is responsible for determining the work registration and exemption status of all SNAP recipients, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff does not attempt to determine whether a claim to care for a child under age six is legitimate, but only follow the steps outlined above.

In scenario 1, if HHSC determines that John does not meet the new exemption criteria, John—who is still considered a mandatory work registrant—will appear in the TWIST SNAP E&T outreach pool 61 days from the date the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* is closed.

Additionally, Boards must be aware that under SNAP E&T scenario 1, John is not required to participate in any other SNAP E&T services once the reconsideration is requested. However, John can choose to volunteer to continue participation in SNAP E&T services, as funding permits.

If the reconsideration request is not processed in time to prevent an exempt SNAP recipient from reappearing in the SNAP E&T outreach pool as a mandatory work registrant, Boards may contact the local HHSC office by phone or e-mail to obtain the individual's work registration status before requiring that individual to resume SNAP E&T participation.

If the local HHSC office determines that there was a delay in processing the request, but indicates that the work code will be

changed from mandatory to exempt, Boards must ensure that the individual is not required to resume participation in SNAP E&T.

#### *HHSC Example 2*

The SNAP household consists of John and Jill Jones; their two children, Joe, age two, and Joy, age four; and Jill's sister Sally Smith, 19 years of age, who helps care for the children on a daily basis. Since all three adults are responsible for the care of the two children under age six, any two of them can claim the exemption, but not all three.

In Sally's case, the following HHSC actions could apply:

- HHSC determines that Sally is an ABAWD;
- Sally can receive an exemption from SNAP E&T participation because she is caring for at least one of two children under age six; and
- Sally could receive an exemption (exception) from the three-months-out-of-36-months ABAWD time limit because she is part of a SNAP household with a child under 18 years of age.

#### *SNAP E&T Scenario 2*

Sally Smith is an ABAWD who recently moved in with the Joneses, is part of their SNAP household, and helps care for their children on a daily basis. Sally was participating in SNAP E&T at the time she moved in with the Joneses, and informed Workforce Solutions Office staff of the move. Sally also informed Workforce Solutions Office staff that she is now responsible for the care of her sister's child, Joy, age four.

#### Board Requirements under SNAP E&T Scenario 2

Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- completes Form H1817, SNAP E&T Information Transmittal, and request that HHSC reconsider Sally's work registration status;
- records the reconsideration in TWIST under the *Good Cause* tab;
- enters into TWIST *Counselor Notes*:
  - the date Form H1817 was sent to HHSC; and
  - whether a copy is on file at the Workforce Solutions Office;and
- closes out all services, support services, and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail*.

Additionally, Boards must be aware that under SNAP E&T scenario 2, reconsideration is requested. However, Sally can choose to volunteer to continue participation in SNAP E&T services, as funding permits.

Boards must be aware that there are instances other than the two examples above in which a SNAP recipient can claim the new exemption. Boards must ensure that the procedures set forth in these examples are followed for all cases in which a customer claims the new exemption.

***A-204.a(3): Screening for Federal Exemptions at the Employment Planning Meeting***

Because Boards are required to outreach newly certified ABAWDs in full-service counties within 10 days of the ABAWDs appearing in the SNAP E&T outreach pool, it is not necessary to rescreen ABAWDs for federal exemptions during employment planning meetings. However, Boards have the flexibility to rescreen if they desire.

Because SNAP E&T General Population mandatory work registrants are not always outreached immediately after they have been certified to receive SNAP benefits, Boards may rescreen for federal exemptions during employment planning meetings.

Workforce Solutions Office staff can use TWC Form FL-139 to allow SNAP recipients to identify any federal exemptions that apply to their situation.

***A-204.a(4): Requests for Reconsideration of Work Registration Status at or Immediately after an Employment Planning Meeting***

When Workforce Solutions Office staff determines that a SNAP recipient referred for SNAP E&T services meets one of the federal exemptions, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- completes and sends HHSC Form H1817 to HHSC requesting that the SNAP recipient's work registration status be reconsidered;
- records the reconsideration request into TWIST under the *Good Cause* tab;
- enters into TWIST *Counselor Notes*:
  - the date Form H1817 was sent to HHSC; and
  - whether a copy is on file at the Workforce Solutions Office; and
- closes the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* into TWIST.

If the reconsideration is for reasons other than employment of 30 hours or more per week, Boards may determine whether an exempt recipient can voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T services (before closing the *SNAP E&T Program Detail*) based on:

- a discussion with the exempt recipient regarding whether he or she wishes to voluntarily participate; and
- available funding.

If the exempt recipient chooses to voluntarily participate, but later fails to cooperate without good cause, he or she must not be sanctioned for noncooperation. If the exempt recipient chooses to discontinue voluntary participation in SNAP E&T services, or if funds are not available, close out all SNAP E&T activities, support services, and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* in TWIST with the appropriate final completion reason.

***A-204.a(5): Federal Time-Limit Exceptions for ABAWDs***

ABAWDs are subject to a three-month out of 36-month time limit on SNAP benefits unless they meet one of the following federal time-limit exceptions:

- Pregnant (verification required)
- Parent or other caretaker of a child
- Member of a SNAP household with a child under age 18\*
- Exempt from SNAP E&T work requirements (based on a federal exemption)
- Physically or mentally unfit to work 20 hours per week (verification required)
- Lives in a waiver area

\*SNAP recipients ages 18 to 50 with no dependents, who are part of a SNAP household that contains a child under age 18, are exempt from the three-month out of 36-month time limit regardless of parental or caretaker status.

*Note:* When an ABAWD meets one of the exceptions listed above, the exception is stored in the HHSC Texas Works Advisor's electronic case file. The exception is not displayed in SAVERR or TIERS.

If an ABAWD informs Workforce Solutions Office staff that he or she meets one of the above federal time-limit exceptions, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff follows the procedures for reconsideration requests set forth in A-204.a(3).

ABAWDs who meet one of the time-limit exceptions previously listed are not subject to ABAWD work requirements, but can voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T services as funding permits.

### **A-204.a(6): ABAWD Waiver Counties**

FNS allows a waiver for ABAWDs who live in areas with unemployment over 10 percent or in areas determined to not have enough jobs. HHSC determines waiver counties, effective each year on October 1. A list of the waiver counties are in HHSC's *Texas Works Handbook*. Waiver counties are also displayed on the SNAP E&T map located at A-106.

In waiver counties, the three-month out of 36-month time limit does not apply to ABAWDs. However, ABAWDs who reside in full-service counties are still subject to all other SNAP E&T requirements and must participate in SNAP E&T even if the county is designated as a waiver county. Sanctions associated with noncooperation apply and appropriate action must be taken to initiate a sanction request if an ABAWD is outreached and subsequently fails to comply.

## **A-300: GOOD CAUSE**

### **A-301: Good Cause**

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Good cause can be granted to SNAP recipients who are unable to participate in SNAP E&T because of personal circumstances or a crisis situation. Good cause can be granted if:

- mandatory work registrants have a legitimate reason for failing to respond to the SNAP E&T outreach notice; or
- mandatory work registrants or exempt recipients have a legitimate reason for failing to comply with SNAP E&T participation requirements. (See A-302, Reasons for Good Cause.)

Mandatory work registrants can claim good cause before or after a penalty has been initiated in TWIST, as long as the penalty has not been imposed by HHSC (i.e., SNAP benefits have not been denied).

#### **A-301.a: Good Cause Actions before a Penalty Has Been Initiated**

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1. If—*during* participation—a mandatory work registrant informs Workforce Solutions Office staff that he or she needs to be temporarily excused from future SNAP E&T participation, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- enters into TWIST one of the good cause reasons that relates to the recipient's circumstance or situation (e.g., temporary illness, court appearance);
  - evaluates the recipient's circumstances monthly; and
  - determines when the recipient can resume participation in SNAP E&T.
2. If—*before* a penalty has been initiated—a SNAP recipient claims good cause after failing to respond to outreach or failing to participate in SNAP E&T, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff determines whether the mandatory work registrant:
- can immediately resume participation; or
  - needs more time to address the circumstances or situation.

*Note:* Boards must ensure that a penalty is initiated within three days of noncooperation, unless the recipient indicates before the three days expire that he or she has good cause.

3. If more time is needed, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:
- enters one of the good cause reasons in TWIST (e.g., illness, court appearance);
  - evaluates good cause monthly to determine whether it still exists; and
  - determines when the recipient can resume participation in SNAP E&T.

Boards may establish local policies and procedures that instruct Workforce Solutions Office staff to attempt to contact a mandatory work registrant to determine good cause (within the three-day time frame) prior to sending a penalty request to HHSC.<sup>2</sup>

### **A-301.b: Good Cause Actions after a Penalty Is Initiated**

1. If a recipient fails to cooperate with SNAP E&T requirements *after* Workforce Solutions Office staff initiates a penalty in TWIST, Boards must ensure that the penalty is electronically transmitted to HHSC. When HHSC receives the penalty, it:
- sends the SNAP recipient a letter informing the recipient that his or her SNAP benefits will be denied; and
  - allows a 13-day adverse action period in which the SNAP recipient can contact HHSC to claim good cause and avoid denial of benefits. (See following Note.)

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<sup>2</sup> As required by TWC rule §802.1(f) and as detailed in WD Letter 10-07, Board members must take such actions in an open meeting.

2. If the SNAP recipient contacts HHSC to indicate that he or she had good cause for not cooperating with SNAP E&T requirements, HHSC refers the recipient to Workforce Solutions Office staff to determine good cause using the *SNAP E&T Noncompliance Report* (Form H1816).
3. If Workforce Solutions Office staff determines that the recipient had good cause, and the 13-day adverse action period has not expired, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:
  - enters a *Penalty Reviewed Good Cause Granted* reason under the TWIST *Good Cause* tab. This good cause action is electronically transmitted to HHSC to alert HHSC that the recipient had good cause and to allow the recipient to continue receiving SNAP benefits;
  - includes a description of the good cause reason in TWIST *Counselor Notes* (e.g., temporary illness, court appearance); and
  - allows the recipient to resume participation in SNAP E&T.

*Note:* If it is determined that a recipient did not have good cause, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff documents the reason in TWIST *Counselor Notes*. No other action is needed.

4. If—*after* the 13-day adverse action period has expired—it is determined that an individual had good cause, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:
  - refers the individual back to HHSC to reapply for SNAP benefits or to inquire about how HHSC can reinstate his or her benefits; and
  - does not send any type of “penalty in error” notice to HHSC.

**Example:** Charlie Wonder missed his initial SNAP E&T appointment because his daughter was in the hospital. Charlie did not realize he missed the appointment until he received a notice of adverse action from HHSC stating that his SNAP benefits would be denied in 13 days. He contacted HHSC immediately and was told to contact the Workforce Solutions Office in order for good cause to be determined. Because Charlie contacted the Workforce Solutions Office before the HHSC 13-day adverse action period expired (i.e., before any action had been taken to deny his SNAP benefits), Workforce Solutions Office staff is required to determine whether Charlie had good cause.

### **A-301.c: Good Cause Actions for Exempt SNAP Recipients**

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When an exempt SNAP recipient indicates that he or she has a legitimate reason for failing to participate in SNAP E&T, good cause can be granted. The exempt SNAP recipient can resume participation in SNAP E&T activities once the situation is resolved. If the exempt recipient chooses not to continue participation in SNAP E&T activities, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff immediately closes out all services and support services.

Boards must ensure that good cause determination:

- is based on individual or family circumstances;
- is based on face-to-face or telephone contact;
- includes a temporary period when SNAP recipients are unable to attend scheduled appointments or participate in ongoing SNAP E&T activities;
- is made at the time Workforce Solutions Office staff learns of the change in circumstances; and
- is conditional upon efforts to address circumstances that limit SNAP recipients' ability to participate in SNAP E&T services.

### **A-302: Reasons for Good Cause**

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Good cause includes, but is not limited to:

- temporary illness or incapacitation;
- court appearance;
- caring for a physically or mentally disabled household member who requires the SNAP recipient's presence in the home;
- a demonstration that there is:
  - no available transportation and the distance prohibits walking; or
  - no available job within reasonable commuting distance, as defined by the Board;
- distance from the home of the mandatory work registrant, or exempt recipient who voluntarily participates in SNAP E&T services, to the Workforce Solutions Office or employment service provider requires commuting time of more than two hours per day (not including taking a child to and from a child care facility), or the distance prohibits walking and there is no available transportation;
- situations in which a farmworker is away from his or her permanent residence or home base, travels to work in an agricultural or related industry during part of the year, and is under a contract or similar agreement with an employer to begin work within 30 days of the date the SNAP recipient notified Workforce Solutions Office staff of his or her seasonal farmwork assignment;
- an inability to obtain needed child care, as defined by the Board and based on the following reasons:

- informal child care by a relative or under other arrangements is unavailable or unsuitable, and based on, where applicable, Board policy regarding child care. Informal child care can also be determined unsuitable by the parent;
- eligible formal child care providers are unavailable, as defined in TWC's Child Care Services rules at 40 TAC, Chapter 809 (<http://www.twc.state.tx.us/twcinfo/rules/ch809.pdf>);
- affordable formal child care arrangements within maximum rates established by the Board are unavailable; and
- formal or informal child care within a reasonable distance from home or the work site is unavailable;
- an absence of other support services necessary for participation;
- receipt of a job referral that results in an offer below the federal minimum wage, except when a lower wage is permissible under federal minimum wage law;
- an individual or family crisis or a family circumstance that precludes participation, including substance abuse, mental health, and disability-related issues, provided the mandatory work registrant, or exempt recipient who voluntarily participates in SNAP E&T services, engages in problem resolution through appropriate referrals for counseling and support services; or
  - a SNAP recipient is a victim of family violence.

### **A-303: Workforce Solutions Office Staff Responsibility**

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Boards must ensure that good cause:

- is reevaluated at least on a monthly basis;
- is extended if the circumstances giving rise to the good cause exception are not resolved after available resources to remedy the situation have been considered;
- does not exceed a total of 12 consecutive months per occurrence if the good cause is based on the existence of family violence;
- is used only for purposes of temporarily excusing SNAP recipients who have a legitimate reason for not participating in SNAP E&T activities; and
- is not used for administrative or case management-related reasons.

Because Workforce Solutions Office staff is required to reevaluate good cause monthly, the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* must be left open in TWIST, and new information entered (as needed) into the *TWIST Counselor Notes*.

Workforce Solutions Office staff can use *Service Code 91 – Determined Good Cause* when granting good cause to SNAP recipients not engaged in any other SNAP E&T activity.

*Note:* Boards must ensure that ABAWDs wishing to claim good cause are informed that, in order to continue receiving benefits (for the fourth and subsequent months), they must enter into a SNAP E&T activity before the three-month in 36-month time limit expires. Although good cause temporarily releases

ABAWDs from participation in SNAP E&T activities, benefits will not be extended beyond three months if ABAWDs do not resume participation within the three-month time frame.

For good cause actions in TWIST, see B-404.

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# SNAP E&T

## Part B – Operations

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### **B-100: SNAP E&T SERVICES**

#### ***B-101: Background***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) services are provided to mandatory work registrants—i.e., SNAP E&T General Population and Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs). The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) also allows Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) the flexibility, as funding permits, to provide SNAP E&T services to exempt SNAP recipients who voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T services.

#### ***B-102: Statewide Expansion of SNAP E&T Services***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

SNAP E&T services are available statewide in full- and minimum-service counties. The statewide expansion of SNAP E&T services allows Boards, as funding permits, to offer SNAP E&T services to SNAP recipients, in any county, who meet SNAP eligibility requirements.

##### **In full-service counties:**

- ABAWDs who are not working at least 20 hours per week are outreached within 10 days of appearing in The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST) outreach pool, and receive SNAP E&T services.
- The SNAP E&T General Population receives SNAP E&T services based on available funding.
- Mandatory work registrants must be sanctioned for failing to cooperate with SNAP E&T requirements.
- Exempt recipients who voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T services must not be sanctioned for failing to cooperate with SNAP E&T requirements.

##### **In minimum-service counties:**

- SNAP recipients (mandatory or exempt) can volunteer to participate in SNAP E&T services.

- Boards may provide services to SNAP recipients based on available funds.
- Outreach is not conducted.
- SNAP recipients (mandatory or exempt) who voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T services must not be sanctioned for failing to cooperate with SNAP E&T requirements.

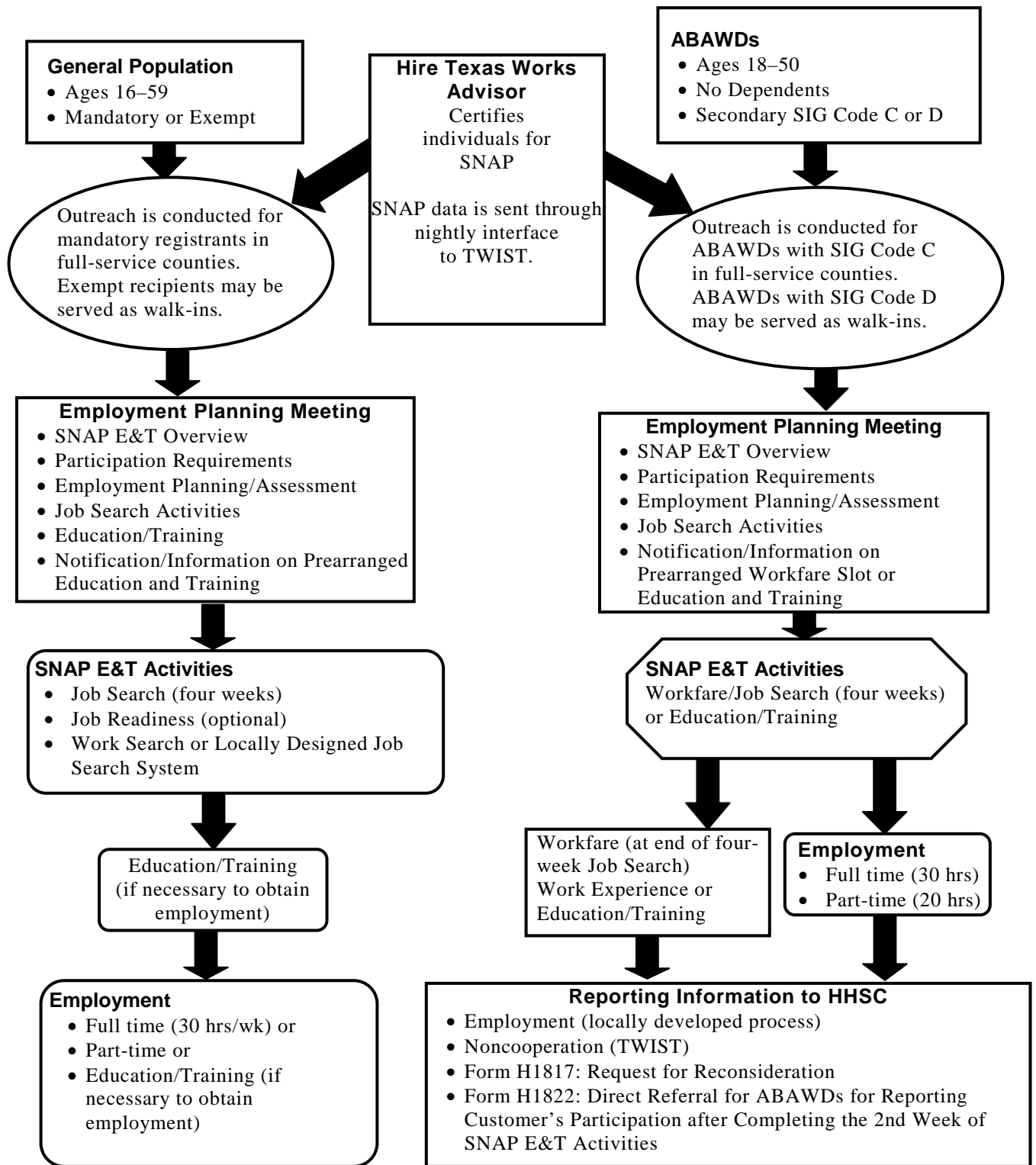
Through a nightly automated interface, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) sends information to TWIST on newly certified or recertified SNAP recipients. The nightly exchange of information allows:

- Boards in full-service counties to begin the SNAP E&T outreach process for mandatory work registrants; and
- Boards in both full- and minimum-service counties to begin the service delivery process for all SNAP recipients who will be participating in SNAP E&T.

The outreach function is not available for mandatory work registrants in a minimum-service county or for exempt SNAP recipients in any county. If these SNAP recipients volunteer for SNAP E&T services and funding is available, Boards may serve them as *walk-ins*.

The following flowchart is provided as a guide for the delivery of SNAP E&T services to mandatory and exempt SNAP recipients.

**B-102.a: SNAP E&T Flowchart**



*Delivery of services varies by local workforce development area.*

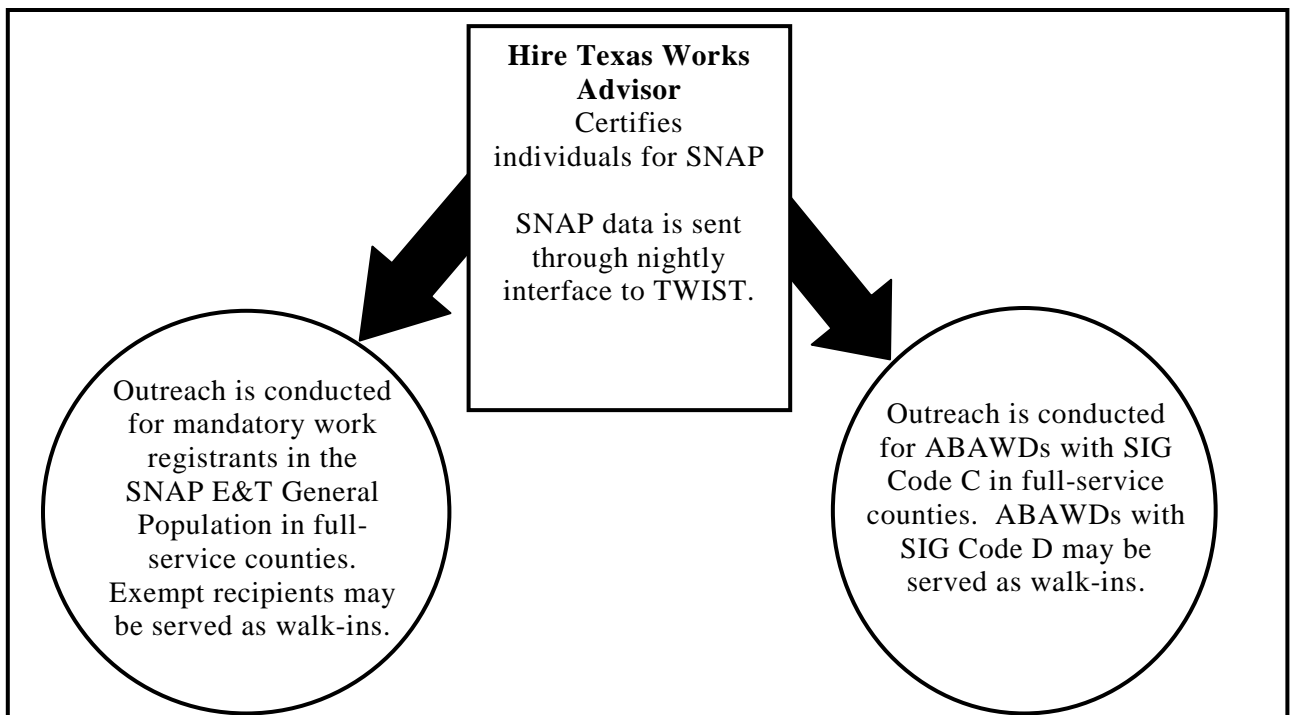
## ***B-103: TWIST SNAP E&T Outreach Pool***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

The SNAP E&T outreach pool identifies all mandatory work registrants (ABAWDs and SNAP E&T General Population) referred from HHSC, and allows Texas Workforce Solutions Office staff to generate appointment letters for SNAP E&T activities.

To ensure that ABAWDs who are not meeting the work requirements enroll in qualifying SNAP E&T activities before their three-month time limit expires, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff outreach all ABAWDs within 10 calendar days of the ABAWD appearing in the TWIST SNAP E&T outreach pool. This includes outreaching ABAWDs who appear on the *Customer Load Exceptions* tab in TWIST (see B-401.a).



## ***B-104: SNAP E&T Outreach Letter***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

The SNAP E&T outreach letter must contain:

- time, date, and place to which the mandatory work registrant must report in order to begin SNAP E&T activities;
- name and telephone number of a contact person at the Workforce Solutions Office; and
- consequences for noncooperation.

A sample outreach letter is provided in B-300.

To comply with the federal requirement to offer an ABAWD a position in a SNAP E&T activity, the letter also must state that the day the ABAWD reports to the Workforce Solutions Office is the ABAWD's first day of job search. This language is needed to ensure the ABAWD is scheduled for a SNAP E&T activity.

Workforce Solutions Office staff is no longer required to send a second letter or *final notice* to mandatory work registrants who do not respond to the initial outreach letter. Boards must process a penalty within three days if the mandatory work registrant does not respond to the outreach letter.

## ***B-105: Monthly SNAP Eligibility Verification***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

It is essential that individuals receiving regular SNAP E&T or job retention services are eligible SNAP recipients. To ensure that SNAP E&T funds are not used for individuals who are not receiving SNAP benefits, monthly SNAP eligibility verification is required for all individuals who:

- are, or who will be, enrolled in SNAP E&T services; or
- have requested SNAP E&T job retention services, support services, or both.

By viewing the TWIST *SNAP E&T History* tab, Workforce Solutions Office staff can verify that an individual is receiving SNAP benefits for the month in which SNAP E&T services are being provided. Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff documents the date of such verification in TWIST *Counselor Notes*.

*Note:* If sufficient verification cannot be obtained using TWIST, HHSC's automated systems must be used.

It is recommended that Boards develop local procedures on how to document continuing eligibility when HHSC's automated systems are used.

For example, Workforce Solutions Office staff can document in TWIST *Counselor Notes* the date that SNAP eligibility was verified by HHSC's Systems for Application, Verification, Eligibility, Referral and Reporting (SAVERR) or Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS), or obtain printouts from one of these automated systems.

If a Board chooses to verify eligibility by viewing HHSC's automated system information and documenting results in TWIST *Counselor Notes*, it is recommended that the Board periodically review the verification process to determine whether it is effective. If the process is not effective, it is recommended that Boards enhance controls by requiring Workforce Solutions Office staff to obtain and maintain printouts or other paper documents that verify continuing eligibility.

Additionally, if TWIST indicates that the individual is eligible, but HHSC's system indicates that the individual is not eligible, notify TWIST Help Desk staff as soon as possible.

## ***B-106: Employment Planning and Assessment***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

An introduction to SNAP E&T is generally provided to SNAP recipients during an initial employment planning meeting. This meeting is generally held weekly or as often as needed. Boards may choose how to structure the meeting, including the frequency and the information given.

However, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff schedules the meetings frequently enough to accommodate ABAWDs (who must be outreached within 10 days of appearing in the SNAP E&T outreach pool because their SNAP eligibility is time-limited).

### **B-106.a: Providing Job Retention Information during Employment Planning Meeting**

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If the Board determines that funding is available for job retention services, it is recommended that information on job retention services, support services, and the 90-day job retention period be shared with recipients at the employment planning meeting or before the recipient begins participation in regular SNAP E&T services.

Boards may incorporate information on career advancement, career paths, and how an employed recipient can obtain a better job into regular SNAP E&T service planning and assessment processes and discuss this information during participation in regular SNAP E&T services.

## **B-106.b: Employment Planning Meeting—Overview of SNAP E&T Service Requirements**

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During the employment planning meeting, the SNAP recipient is provided with an overview of SNAP E&T, which can include:

- an explanation of SNAP E&T activities and requirements for participating in SNAP E&T; and
- an explanation of the appeals process and the SNAP recipient's right to appeal, and materials and handouts with information on the right to appeal and where to file an appeal.

An assessment is completed during the meeting or shortly thereafter that includes:

- an explanation of the benefits of participating in job search;
- an explanation of job readiness activities such as interviewing skills, the Job Seeker Registration in WorkInTexas.com, job search techniques, job referrals, etc.;
- help completing necessary forms;
- discussion of requirements for all SNAP E&T activities;
- discussion of expectations and the SNAP recipient's responsibilities;
- information about the local labor market;
- information on dates, times, and locations of SNAP E&T activities; and
- development of an employment plan.

When developing the employment plan, Workforce Solutions Office staff completes the *Job Seeker Registration* information in WorkInTexas.com to identify occupational choices for which the SNAP recipient qualifies. It is recommended that Workforce Solutions Office staff completes the registration information before the SNAP recipient enters the job search activity. Workforce Solutions Office staff is responsible for helping the SNAP recipient understand how to use WorkInTexas.com and the circumstances under which the SNAP recipient should change or update his or her registration information.

When developing the employment plan, Workforce Solutions Office staff and the SNAP recipient also must decide on the SNAP E&T activities in which the SNAP recipient will participate. Activities assigned must help the SNAP recipient obtain employment as quickly as possible.

## **B-106.c: SNAP E&T General Population Mandatory Work Registrants**

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The following are examples of what Workforce Solutions Office staff and a SNAP E&T General Population mandatory work registrant may agree to as part of the employment plan.

- Enroll the SNAP E&T General Population mandatory work registrant in four consecutive weeks of job search. If the General Population mandatory work

registrant does not find a job by the end of the four-week period, Workforce Solutions Office staff can:

- enroll him or her in an education, training, or work experience activity; or
  - immediately close all SNAP E&T services, support services, and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* in TWIST. The SNAP E&T General Population mandatory work registrant has fulfilled the work requirement (based on the agreed-upon employment plan).
- Enroll the SNAP E&T General Population mandatory work registrant in the four-week job search activity. If, after the second week, a reassessment of the SNAP E&T General Population mandatory work registrant's circumstances indicates a need to change to a more suitable SNAP E&T activity (e.g., training, work experience), enroll him or her in that activity.

If a SNAP E&T General Population mandatory work registrant fails to cooperate in any activities set forth in the employment plan, initiate a sanction request to HHSC within three days of the noncooperation.

#### **B-106.d: ABAWDs Not Meeting Work Requirements**

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Boards must be aware of the following:

The following are examples of what Workforce Solutions Office staff and an ABAWD not meeting work requirements [Secondary SIG Code C] may agree to as part of the employment plan.

- Enroll the ABAWD in four weeks of job search (which is provided in conjunction with a workfare assignment). If the ABAWD does not find a job within the four-week period, the ABAWD must enter into a workfare activity unless a reassessment indicates a need to change to a more suitable SNAP E&T activity. (If the ABAWD fails to participate, initiate a sanction request.)
- Enroll the ABAWD in four weeks of job search (which is provided in conjunction with a workfare assignment). If after the second week a reassessment of the ABAWD's circumstances indicates a need to change to a more suitable SNAP E&T activity (e.g., training, work experience), enroll the ABAWD in that activity. (If the ABAWD fails to participate, initiate a sanction request.)

*Note:* An ABAWD not meeting work requirements can receive SNAP benefits for only three months in a 36-month period unless he or she is participating in a SNAP E&T activity. Therefore, if an ABAWD remains eligible for SNAP benefits and resides in a full-service county, the ABAWD must participate in a SNAP E&T activity (e.g., workfare,

work experience) each month. If the ABAWD fails to cooperate, initiate a sanction request to HHSC within three days of noncooperation.

### **B-106.e: ABAWDs Meeting Work Requirements (through 20 Hours of Employment) Who Voluntarily Participate in SNAP E&T**

ABAWDs who are employed at least 20 hours per week may voluntarily participate in education, training, or job search activities that will improve basic skills, increase employability, and help them get better jobs to progress up a career ladder.

*Note:* ABAWDs meeting the work requirements cannot be enrolled in workfare activities.

Boards have the flexibility to determine the length of time an ABAWD employed at least 20 hours per week participates in job search or other activities set forth in the employment plan. However, the weekly SNAP E&T participation hours and the 20 hours of employment must total 30 hours.

If an employed ABAWD later decides not to participate, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff does not initiate a sanction request but immediately closes out all services, support services, and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* in TWIST.

### **B-106.f: Exempt SNAP Recipients Who Voluntarily Participate in SNAP E&T**

The following are examples of what Workforce Solutions Office staff and the exempt SNAP recipient might agree to during the employment planning process.

- Enroll the exempt recipient in four consecutive weeks of job search. If the exempt recipient does not find a job by the end of the four-week period, discuss with the exempt recipient whether he or she wants to continue participation in other SNAP E&T services. If he or she decides not to continue, immediately close all SNAP E&T services, support services, and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* in TWIST.
- Enroll the exempt recipient in four consecutive weeks of job search. If the exempt recipient does not find a job by the end of the four-week period, and would like to continue in other SNAP E&T services, enroll him or her in an education, training, or work experience activity as appropriate.

Effective October 1, 2009, Boards may enroll exempt SNAP recipients in job retention services, i.e., job search, education, and training for up to 90 days if the recipients:

- are exempt for reasons other than full-time employment;
- voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T services on or after October 1, 2009; and
- then enter into full-time employment and request job retention services.

Boards must ensure Workforce Solutions Office staff works with SNAP recipients to determine the number of hours and weeks of participation in job search and other activities. See B-115.o for descriptions of job search, education, and training available as job retention services.

Boards must ensure that when an exempt recipient enters into full-time employment after voluntarily participating in regular SNAP E&T services, Form H1817 is sent to HHSC informing HHSC of the recipient's employment.

Boards may provide an exempt SNAP recipient with job retention services even if the exempt code is not changed to reflect full-time employment (Work Code P) at the time the request for job retention services is made.

### ***B-107: SNAP E&T Hourly Participation Requirements***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

All mandatory work registrants are required to participate 30 hours per week in SNAP E&T activities, except ABAWDs participating in workfare (see following Note). Only actual hours of participation in SNAP E&T activities can be entered into TWIST as participation.

An exempt recipient who voluntarily participates in SNAP E&T services is required to participate 30 hours per week unless the recipient is employed full time.

If the SNAP recipient (mandatory or exempt) is employed part time (i.e., fewer than 20 hours for ABAWDs not meeting work requirements; fewer than 30 hours for ABAWDs meeting work requirements and who voluntarily participate; or fewer than 30 hours for the SNAP E&T General Population), the SNAP recipient must be enrolled in another SNAP E&T activity that will increase the total number of hours per week to 30. See B-108.e.

Mandatory work registrants are required to participate in all assigned SNAP E&T activities each month (including workfare for ABAWDs). SNAP E&T activities, support services, or the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* in TWIST must not be closed, unless:

- the SNAP benefits are denied;

- the SNAP recipient claims an exemption from SNAP E&T participation and chooses not to voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T;
- the SNAP recipient is part of the SNAP E&T General Population and has fulfilled the work requirements based on an agreed-upon employment plan;
- the ABAWD becomes employed (paid or unpaid) at least 20 hours per week and chooses not to voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T; or
- the SNAP E&T General Population or ABAWD recipient enters full-time employment, and the 90-day job retention period has expired.

*Note:* The number of hours ABAWDs are required to participate each month in workfare is based on the SNAP allotment amount divided by the number of ABAWDs in the SNAP household (when there are multiple ABAWDs), divided by the federal minimum wage (see B-108.e).

### **120-Hour Monthly Limitation**

TWC SNAP E&T rule §813.14 establishes a maximum monthly participation requirement of 120 hours for the SNAP E&T General Population. The 120 hours include hours in all SNAP E&T activities, including any hours worked, regardless of compensation. SNAP E&T General Population mandatory work registrants who are scheduled to participate more than 120 hours per month must not be sanctioned for noncooperation after 120 hours have been reached. The 120-hour monthly cap does not apply to ABAWDs.

### ***B-108: SNAP E&T Activities for ABAWDs and the SNAP E&T General Population***

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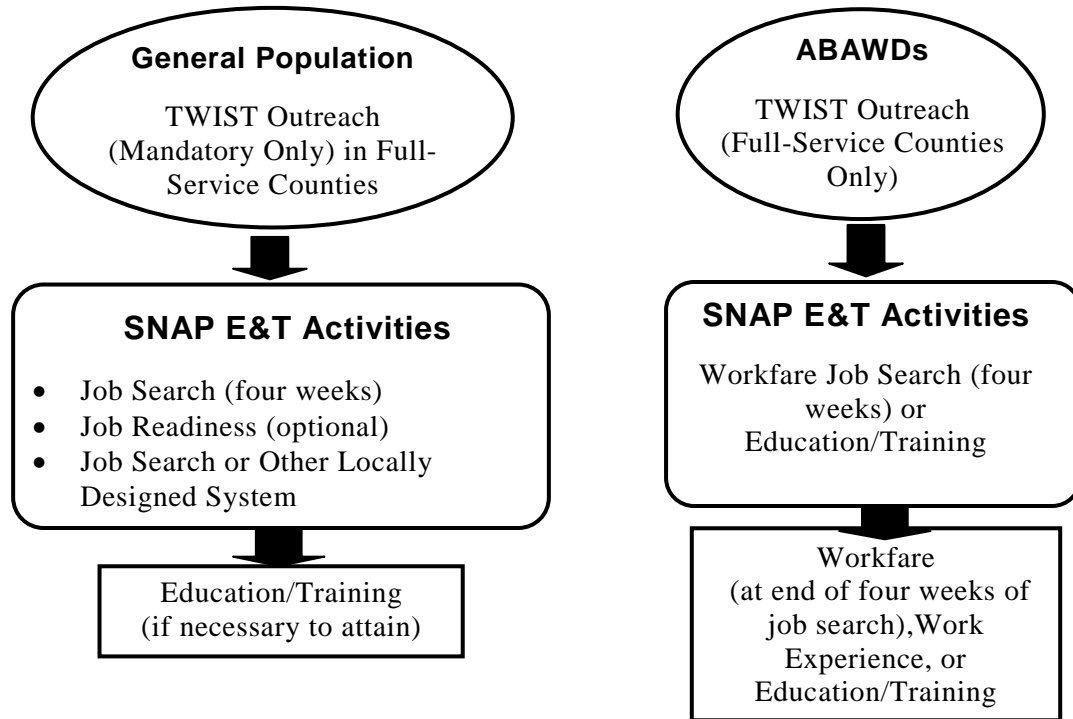
Boards must be aware of the following:

In Texas, ABAWDs and the SNAP E&T General Population can participate in any of the following SNAP E&T activities:

- Job search
- Vocational training
- Nonvocational education
- Work experience
- Workfare (ABAWDs only)
- Workforce Investment Act (WIA) work programs
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) work programs
- Unsubsidized employment (allowable only if enrolled in other SNAP E&T activities)\*

\* The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) does not recognize unsubsidized employment as an allowable category of service for SNAP E&T. Therefore, employed SNAP recipients (ABAWDs or SNAP E&T General Population)

also must participate in other allowable SNAP E&T activities in addition to unsubsidized employment. (See B-108.f and B-405 for additional information regarding unsubsidized employment.)



### **B-108.a: Job Search**

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Job search is a SNAP E&T activity that:

- requires SNAP recipients participating in SNAP E&T to search for employment;
- incorporates job readiness, job search training, assisted job search, and group job search; and
- includes:
  - job skills assessment;
  - job placement services;
  - job development services focused on active engagement of employers;
  - training in techniques for employability;
  - counseling;
  - job search skills training;
  - information on available jobs;
  - occupational exploration, including information on local emerging and demand occupations;
  - interviewing skills and practice interviews;
  - assistance with applications and resumes;
  - job fairs;

- life skills;
- guidance and motivation for development of positive work behaviors necessary for the labor market;
- completing job applications;
- setting employment goals for job inquiries and follow-up; and
- defining general workplace expectations and information on how to retain employment.

### **Number of Weeks a SNAP Recipient Participating in SNAP E&T Can Spend in a Job Search Activity**

- ABAWDs—four weeks (total) as part of the workfare activity
- SNAP E&T General Population (including exempt recipients who voluntarily participate)—four consecutive weeks and up to six weeks of total activity in a federal fiscal year.

ABAWDs participating in workfare must participate in four weeks of job search up front and in conjunction with a workfare assignment. ABAWDs can participate in job search only *once*, following the initial certification period, unless they did not complete the full four weeks. A workfare slot must be developed when offering ABAWDs job search. (See B-108.e for additional information on the workfare activity.)

If job search is offered as a part of other SNAP E&T activities, or as a part of WIA core services, the number of weeks in job search for both ABAWDs and the SNAP E&T General Population can extend beyond the four- or six-week limitation. However, the time spent in job search must not constitute more than half of the required time spent in SNAP E&T activities. Job search must be tracked as the actual activity being provided (i.e., job search provided as part of a training activity must be tracked as training, with job search constituting less than half of the required time).

Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff also provides employment preparation information during the job search period. Boards may choose how to structure and format job search services.

Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff providing job search services coordinates with Business Services Unit (BSU) staff.

Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff and BSU staff:

- coordinate and identify the hiring needs of employers; and
- assist SNAP recipients in their job search using referrals or job development contacts.

### ***B-108.a(1): Verification Procedures for SNAP Recipients Participating in Job Search***

While documentation, verification, and supervised job search are no longer required for SNAP E&T, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff providing job search services monitors participation in job search by:

- reviewing job search worksheets to ensure contacts have been made; and
- recording the participant's time spent making job search contacts or participating in other job search activities in TWIST.

### **B-108.b: Vocational Training**

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Vocational training is a SNAP E&T activity that improves the employability of SNAP recipients by providing training in a skill or trade. This allows SNAP recipients to move directly into employment.

Vocational training incorporates:

- occupational assessment and remedial and entry-level job skills training;
- short-term, prevocational, entrepreneurial training;
- customized training;
- institutional skills training;
- upgrade training; and
- vocational education.

Vocational training must be:

- related to the types of jobs available in the labor market;
- consistent with employment goals identified in the SNAP recipient's employment plan, when possible; and
- provided in either a classroom or work-based setting.

*Note:* Training that is appropriate to the SNAP recipient's job goal and leads to a license or certificate can last up to 24 calendar months. However, because the intent of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) and Texas' *work first* philosophy is to move SNAP recipients into the workforce as quickly as possible, it is recommended that Workforce Solutions Office staff limit the number of months a SNAP recipient is in training unless the provider states that a specific number of months is needed to complete the activity or obtain sufficient skills that will ultimately lead to employment.

*Note:* On-the-job training (OJT) is not an allowable SNAP E&T activity. However, SNAP recipients can participate in OJT through WIA services, and through the use of WIA funds. SNAP E&T funds must not be used for any type of OJT activity.

### **B-108.c: Nonvocational Education**

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Nonvocational education is a nonwork SNAP E&T activity that provides educational programs or activities to improve basic skills or otherwise improve employability. It incorporates the following:

- Adult Basic Education
- basic literacy (see Note 1)
- General Educational Development (GED) instruction
- English as a Second Language
- postsecondary education that does not result in a baccalaureate or advanced degree (see Note 2)

It is important that nonvocational education focuses on training that increases a SNAP recipient's employability, such as:

- enrollment in a secondary school leading to a high school diploma, or in a course of study leading to a GED credential;
- basic skills and literacy; or
- English proficiency.

*Note 1:* In addition to basic literacy, workforce development services must include financial literacy training. Boards providing financial literacy training can use the Money Smart curriculum available in English and Spanish through the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's Website at <http://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/moneysmart/>.

*Note 2:* Only educational activities (including postsecondary education) that directly enhance the employability of the SNAP recipient are allowable. A direct link between the educational activity and job readiness must be established before the SNAP recipient begins the activity.

Because the intent of PRWORA and Texas' work first philosophy is to move customers into the workforce as quickly as possible, it is recommended that Workforce Solutions Office staff limit the number of months a SNAP recipient is in an educational activity. If postsecondary educational activities are provided through SNAP E&T, Boards must ensure that SNAP recipients are enrolled in educational institutions that prepare them for employment in high-growth, high-demand occupations that do not require a baccalaureate or advanced degrees.

### **B-108.d: Work Experience**

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Work experience is authorized by 7 U.S.C. §2015(d)(4)(B)(iv) and WIA [20 CFR §663.200(b)]. The work experience activity is available to all SNAP recipients who need help acquiring basic work skills. Work experience activities must:

- occur in the workplace for a limited period of time;
- occur in either the private for-profit, nonprofit, or public sectors; and
- be paid or unpaid.

SNAP recipients participating in SNAP E&T can enroll in either paid or unpaid work experience. Before the SNAP recipient enters the work experience activity, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff determines whether the work experience activity is conducted in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) (see B-112).

*Note:* Boards must not use SNAP E&T funds to subsidize wages. This includes stipends or incentives paid to the SNAP recipient participating in work experience activities. If wages, stipends, or incentives are paid to the SNAP recipient, alternative sources of funding (e.g., WIA) must be used.

### **B-108.e: Workfare**

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Workfare is a SNAP E&T activity designed to improve the employability of ABAWDs through actual employment experience or training, or both. Nonexempt ABAWDs perform work in a public service capacity as a condition of eligibility to receive the SNAP allotment to which their household normally is entitled.

ABAWDs must participate in workfare each month they receive SNAP benefits, unless a reassessment indicates they need to change to a more appropriate SNAP E&T activity.

ABAWDs participate in an up-front four weeks of job search before entering workfare. The ABAWD is allowed to participate in job search only once following the initial certification period, and cannot participate in job search again unless the ABAWD did not complete the full four weeks. (See B-108.a for additional information regarding an ABAWD's length of time spent in job search).

An ABAWD who is not employed at the end of the four-week job search period is offered a workfare placement with a public or private nonprofit entity. Public entities are city, county, state, and federal agencies. Private nonprofit entities include, but are not limited to, community-based organizations. Jobsites can be created for ABAWDs at Workforce Solutions Offices regardless of the profit or

nonprofit status of the Workforce Solutions Office operator, because the site is under the jurisdiction of the Board.

Workforce Solutions Office staff assigns ABAWDs to a workfare jobsite. The workfare appointment can be given to the ABAWD:

- at the initial job search activity; or
- during the four weeks of job search.

The number of hours ABAWDs must work each month equals their household SNAP allotment amount divided by the number of ABAWDs in the SNAP household (when there are multiple ABAWDs in the household), which is then divided by the federal minimum wage.

**Scenario for calculating workfare hours:**

**An ABAWD resides in a one-person household with no income. HHSC determines that the household's allotment amount is \$200.**

**Divide \$200 by \$7.25 = 27.58 (fractions of hours of obligation are rounded down). The ABAWD is assigned to workfare for 27 hours per month.**

**\*The federal minimum wage increased to \$7.25 per hour on July 24, 2009. The appropriate minimum wage rate must be used when determining the number of hours of workfare participation.**

*Note:* Until the HHSC automated system is programmed to send the SNAP allotment information (for a one-person household member or when there are multiple ABAWDs in a household) through the TWIST interface, the number of ABAWDs and the amount of the household SNAP allotment\* must be obtained by contacting HHSC:

- in writing; or
- by telephone (document the name and date of contact).

\*Do not attempt to determine the SNAP allotment amount without contacting HHSC.

Workforce Solutions Office staff can schedule participation in workfare anytime during the month. The ABAWD can complete the hours in a week or be scheduled each week in a month. Boards must ensure that the hours are based on employer needs, administrative efficiency, and the needs of ABAWDs.

Fractions of hours of obligation must be rounded down, and the household's hours of obligation for any month must not be carried over into another month.

## **Nonfinancial Agreements (Workfare)**

Boards—or Workforce Solutions Offices if directed by the Boards—must establish contractual agreements with the local workfare employing entity before they assign ABAWDs to workfare slots.

An updated TWC nonfinancial agreement template is included in Part C of this guide. Boards may use this template or may develop their own agreements.

Boards that elect to use an agreement other than the TWC template must include similar information to ensure that the agreement addresses certain legal requirements with the employer. Those requirements are specified in 7 CFR §273.7(m)(3).

## **Other Requirements for ABAWDs Participating in Workfare**

Under 7 CFR §273.7(m)(6)(i)(E) the operating agency must ensure that all persons employed in workfare jobs receive job-related benefits at the same levels and to the same extent as similar non-workfare employees. These are benefits related to the actual work being performed, such as workers' compensation, and not to the employment by a particular agency, such as health benefits. Of those benefits required to be offered, any elective benefits that require a cash contribution by the ABAWD will be optional at the discretion of the ABAWD.

The operating agency must ensure that ABAWDs participating in workfare have the same working conditions as non-workfare employees similarly employed. The Service Contract Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-286), relating to health and safety conditions, applies to the workfare activity. Operating agencies must not provide work to ABAWDs that has the effect of replacing or preventing the employment of an individual not participating in workfare.

**B-108.e(1): Sample Workfare Assignment Letter**

Individual's Full Name  
Address  
City, Texas Zip

Dear [Individual's Name]:

If you have not found employment after completing four weeks of job search, you will be required to enter a workfare activity. Workfare places you in public-service–related employment, so you can continue receiving your SNAP benefits.

A workfare assignment is scheduled for you on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

You must report to:

Street Address  
City, State Zip  
Telephone number

When you arrive, ask for \_\_\_\_\_. If you fail to report to \_\_\_\_\_, your SNAP benefits will be denied.

**B-108.f: Unsubsidized Employment**

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Unsubsidized employment is full- or part-time employment with wages paid in full by an employer.

*Full-time Employment*

Full-time employment is:

- employment of 30 hours per week or more, for which the individual receives wages or compensation from an employer or from self-employment; or
- weekly wages from an employer or from self-employment that are at least equal to 30 hours per week multiplied by the federal minimum wage.

If —*during* participation in SNAP E&T— a SNAP recipient enters full-time employment, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- sends Form H1817 to HHSC to reconsider the recipient's work registration status;
- records the reconsideration in TWIST (see B-401.c);
- closes all SNAP E&T activities, unless the recipient requests to continue participating; and

- leaves the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* open for 90 days to enter any job retention services that may be requested (see B-115).

If—*prior to* receiving SNAP E&T services—the SNAP recipient enters full-time employment, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- sends Form H1817 to HHSC to reconsider the recipient’s work registration status;
- records the reconsideration in TWIST;
- closes all SNAP E&T activities, and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail*; and
- does not provide job retention services (see B-115.d).

#### *Federal Exemption for Recipients Who Become Employed Full Time*

A SNAP recipient is considered to be meeting the federal exemption (Work Code P)—and as such is exempt from SNAP E&T participation—if the recipient:

- accepts a job offer of at least 30 hours per week; and
- is scheduled to begin work immediately, or within 30 calendar days of reporting the employment.

If the SNAP recipient’s job is not scheduled to begin immediately, but will begin within the next 30 days, the recipient may voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T services until the job begins. Boards must be aware that a penalty cannot be initiated if the recipient does not voluntarily continue participation in SNAP E&T.

#### *Part-time Employment*

Part-time employment is employment of fewer than 30 hours per week, for which the individual receives wages or compensation from an employer or from self-employment. SNAP recipients employed part time must be enrolled in other SNAP E&T activities as follows:

- **ABAWDs (not meeting work requirements)**—ABAWDs who are employed fewer than 20 hours per week must also participate in a SNAP E&T activity that will increase the total number of hours of participation to 30 hours per week.
- **ABAWDs (meeting work requirements)**—ABAWDs who are employed at least 20 hours per week and who volunteer must also participate in a SNAP E&T activity that will increase the total number of hours of participation to 30 hours per week.

*Note:* ABAWDs meeting the work requirements cannot be enrolled in workfare activities. If an ABAWD decides not to participate, immediately close out all services and support services.

- **SNAP E&T General Population**—SNAP E&T General Population who are employed fewer than 30 hours per week must also participate in SNAP E&T

activities that will increase the total number of hours of participation to 30 hours per week.

ABAWDs employed fewer than 20 hours per week can request additional hours from the employer to increase work hours to 20 or more. If the employer increases the hours, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff notifies HHSC that the ABAWD is meeting the work requirement.

SNAP E&T General Population employed fewer than 30 hours per week can request additional hours from their employer to increase work hours to 30. If the employer increases the hours to 30, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff notifies HHSC of the increased hours and requests a reconsideration of the work registration status.

**HHSC considers SNAP recipients employed (i.e., unsubsidized) even if the employment is unpaid.**

***Example:* An ABAWD is employed by the River Valley Apartment Complex for 20 hours per week, but the ABAWD does not receive wages. Instead, the ABAWD receives free rent in exchange for her work. In this case, inform HHSC that the ABAWD has met the 20-hour work requirement. Because the ABAWD is meeting work requirements through 20 hours of employment, she is not required to continue participation in SNAP E&T, but can choose to volunteer (by participating in an additional 10 hours of SNAP E&T activities) if funding is available.**

**Mandatory work registrants are considered employed if they receive room and board instead of wages.**

**If the mandatory work registrant works in lieu of paying rent or utilities, determine the number of hours per week the work registrant is employed.**

**If the mandatory work registrant is an ABAWD who is employed at least 20 hours per week in exchange for room and board, refer him or her back to HHSC unless the ABAWD indicates that he or she wishes to continue SNAP E&T services and funding is available.**

See B-300 for general documentation and verification information.

## **B-108.g: Workforce Investment Act Work Activities**

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Apart from work experience under WIA, SNAP recipients participating in SNAP E&T can explore WIA activities that provide them with the skills necessary to meet the emerging demands of local businesses. SNAP recipients can enroll in WIA core, intensive, or training services.

The job search limitation (four weeks for ABAWDs and four to six weeks for SNAP E&T General Population) does not apply to WIA activities as long as:

- the job search activity does not comprise more than half of the required time spent in those activities; and
- the activity is tracked in TWIST as a WIA-funded service (see B-108.a).

## **B-108.h: Trade Adjustment Assistance Work Programs**

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TAA provides funding for training, job search, relocation assistance, and weekly income support to individuals whose jobs were trade affected. Most TAA customers will become exempt—because of application and receipt of UI benefits—before a referral for TAA services is made; however, they may volunteer and participate in SNAP E&T activities as funding permits.

## **B-109: Students**

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Boards must be aware of the following:

A student is classified by HHSC as an individual age 18–49 who is enrolled at least half-time (as defined by the institution) in:

- a college or university curriculum that offers degree programs, regardless of whether a high school diploma is required for admittance; or
- a business, technical, trade, or vocational school that normally requires a high school diploma or equivalent for admittance.

SNAP recipients enrolled in a college or university (as defined above) must meet special student eligibility requirements in order to remain eligible for SNAP benefits. HHSC determines whether a SNAP recipient meets the student eligibility requirements. If a SNAP recipient self-enrolls (self-initiates) in a college or university, as defined above, while participating in SNAP E&T services, refer the SNAP recipient back to HHSC as soon as possible using Form H1817 or a locally developed form, and immediately close out all SNAP E&T services, support services, and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* in TWIST.

If HHSC determines that the SNAP recipient meets the student eligibility criteria, the individual will be exempt (Work Code S) from participation in SNAP E&T, but may voluntarily participate.

If Workforce Solutions Office staff enrolls a SNAP recipient participating in SNAP E&T in a college, or business, trade, or technical school, do not refer the SNAP recipient back to HHSC.

*Note:* Only educational activities (including postsecondary education) that directly enhance the employability of the SNAP recipient are allowable. If postsecondary educational activities are provided through SNAP E&T, Boards must ensure that SNAP recipients are enrolled in educational institutions that prepare them for employment in current and emerging occupations and that do not require baccalaureate or advanced degrees.

### ***B-110: Changing SNAP E&T Activities***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

A SNAP recipient who is participating in a SNAP E&T activity can change to a different activity if Workforce Solutions Office staff determines during a reassessment that a more appropriate SNAP E&T activity is necessary. For example, an ABAWD who is participating in four weeks of job search in conjunction with a workfare assignment can change to an education or training activity if Workforce Solutions Office staff determines during a reassessment of the ABAWD's circumstances that education or training is more appropriate.

However, if the education and training ends, or if the ABAWD decides to return to workfare, the ABAWD cannot resume or reenter the job search activity unless he or she did not complete the full four weeks of job search as outlined in B-108.a.

### ***B-111: Participation in More than One SNAP E&T Activity (Stacking)***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

The SNAP E&T General Population can participate in more than one SNAP E&T activity as agreed on by Workforce Solutions Office staff and the SNAP E&T General Population participant and as set forth in the employment plan. The SNAP E&T General Population can combine education and training activities, or if the SNAP E&T General Population participant is employed part time (as defined in B-108.f), the individual can participate in unsubsidized employment and education or training activities, to total 30 hours per week.

ABAWDs can combine education and training activities, or unsubsidized employment and education or training activities, to total 30 hours per week. In Texas, ABAWDs cannot combine another SNAP E&T activity with the workfare activity.

## ***B-112: Fair Labor Standards Act***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff determines whether SNAP recipients participating in SNAP E&T activities (e.g., work experience) are *employees* entitled to the wage and hour protections of FLSA, 29 U.S.C, Chapter 201. For FLSA to apply, there must be an employment relationship between an employer and an employee. An *employee* is defined under 29 U.S.C. §203(e) as “any individual employed by an employer.” An *employer* is defined at 29 U.S.C. §203(d) to include “any person acting directly or indirectly in the interest of an employer in relation to an employee and includes a public agency, but does not include any labor organization...or anyone acting in the capacity of officer or agent of such labor organization.”

The term *employee* does not include an individual who volunteers to perform services for a public agency—i.e., a state, a political subdivision of a state, or an interstate governmental agency—if:

- the individual receives no compensation or is paid expenses, reasonable benefits, or a nominal fee to perform the services for which the individual volunteered; and
- the services are not the same type of services that the individual is employed to perform for such public agency.

Before enrolling a SNAP recipient in a SNAP E&T activity (e.g., work experience), Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff references the policy set forth in 29 U.S.C., Chapter 201, and explores whether an employee/employer relationship exists (certain situations can require legal counsel before a determination is made). If an employer/employee relationship exists, the SNAP E&T activity must be conducted in compliance with FLSA by dividing the SNAP benefit amount by the federal minimum wage to obtain the amount of time per week the SNAP recipient will be required to participate in the SNAP E&T activity (e.g., work experience).

One of the most common misconceptions associated with the employment relationship under FLSA relates to *trainees*. Whether trainees are employees of an employer under FLSA depends upon all of the circumstances surrounding their activities on the employer’s premises.

Trainees are not employees under FLSA if all of the following criteria apply to the SNAP E&T activity in which the individual will be participating:

- The training is similar to that given in a vocational school.
- The training is for the benefit of the trainees.
- Trainees do not displace currently employed workers.

- Employers derive no immediate advantage from the trainees' SNAP E&T activities.
- Trainees are not entitled to a job after completing training.
- Employers and trainees understand that the trainees are not paid.

If all of the above criteria apply, the SNAP E&T activity is considered *training* under FLSA and Workforce Solutions Office staff is not required to calculate the maximum hourly participation using minimum wage and overtime standards.

### ***B-113: Noncooperation with SNAP E&T Requirements***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Workforce Solutions Office staff is responsible for determining noncooperation with SNAP E&T requirements and for initiating a sanction request in TWIST.

When a mandatory work registrant fails to respond to outreach or fails to cooperate with SNAP E&T requirements, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff initiates a sanction request. *The request must be entered into TWIST within three calendar days of a mandatory work registrant failing to cooperate*, unless the SNAP recipient indicates that he or she was unable to participate based on an extenuating circumstance and Workforce Solutions Office staff grants good cause. Day one of the three-day period begins the day after the recipient noncooperates with SNAP E&T requirements.

Because federal regulations contain strict guidelines on the number of days the State of Texas has to process SNAP E&T noncooperations, TWC did not align the Choices “timely and reasonable attempt policy” with SNAP E&T.

Therefore, if a mandatory work registrant fails to respond to outreach or fails to cooperate with SNAP E&T requirements, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- does not pursue any type of timely and reasonable attempt actions; and
- initiates the sanction request no later than the third day after the recipient noncooperates.

Upon initiating a sanction, immediately close out all SNAP E&T services, support services, and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* in TWIST.

Sanction periods for mandatory work registrants who fail to cooperate with SNAP E&T requirements are:

- one month for the first noncooperation, or until the individual agrees to cooperate, whichever is longer;
- three months for the second noncooperation, or until the individual agrees to cooperate, whichever is longer; and
- six months for a third or subsequent noncooperation, or until the individual agrees to cooperate, whichever is longer.

Mandatory work registrants who are sanctioned for noncooperation must not receive SNAP E&T services or support services until the sanction period has ended and the individual has reapplied and begun receiving SNAP benefits again.

### ***B-114: Regaining SNAP Eligibility (ABAWDs Only)***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

ABAWDs who noncooperate with SNAP E&T requirements and have ceased receiving SNAP benefits can decide to regain their SNAP eligibility. ABAWDs can regain SNAP eligibility—even if their sanction period has ended—if, in a 30-day period, they:

- work 80 or more hours (monitored by HHSC);
- participate in and comply with the requirements of WIA or TAA for 80 or more hours;\*
- combine work and participation in a work program for a total of 80 hours; or
- become exempt.

\*ABAWDs ineligible for SNAP benefits cannot participate in SNAP E&T activities to regain eligibility.

It is recommended that Boards coordinate with HHSC staff and ask that HHSC inform the ABAWD that he or she can participate in Workforce Solutions Office services such as WIA or TAA to regain SNAP eligibility. Additionally, it is recommended that Workforce Solutions Office staff establish local procedures for confirming with or reporting to HHSC that the ABAWD successfully completed the 80 hours of participation.

Once the ABAWD has participated 80 hours and regains SNAP eligibility, he or she can be outreached again and resume participation in SNAP E&T.

### ***B-115: SNAP E&T 90-Day Job Retention Services and Support Services***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

The Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 allows states to use SNAP E&T funds to provide job retention services, support services, or both, for up to 90 days to SNAP recipients who participated in SNAP E&T services and entered full- or part-time employment.

Boards must be aware that individuals residing in full- or minimum-service counties in Texas may receive job retention services, support services, or both, if requested, for up to 90 days, if funding is available and the individual:

- is a SNAP recipient (eligibility must be verified);
- participated in regular SNAP E&T services within three full calendar months from the date of the last regular SNAP E&T service recorded in TWIST; and
- then entered full- or part-time employment during or immediately after participation in regular SNAP E&T services.

Boards must ensure that job retention services or support services are not provided if the SNAP recipient:

- has not participated in regular SNAP E&T services within three full calendar months from the date of the last regular SNAP E&T service recorded in TWIST; and
- entered full- or part-time employment prior to participation in SNAP E&T services.

If the SNAP recipient participated in regular SNAP E&T services, then ended participation (i.e., fulfilled work requirement, etc.), but later entered full- or part-time employment, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff determines whether regular SNAP E&T services were received within the last three calendar months (i.e., the last regular SNAP E&T service in TWIST took place no more than three months from the date the job retention services were requested). See B-115.h.

### **B-115.a: SNAP E&T Funding and Job Retention**

Because additional federal funds will not be allocated for job retention services or support services, Boards must work within their existing allocation. Before using SNAP E&T funds to provide job retention services or support services, Boards must give careful consideration when determining the amount of funds available for outreach for regular SNAP E&T services to ABAWDS and General Population.

See A-101.c for information on use of 100 percent federal funds and 50/50 federal and state funds for job retention. Boards must ensure that ABAWD-only funds are not used to provide any type of job retention services or support services.

### **B-115.b: Verification of SNAP Eligibility**

Boards must ensure that SNAP eligibility is verified:

- when job retention services, support services, or both are requested; and
- each month that the individual receives job retention services or support services.

### **B-115.c: Request for Job Retention Services during Participation in Regular SNAP E&T Services**

In many instances, job retention services, support services, or both will be requested:

- during participation in regular SNAP E&T services when the individual enters full- or part-time employment; or
- immediately after participation in regular SNAP E&T services at time of entry into full- or part-time employment.

If the individual enters full- or part-time employment while participating or immediately after participating in regular SNAP E&T services, and requests job retention services, support services, or both Boards may provide job retention services or support services if:

- funding is available; and
- Workforce Solutions Office staff has verified SNAP eligibility.

Review decisions 1 and 2 in the B-115.h Decision Table before providing job retention services or support services.

### **B-115.d: SNAP E&T General Population and ABAWD Recipients Who Enter Full-Time Employment and Request Job Retention Services**

Boards must ensure that when a SNAP E&T General Population or ABAWD recipient enters full-time employment during or after participation in regular SNAP E&T services, Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- notifies HHSC of the recipient's full-time employment; and
- requests that HHSC reconsider the recipient's work registrant status.

The recipient is not required to participate further in regular SNAP E&T services, but can participate in job retention activities even if the mandatory work code is not changed to exempt Work Code P at the time the request is made. Job retention services, support services, or both can be provided for the individual employed full time if:

- funding is available;
- SNAP eligibility is verified; and
- if a determination is made, based on the Decision Table in B-115.h, that job retention services can be provided.

See A-204.a(1) for the definition of Work Code P.

### **B-115.e: SNAP E&T General Population and ABAWD Recipients Who Enter Part-Time Employment and Request Job Retention Services**

Because SNAP E&T General Population and ABAWD recipients employed part time—i.e., less than 30 hours for SNAP E&T General Population and less than 20 hours for ABAWDs—are still required to work and participate in regular SNAP E&T services (for a combined total of 30 hours of weekly participation), Boards must ensure that these individuals receive only job retention support services that will assist them with retaining employment.

Boards must ensure that before providing any support services, Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- notifies HHSC of the recipient’s part-time employment; and
- requests that HHSC reconsider the recipient’s work registrant status by changing the work code to reflect the part-time employment entry.

Boards may provide the recipient with job retention support services even if the work code is not changed, if:

- funding is available;
- SNAP eligibility is verified; and
- a determination is made, based on the Decision Table in B-115.h, that job retention support services can be provided.

If a SNAP E&T General Population or ABAWD recipient who is employed part time requests job retention assistance other than support services (i.e., GED classes, training, etc.), Boards must ensure that the recipient is informed that as a mandatory SNAP E&T work registrant, participation in regular SNAP E&T services, combined with part-time employment for a total of 30 hours of weekly participation, is required.

### **B-115.f: Job Retention Support Services for SNAP Recipients Employed Full Time or Part Time**

Prior to October 1, 2009, SNAP recipients who entered full- or part-time employment were allowed to receive only support services to assist them with participation in regular SNAP E&T services and obtaining employment—not with retaining employment.

Boards must be aware that, effective October 1, 2009, SNAP recipients employed full time or part time can receive support services for:

- participation in regular SNAP E&T services;
- obtaining employment; and
- retaining employment.

See B-201 and B-202 for additional information on support services.

### **B-115.g: Request for Job Retention Services or Support Services after Regular SNAP E&T Services Have Ended**

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Situations can occur in which the request for job retention services or support services will be made after regular SNAP E&T services have ended, and the *TWIST SNAP E&T Program Detail* has been closed.

Following are some examples of situations in which regular SNAP E&T services have ended, the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* is closed, and the SNAP recipient then enters full- or part-time employment:

- The SNAP E&T General Population recipient fulfilled the work requirement and later became employed.
- An exempt recipient voluntarily participated, discontinued participation, and later became employed.
- While participating in regular SNAP E&T services, an ABAWD became employed at least 20 hours per week and then discontinued participation, but later requests job retention support services.

Boards must ensure that if the request for job retention services or support services is made after the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* has been closed for one of these situations, Workforce Solutions Office staff determines whether the request was made within three full calendar months of the last regular SNAP E&T service recorded in TWIST.

If the request for job retention services or support services was made within three full calendar months of the date of the last regular SNAP E&T service recorded in TWIST (and if SNAP eligibility is verified), job retention services, support services, or both can be provided.

Boards must ensure that job retention services or support services are not provided, if the request was made more than three full calendar months from the date of the last regular SNAP E&T service recorded in TWIST. See the B-115.h Decision Table.

Boards must be aware that because job retention services and support services can only be provided for up to 90 days after a SNAP recipient enters employment, the date of entry into employment must also be considered, even if the request for services is made within the three-month calendar period. See B-115.m and B-115.m(1).

**B-115.h: Job Retention Services and Support Services Decision Table**

The following Decision Table sets forth the time frames for determining whether job retention services and support services can be provided.

<b>Job Retention Services and Support Services Decision Table</b>			
<b><u>Decision 1</u></b>	Was the SNAP recipient <i>participating</i> in regular SNAP E&T services within the last three calendar months from the date of the last SNAP E&T services in TWIST?	If yes, go to Decision 2.	If no, job retention services or support services must not be provided.  (The SNAP recipient must be or have been participating in SNAP E&T services within the last three calendar months, and then have entered employment before job retention services can be provided.)
<b><u>Decision 2</u></b>	Did the SNAP recipient <i>enter full- or part-time employment</i> during or immediately after participation, and request job retention services or support services?	If yes, job retention services can be provided if funding is available, eligibility is verified, and the 90-day job retention period has not expired.	If no, no action is necessary. Continue providing regular SNAP E&T services as appropriate.
<b><u>Decision 3</u></b>	If the SNAP recipient participated in regular SNAP E&T services within the last three calendar months from the date of the last SNAP E&T services in TWIST, did the services end before the SNAP recipient entered employment?	If yes, go to Decision 4.	If no, provide job retention services as outlined in Decision 2, or continue providing regular SNAP E&T services if appropriate.
<b><u>Decision 4</u></b>	If regular SNAP E&T services ended, did the services end for one of the following reasons: 1. The SNAP E&T General Population recipient fulfilled the work requirement;	If yes, go to Decision 5.	If no, and services ended due to noncooperation or denial of SNAP benefits for any reason, do not provide job retention services or support services.

	<p>2. An ABAWD entered employment of at least 20 hours per week while participating in regular SNAP E&amp;T services and immediately discontinued participation; or</p> <p>3. An exempt recipient voluntarily participated, and then discontinued participation.</p>		
<b><u>Decision 5</u></b>	Were all regular SNAP E&T services and the <i>SNAP E&amp;T Program Detail</i> closed when regular SNAP E&T participation ended?	If yes, go to Decision 6.	If no, determine whether it has been more than three full calendar months since the last service.
<b><u>Decision 6</u></b>	Did the recipient enter full- or part-time employment and request job retention services or support services after the <i>SNAP E&amp;T Program Detail</i> was closed?	If yes, go to Decision 7.	If no, no action is necessary.
<b><u>Decision 7</u></b>	Was the request for job retention services made within three full calendar months of the last regular SNAP E&T service recorded in TWIST and the 90-day job retention period has not expired?	If yes, proceed with the provision of job retention services or support services, if funding is available and eligibility is verified.	If no, job retention services or support services must not be provided.

**B-115.i: Determining the Three-Month Period after Regular SNAP E&T Services Have Ended and Job Retention Services Are Requested**

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Following are examples of how to determine whether the three-month period has expired when a request is made for job retention services after regular SNAP E&T services have ended and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* in TWIST has been closed.

*Example 1:* John Doe is an ABAWD who was successfully participating in regular SNAP E&T services until he entered employment of 20

hours per week on October 3, 2010. John discontinued participation in regular SNAP E&T services, so all services ended and were closed on the same day. On December 3, 2010, John, who is still a SNAP recipient, requested transportation assistance to get to work. Since the request was made within the three full calendar months period, transportation can be provided.

October	November	December	January 2011
John stopped participating on October 3, 2010.		On December 3, 2010, John requested transportation assistance to get to work.	

*Example 2:* Mary Jane Weeworth is a SNAP E&T General Population recipient who participated in regular SNAP E&T services until October 30, 2010, when she fulfilled her work requirement. On February 3, 2011, Mary Jane entered full-time employment and requested to participate in training to advance her career. Mary Jane’s wages are not enough to deny her SNAP benefits; therefore, she is still a SNAP recipient with a Work Code P.

However, since three full calendar months have passed since Mary Jane’s last regular SNAP E&T service, Mary Jane cannot receive job retention services.

October	November	December	January	February
Mary Jane participated in regular SNAP E&T services until October 30, 2010.				Mary Jane entered full-time employment on February 3, 2011, and requested training.

*Example 3:* Joe Lee Watercraft is an exempt recipient who voluntarily participated in regular SNAP E&T services until November 1, 2010, when he discontinued participation. All services stopped and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* was closed November 1, 2010. On January 14, 2011, Joe Lee entered full-time employment and needed steel-toed boots for the new job. Joe Lee is still a SNAP recipient. Because Joe Lee is still a SNAP recipient who entered full-time employment within three months of his last regular SNAP E&T service, Workforce Solutions Office staff can provide Joe Lee with the steel-toed boots.

October	November	December	January	February
	Joe Lee participated in regular SNAP E&T services until October 1, 2010.		January 14, 2011, Joe Lee entered employment and requested job retention support services.	

Boards must be aware that all Data Integrity (DINT) rules apply to the provision of job retention services.

### **B-115.j: SNAP E&T General Population Recipients Who Fulfill the Work Requirement, and Then Enter Full- or Part-Time Employment and Request Job Retention Services**

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SNAP E&T General Population recipients who successfully participate (i.e., fulfill the work requirement) in regular SNAP E&T services, and later enter full-time employment and request job retention services, may participate in job retention services, support services, or both for up to 90 days, if a determination is made, based on the Decision Table in B-115.h, that job retention services, support services, or both can be provided.

If the recipient fulfills the work requirement and later enters part-time employment, the recipient may receive support services only. Boards must ensure that for recipients employed part time to receive job retention services other than support services (i.e., education, training, etc.) participation in both regular SNAP E&T services and employment for a combined total of 30 hours per week is required.

### **B-115.k: ABAWDs Who Enter Employment of at Least 20 Hours per Week and Request Job Retention Services**

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Boards must be aware that ABAWDs who participated in regular SNAP E&T services, entered employment of at least 20 hours per week, and request assistance with retaining a part-time job may receive job retention support services for up to 90 days if a determination is made, based on the Decision Table in B-115.h, that job retention support services can be provided.

An ABAWD may receive support services for up to 90 days even if he or she discontinues voluntary participation in regular SNAP E&T services.

Boards must ensure that if an ABAWD employed part time needs job retention services other than support services, the ABAWD is required to participate in both regular SNAP E&T services and employment for a combined total of 30 hours per week to receive the job retention services.

### **B-115.I: SNAP Recipients Exempt for Reasons other than Full-Time Employment Who Enter Full- or Part-Time Employment and Request Job Retention Services**

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Boards must be aware that SNAP recipients who were exempt for reasons other than full-time employment may receive job retention services, support services, or both if:

- the recipient voluntarily participated in regular SNAP E&T services, and then entered full-time employment; and
- a determination is made—based on the Decision Table in B-115.h—that job retention services, support services, or both can be provided.

If the exempt recipient entered part-time employment and requests job retention services, Boards must ensure that the exempt recipient receives only job retention support services because he or she is employed part time. If services other than support services are requested, Boards must ensure that exempt recipients participate in regular SNAP E&T services and work for a combined total of 30 hours per week before they receive job retention services other than support services.

## **B-115.m: 90-Day Job Retention Time Frame**

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Once a determination is made that job retention services or support services can be provided, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff informs the SNAP recipient that job retention services and support services are limited to 90 calendar days.

Day one of the 90-day job retention period begins the day after a SNAP recipient enters full- or part-time employment. A SNAP recipient can request to participate in more than one SNAP E&T job retention activity or receive multiple job retention support services during the 90-day time frame if:

- the activity is an allowable job retention service that will lead to a better job, assist with progressing up a career ladder, and can be completed within the 90-day period; and
- the support services are reasonable, necessary, directly related to retaining employment, and will end by the end of the 90-day period.

Boards must ensure that if job retention services, support services, or both are needed after the 90-day time frame has expired, SNAP E&T funds are not used. Alternative funding sources must be used.

See B-115.m(1) for examples of the 90-day job retention time frame.

**B-115.m(1): 90-Day Time Frame Examples for the Provision of Job Retention Services**

September	October	November	December
Example 1	<p>SNAP recipient is enrolled in regular SNAP E&amp;T services on October 1, 2010, enters full-time employment on October 2, 2010, and requests job retention support services on October 2, 2010.</p> <p>Job retention services, support services, or both can be provided until December 31, 2010, when the 90-day job retention period ends.</p>		
<p>Example 2</p> <p>SNAP recipient is enrolled in regular SNAP E&amp;T services on September 9, 2010.</p>	<p>SNAP recipient continues participation in regular SNAP E&amp;T services on October 1, 2010, and enters full-time employment on October 2, 2010.</p> <p>Job retention services or support services are not requested at this time. <i>The SNAP E&amp;T Program Detail</i> will remain open for 90 days.</p>	<p>Job Retention services and support services are requested on November 21, 2010.</p> <p>Since the individual entered employment on October 2, 2010, the individual can receive job retention services only until December 31, 2010, when the 90-day job retention period ends.</p>	
Example 3	<p>SNAP E&amp;T General Population recipient begins participation in regular SNAP E&amp;T services on October 1, 2010, and continues until October 2, 2010, when the work requirement is fulfilled. All services and the <i>SNAP E&amp;T Program Detail</i> are closed on October 2, 2010.</p>	<p>The SNAP recipient enters full-time employment on November 15, 2010, and requests job retention services and support services the same day.</p> <p>Job retention services and support services can be provided until February 13, 2011, when the 90-day job retention period expires.</p>	

Boards must be aware that all DINT rules apply when determining whether job retention services can be provided.

### **B-115.n: Assessment and Job Retention Service Planning**

Before job retention services are provided, Boards must ensure that:

- an assessment is conducted of the SNAP recipient’s skills, strengths, and weaknesses to determine which activities will best help the individual retain employment and move up a career path;
- the number of hours of participation and all activities assigned are mutually agreed upon by the SNAP recipient and Workforce Solutions Office staff; and
- the activities are completed by the end of the 90-day job retention period.

### **B-115.o: Allowable SNAP E&T Activities for Job Retention**

SNAP recipients employed full time may participate in allowable SNAP E&T job retention activities during the 90-day job retention period if:

- a determination is made, based on the Decision Table in B-115.h, that job retention services can be provided;
- the job retention services requested are among the allowable SNAP E&T activities listed in B-115.o(15) and are mutually agreed upon by the recipient and Workforce Solutions Office staff;
- the allowable activity will assist the recipient with retaining employment or career advancement; and
- the allowable activity can be completed before the 90-day period expires.

#### ***B-115.o(1): Allowable SNAP E&T Activities***

Allowable SNAP E&T activities that can be used for assisting SNAP recipients with retaining full-time employment are limited to the following.

- **Job Search**—SNAP recipients may volunteer to participate in activities that will increase their employability and assist them in obtaining better jobs to progress up a career path. Such activities include:
  - job skills assessments;
  - career planning and counseling;
  - job-finding clubs;
  - training in techniques for employability; and
  - career development.

- **Education**—SNAP recipients may volunteer to participate in career advancement classes or programs and activities to improve basic skills or employability that include a direct link between the education activity and the job readiness of the individual.
- **Training**—SNAP recipients may volunteer to participate in training services that will increase their skills and their career opportunities or assist them with a career change.

### **B-115.p: Allowable Support Services for Job Retention**

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Boards must be aware of the following:

All support services outlined in B-201 can be used to assist SNAP recipients employed full time or part time with retaining employment. See B-201 and B-202 for additional information on support services and job retention.

### **B-115.q: Eligibility Verification and Monitoring of Job Retention Activities**

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Boards must be aware of the following:

#### SNAP Recipients Employed Full Time

While verification and supervision of job retention activities are not required for SNAP recipients who are employed full time, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- verifies SNAP eligibility each month of the 90-day job retention period;
- contacts the SNAP recipient each month of the 90-day job retention period to determine whether the SNAP recipient is still employed; and
- determines that the SNAP recipient is actively participating in accordance with the mutually agreed upon job retention plan.

### **B-115.r: Recording the Provision of Job Retention Services and Support Services in TWIST**

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Boards must be aware of the following:

A new sub-fund code has been created to be used exclusively for recording the provision of job retention services and support services to SNAP recipients. See B-406.

### **B-115.s: Provision of Job Retention Services When a Recipient Enters New Employment during the 90-Day Job Retention Period**

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Boards must be aware of the following:

FNS clarified that states can provide job retention services and support services to a SNAP recipient who enters new employment during the initial 90-day job retention period. This means that a SNAP recipient who loses a job, and subsequently enters new employment, can receive assistance with retaining the new job, as long as the original 90-day job retention period has not expired.

FNS further clarified the following for the new job:

- The initial 90-day period cannot be extended.
- A new 90-day period cannot be allowed.

*Example:* Clyde Acorn had been participating in SNAP E&T for a few weeks. Mr. Acorn entered full-time employment at Bennie's seafood market on August 9, 2011. The first day of the 90-day job retention period began on August 10, 2011. Mr. Acorn was laid off from Bennie's on September 19, 2011, but entered new employment at Mickie Dee's restaurant on October 4, 2011.

Mr. Acorn requested assistance with purchasing a chef's uniform and a pair of shoes for the new job. Since the initial 90-day job retention period has not expired, Workforce Solutions Office staff can provide the uniform and shoes based on available funding. When the initial 90-day period ends, Mr. Acorn will not be eligible to receive additional job retention assistance. If additional job retention assistance is needed after the 90-day period expires, alternative funding must be used. SNAP E&T funds cannot be used.

### **B-115.t: Closing Job Retention Services and Support Services**

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Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff closes out all job retention services, support services, or both, if the:

- 90-day job retention period has expired;
- recipient who was employed part time noncooperated with regular SNAP E&T services\*;
- recipient's full or part-time employment is terminated; or
- SNAP recipient's benefits are denied.

\*Boards must ensure that job retention services or support services are not provided to individuals who enter full- or part-time employment and request job retention services while on sanction or penalty status.

## **B-200: SUPPORT SERVICES**

### ***B-201: Support Services***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards must provide support services to mandatory work registrants and exempt recipients who voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T activities if the support services are reasonable, necessary, and directly related to participation in SNAP E&T or to the recipient's employment.

Support services include payment or reimbursement for:

- transportation expenses;
- work-related expenses
- training or education-related expenses such as GED test payments, uniforms, personal safety items or other necessary equipment, and books or training materials;
- clothing suitable for job interviews or employment;
- licensing and bonding fees;
- vision needs (such as eyeglasses and eye exams);
- housing assistance; or
- child care (SNAP E&T General Population).

Boards may provide support services for SNAP recipients who are participating in the following SNAP E&T activities:

- Job search
- Vocational training
- Nonvocational education
- Work experience
- Workfare (ABAWDs only)

### ***B-202: Support Services and Job Retention***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards must be aware that SNAP recipients who enter full- or part-time employment can receive support services for up to 90 days to assist them with retaining employment, if:

- SNAP eligibility is verified; and
- a determination is made, based on the Decision Table in B-115.h, that job retention services, support services, or both can be provided.

While SNAP recipients employed full time or part time can receive support services multiple times during the 90-day period, Boards must ensure that all support services are closed by the end of the 90-day period.

Boards must be aware that SNAP recipients who are employed full time:

- can receive support services even if they are not participating in an allowable SNAP E&T job retention activity; and
- are not required to participate in job search, education, or training before job retention support services are provided.

Boards also must be aware that SNAP recipients employed part time can receive stand-alone job retention support services and are not required to participate in SNAP E&T allowable activities before the support services can be received, if the recipient:

- has fulfilled the work requirement and entered part-time employment;
- is an ABAWD who entered 20 hours of employment after participating in regular SNAP E&T services, and then discontinued; or
- was exempt, voluntarily participated, and then discontinued participation in SNAP E&T activities and entered part-time employment.

Boards must ensure that if none of these situations apply, the SNAP recipient employed part time is required to participate in regular SNAP E&T services successfully before job retention support services are provided.

### ***B-203: Transportation Assistance***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards must ensure that when alternative transportation resources are not available, transportation assistance is provided if it is reasonable, necessary, and directly related to SNAP E&T participation or the 90-day job retention period.

Transportation assistance includes:

- bus tokens;
- gas vouchers;
- prepaid gas cards;
- automobile repairs (applicable only to SNAP E&T mandatory work registrants);
- car pools;
- mileage reimbursement (personal vehicles only);
- taxicab services;
- contracts with private entities, such as transit providers who provide shuttle or van services;
- Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) projects;

- purchase of tires or automobile batteries (applicable only to SNAP E&T mandatory work registrants);
- driver license fees (includes renewals);
- vehicle inspection fees; and
- car insurance (applicable only to SNAP E&T mandatory work registrants).

FNS guidance provides that the costs associated with assisting an exempt recipient with certain support services are beyond the mission of SNAP E&T and are unnecessary because the recipient is not required to participate.

Thus, Boards must be aware that FNS prohibits the use of SNAP E&T funds to assist exempt recipients with the purchase of the following:

- tires;
- automobile batteries;
- automobile repairs; and
- car insurance.

If these support services are needed for an exempt recipient to voluntarily participate in SNAP E&T, Boards must ensure that alternative funding sources are used. If other funding is unavailable, Boards must ensure that the individual is informed that he or she can no longer participate in SNAP E&T.

Each Board must determine the methods and amounts used to provide transportation assistance.

It is recommended that Boards encourage Workforce Solutions Office staff using checks as the method of dispersing transportation funds to make agreements or arrangements with local check-cashing facilities to ensure that these facilities do not charge SNAP recipients a check-cashing fee.

**Recouping Transportation Expenses:** Boards must ensure that the amount of transportation expenditures is tracked for each SNAP recipient participating in SNAP E&T activities. When a SNAP recipient participating in SNAP E&T receives transportation assistance erroneously (e.g., the SNAP recipient was ineligible, or the amount exceeded what the Board determined the SNAP recipient was entitled to), Board staff must make an attempt to recoup those expenditures. The Board may send a locally developed letter to the SNAP recipient. Boards must ensure that a copy of the letter is retained in the SNAP recipient’s SNAP E&T record, and that Workforce Solutions Office staff attempts to recoup any erroneous disbursements regardless of the reason.

In addition, similar procedures must be followed in cases of suspected fraud, waste, theft, and program abuse. See additional procedures addressed in WD Letter 59-06, Change 1, issued February 2, 2007, and entitled “Requirements for Reporting, Fact-Finding, and Prosecution of Fraud, Waste, Theft, and Program

Abuse Cases, and Collection of Overpayments: *Update*,” and subsequent issuances, available at <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/boards/wdletters/wdletters.html>.

**Accepting Repayment:** If the SNAP recipient agrees to repay the amount issued in error, Boards may offer assistance with establishing a repayment plan and may decide on the method of repayment.

### ***B-204: Expenses Related to SNAP Recipients Accepting or Retaining Employment***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards must ensure that work-related expenses are provided only if the expenses are reasonable, necessary, and directly related to accepting or retaining employment and are not provided beyond the 90-day job retention period.

Work-related expenses include:

- uniforms;
- equipment;
- clothing;
- union dues;
- relocation expenses; and
- tools.

Boards must be aware that work-related expenses must be paid for based on methods and amounts established in the Board’s local policies and procedures.

### ***B-205: Housing Assistance***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards must be aware that housing assistance such as rent or utility payments can be provided if the assistance is:

- reasonable, necessary, and directly related to participation in SNAP E&T activities or retaining employment;
- paid for based on methods and amounts established in the Board’s local policies and procedures;
- provided for no more than two months in a 12 calendar month period for SNAP recipients participating in regular SNAP E&T activities; and
- provided for no more than two occurrences in a 90-day period after a SNAP recipient has entered full-time employment.

## ***B-206: Child Care***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards must ensure that child care services are provided to the SNAP E&T General Population (mandatory or exempt), if needed.

Workforce Solutions Office staff determines the need for child care and helps the SNAP recipient participating in SNAP E&T explore resources. The Board's child care contractor administers the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) allotment, which is used for needed child care. Boards must ensure that only CCDF funds—not SNAP E&T funds—are used to provide child care services to SNAP recipients. The contractor is responsible for a wide range of activities related to providing child care services to eligible SNAP recipients. Workforce Solutions Office staff determines the SNAP recipient's eligibility for child care to support participation in SNAP E&T.

Before the child care contractor is permitted to enroll the child of a SNAP recipient in care, Boards must ensure that appropriate Workforce Solutions Office staff authorizes child care for a SNAP recipient who is participating in SNAP E&T activities.

Boards must ensure that:

- Workforce Solutions Office staff completes Form 2510 (Notification of Child Care Eligibility) or a locally developed form and transmit it to the child care contractor. If the SNAP recipient needs child care for SNAP E&T activities of brief duration, Workforce Solutions Office staff can use Form 2510 both to authorize and to discontinue child care on a set date.
- Workforce Solutions Office staff verifies eligibility before authorizing SNAP E&T child care and writes the date(s) care is needed in the comments section of Form 2510.

Before authorizing child care, refer to the following table.

## Authorizing Child Care

IF...	THEN...
A parent is participating in SNAP E&T activities and needs child care.	Send Form 2510 or a locally developed form to the child care contractor, authorizing SNAP E&T child care and noting the effective date.
The parent's SNAP benefits are denied.	Send a new Form 2510 or locally developed form to notify the child care contractor to discontinue SNAP E&T child care. The contractor then determines the child's continued eligibility for subsidized child care.
The parent's employment ends.	Send a new Form 2510 or locally developed form to the child care contractor to discontinue SNAP E&T child care. The contractor then determines the child's continued eligibility for subsidized child care.
The child's eligibility changes.	Call and notify the child care contractor of the change.  Send the child care contractor an updated Form 2510 or locally developed form noting the change and the effective date.
Child care is no longer needed.	Call and notify the child care contractor of the change.  Send the child care contractor a completed Form 2510 or locally developed form to terminate services.  The contractor notifies the parent of the right to appeal the termination of child care.

## ***B-207: Training or Education-Related Expenses***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards may provide payments for training or education-related items, including but not limited to:

- uniforms;
- personal safety items; or
- other necessary equipment, including books or training manuals.

*Note:* These training or education expenses do not include the cost of meals away from home.

### ***B-207.a: General Educational Development Test Payments***

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The SNAP E&T General Population and ABAWDs can study for a GED credential while in an education or training component. If they identify themselves as ready to begin the test series for a GED credential, the GED testing facilitator can offer assistance in paying for testing. This will remove one more obstacle to the SNAP recipient's progress and enhance the benefits of participation in SNAP E&T.

## ***B-208: Discontinuing Support Services***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff discontinues support services while ABAWDs or the SNAP E&T General Population are in good cause status unless they need support services to address the barrier(s) resulting in the good cause determination. If SNAP recipients need support services to address the barrier responsible for good cause determination, Boards may provide the services. If SNAP recipients do not need support services during the good cause period, they can continue receiving support services when good cause is removed and they begin participating again.

Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff discontinues all support services if a mandatory work registrant fails to comply with SNAP E&T requirements, or if an exempt recipient decides not to participate in SNAP E&T services.

## ***B-209: Lack of Support Services***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards must ensure that mandatory work registrants are not sanctioned for failure to participate in SNAP E&T services if such failure is due to lack of receipt of support services.

## **B-300: CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

### ***B-301: Case Management Services***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Case management is the organization and coordination of a network of formal and informal activities, services, and support designed to assist SNAP recipients participating in SNAP E&T in becoming employed and self-supporting through participation in work programs and education/training activities.

Case management is an ongoing process that includes:

- analyzing and gathering information;
- identifying a SNAP recipient's strengths and weaknesses;
- assisting with the removal of barriers;
- developing and updating the employment plan;
- documenting all events impacting SNAP E&T services, face-to-face meetings, and participation hours; and
- identifying employment opportunities that can help the SNAP recipient's progress toward independence from public assistance.

Case management involves:

- outreach;
- initial and ongoing assessment (including planning and setting goals);
- coordination with HHSC or other entities;
- referrals; and
- documentation, including:
  - eligibility;
  - assessment;
  - monitoring participation;
  - closure; and
  - records retention.

## ***B-302: Outreach***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Outreach is the method of informing mandatory work registrants of a scheduled appointment. Outreach for ABAWDs must occur within 10 days from the date the ABAWD appears in the TWIST outreach pool. The process requires Workforce Solutions Office staff to schedule an appointment and send an appointment letter on the earliest possible date to prevent jeopardizing the ABAWD's SNAP benefits. Boards must ensure that there is no delay in scheduling an ABAWD's appointment. It is recommended that ABAWDs be scheduled for SNAP E&T activities within one month of the date of outreach. A delay in scheduling an appointment within this time frame could result in ABAWDs losing their SNAP benefits. The appointment letter must include the following:

- Time, date, location, and assigned SNAP E&T activity;
- Consequences for failure to respond and comply with SNAP E&T requirements; and
- A statement explaining that the date of the assigned SNAP E&T activity counts as the ABAWD's first day of job search.

### **B-302.a: Sample Outreach Letter**

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Mandatory Work Registrant's Full Name  
Mandatory Work Registrant's Address  
Mandatory Work Registrant's City, Texas Zip

Mandatory Work Registrant's Full Name:

As an individual receiving SNAP benefits in Texas, you have a responsibility to look for work. The \_\_\_\_\_ Workforce Solutions Office is ready to assist you with services that will help you get a job or lead you to a better job if you are currently employed part time. Through Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training, you will obtain information about:

- the local job market;
- preparing for work; and
- the benefits of participating in job search.

You are scheduled to attend an employment planning meeting. This meeting will be on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ at the \_\_\_\_\_ Workforce Solutions Office:

Address: Street Address, City, Texas Zip  
Telephone:

Comments: This meeting is the first day you will begin your job search activities.

This is the only notice you will receive, and it is very important for you to attend. *If you do not attend this meeting, your SNAP benefits will be denied.* Please contact \_\_\_\_\_ on or before the date scheduled if you are not able to attend.

### ***B-303: Initial and Ongoing Assessment***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Assessment is an in-depth evaluation of a SNAP recipient's employability skills. Assessment includes:

- gathering and analyzing information to identify the SNAP recipient's strengths and weaknesses; and
- determining the steps necessary to enable the SNAP recipient to achieve employment and self-sufficiency goals.

Discussing assessment information with the SNAP recipient provides an opportunity for Workforce Solutions Office staff to begin a cooperative working relationship, and enables Workforce Solutions Office staff to understand the factors affecting the SNAP recipient's employability.

As part of the assessment process, Workforce Solutions Office staff and the SNAP recipient develop an employment plan, based on the SNAP recipient's initial assessment.

The SNAP recipient and Workforce Solutions Office staff share responsibility to establish goals, assess service needs, develop a course of action, and document both the Workforce Solutions Office staff and the SNAP recipient's agreement to the plan. When Workforce Solutions Office staff and the SNAP recipient agree on a plan, the SNAP recipient is expected to complete all activities unless he or she is reassessed or is no longer a SNAP recipient (e.g., SNAP case is denied).

### ***B-304: Coordination with HHSC***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

TWC's SNAP E&T rules include requirements for coordination with HHSC to help Boards provide consistent and streamlined SNAP E&T services. Regularly scheduled coordination activities will also help Boards improve the transition of SNAP recipients between local HHSC offices and Workforce Solutions Offices.

### ***B-305: Referrals for Community-based Services***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

After the assessment process, Workforce Solutions Office staff can make referrals for community-based services, including:

- housing assistance;
- substance abuse counseling;
- family violence; and
- clothes closets.

Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff maintains information on each referral.

## ***B-306: Documentation***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Documentation of SNAP E&T activities and services serves the following four purposes:

1. Identifies customer services provided.
2. Explains case decisions.
3. Justifies expenditures.
4. Allows Workforce Solutions Office staff to record data in TWIST that is used to gather statistical information, is the basis of the monthly and yearly reports, and makes service information accessible to others in the service delivery network.

The primary method of documentation is TWIST *Counselor Notes*. It is recommended that Workforce Solutions Office staff use the SNAP recipient's individual case file or a paper record for maintaining copies of documents that require a signature. Documents verifying and supporting mandatory work registrant activities that TWIST cannot identify through data entry, such as job search worksheets, can also be included.

### ***B-306.a: Eligibility Verification***

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Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff verifies that the individual is eligible for SNAP benefits each month.

Documentation in TWIST *Counselor Notes* must indicate:

- whether the individual is eligible for SNAP benefits; and
- the date Workforce Solutions Office staff verified eligibility.

### ***B-306.b: Assessment***

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Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- documents initial assessment information and continuing assessments throughout the SNAP recipient's participation in SNAP E&T services; and
- maintains a signed copy of the employment plan in the SNAP recipient's file.

### **B-306.c: Monitoring Participation**

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Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- enters daily hours of participation into TWIST—all other entries in TWIST (including documentation in TWIST *Counselor Notes*) must support actual participation in allowable SNAP E&T services; and
- uses TWIST *Counselor Notes* to document any discrepancies between the employment plan and the entries in TWIST.

### **B-307: Closing SNAP E&T Services**

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff closes all SNAP E&T services and support services in the following situations:

1. A SNAP recipient who is part of the SNAP E&T General Population fulfills his or her requirement to participate based on the service plan.
2. An ABAWD becomes employed at least 20 hours per week and does not wish to continue participating in SNAP E&T services.
3. A SNAP E&T General Population or ABAWD's SNAP benefits are denied.
4. Workforce Solutions Office staff requests or initiates a penalty.
5. A SNAP E&T General Population or ABAWD meets federal exemption criteria and does not wish to continue participating in SNAP E&T as a volunteer. (A request for reconsideration is then sent to HHSC. See following Note.)
6. A SNAP recipient's 90-day job retention period has expired.

*Note:* A SNAP E&T General Population or ABAWD recipient is considered to be meeting the federal full-time employment exemption criteria if the recipient:

- accepts a job offer of at least 30 hours per week; and
- is scheduled to begin working immediately or within the next 30 days.

Boards must be aware that, if a SNAP recipient's job is not scheduled to begin immediately, but will begin within the next 30 days, the recipient can voluntarily continue participating in SNAP E&T services. However, the recipient is not required to voluntarily continue participation; therefore, Boards must ensure that a penalty is not initiated if the recipient does not voluntarily continue participation.

### **B-308: Records Retention**

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff maintains:

- SNAP E&T records for three years; and
- property records for property purchased with SNAP E&T funds for three years following the disposition of the property.

## **B-400: SNAP E&T IN THE WORKFORCE INFORMATION SYSTEM OF TEXAS**

### ***B-401: Outreach for SNAP E&T Services***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff outreaches all ABAWDs for SNAP E&T services within 10 days of an ABAWD's appearance in a Board's outreach pool. This includes outreach to ABAWDs who appear on the *SNAP E&T Customer Load Exceptions* list in TWIST.

In addition to outreaching ABAWDs with mandatory Work Codes 2, 3, 4, or R, Boards must ensure that ABAWDs with Work Code 5 are outreached within 10 days of their appearance in the TWIST outreach pool.

On March 8, 2010, Work Code 5 was added to the *Work Code* dropdown menu in TWIST Scheduler for the ABAWD and SNAP E&T General Population fund sources.

Boards must ensure that SNAP E&T General Population mandatory work registrants and SNAP E&T General Population recipients assigned Work Code 5 are outreached based on available funding.

#### **B-401.a: Customer Load Exceptions List, Customer Exceptions Detail Screen**

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SNAP recipients whose information from HHSC is not consistent with the information available in TWIST appear on the *SNAP E&T Customer Load Exceptions* list, *Customer Exceptions Detail*. Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- addresses exceptions and makes appropriate corrections so the customer can be placed into the outreach pool, where the customer is available to be outreached; and
- conducts outreach for each ABAWD on the list before the 10-day outreach period expires.

#### **B-401.b: Outreach Letter**

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Boards must create and send an outreach letter to notify mandatory work registrants of a scheduled SNAP E&T appointment. Refer to the *Guide to Using TWIST* located under the help menu in TWIST or at

[ftp://ftp01.twc.state.tx.us/priv/TWIST/TWIST\\_Administrator\\_Files/Users\\_Guide/](ftp://ftp01.twc.state.tx.us/priv/TWIST/TWIST_Administrator_Files/Users_Guide/) for specific information on creating an outreach letter.

Boards may use the standardized letter in TWIST or create a customized local version. Boards must ensure that the letter includes language stating that the date of the scheduled SNAP E&T appointment is the SNAP recipient's first day of job search.

Only one letter is required for SNAP E&T outreach. This letter serves as the first and final notice. Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff does not initiate a request for penalty until an outreach letter is sent and the SNAP recipient fails to respond.

### **B-401.c: Procedures for SNAP Recipients Who Claim Federal SNAP E&T Exemptions**

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Mandatory work registrants who claim federal SNAP E&T exemptions at the employment planning meeting or after they begin participation in SNAP E&T are referred back to HHSC using Form H1817 (or a locally developed form) so that HHSC can reconsider the SNAP recipient's work registration status. In addition to sending a request for reconsideration, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- records the reconsideration in TWIST under the *Good Cause* tab;
- enters in TWIST *Counselor Notes* the date Form H1817 was sent to HHSC and whether a copy of Form H1817 is on file at the Workforce Solutions Office; and
- closes the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* unless the individual enters full-time employment.

If the individual enters full-time employment, the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* must remain open for 90 days. If HHSC does not change the SNAP recipient's Work Code from mandatory to exempt within 61 days of entering the reconsideration into TWIST, the SNAP recipient will recycle into the SNAP E&T outreach pool.

### **B-401.d: Outreach Recycle Period for SNAP E&T General Population (Mandatory Work Registrants)**

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SNAP E&T General Population mandatory work registrants with *Final Completion Reason Code 70 – Services Provided* or *Code 77 – Entered Employment* will not recycle into the SNAP E&T outreach pool until one year after the final completion date if:

- the SNAP E&T General Population mandatory work registrant’s SNAP case is not denied; and
- the SNAP E&T General Population mandatory work registrant’s Work Code has not changed from mandatory to exempt.

#### **B-401.e: Outreach Recycle Period for Mandatory Work Registrants in Full-Service Counties Where a Penalty Exists**

When Workforce Solutions Office staff initiates a sanction request in TWIST and sends it to HHSC, HHSC imposes a sanction and denies the individual’s SNAP benefits unless he or she claims good cause. If HHSC does not impose a sanction within 61 days, the individual recycles into the SNAP E&T outreach pool unless:

- HHSC denies the individual’s SNAP benefits for a reason other than noncooperation with SNAP E&T; or
- the individual’s Work Code changes from mandatory to exempt.

#### **B-402: Serving Volunteers**

Boards must be aware of the following:

The outreach function is not available for the following SNAP recipients:

- Exempt SNAP recipients who reside in any county
- ABAWDs employed at least 20 hours per week (SIG Code D) who reside in any county
- Mandatory work registrants who reside in a minimum-service county

If these SNAP recipients volunteer—and funding is available—Boards may serve them as *walk-ins*.

If the volunteer decides not to participate in SNAP E&T services, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff does not initiate a sanction request.

#### **B-403: SNAP Eligibility Verification and Documentation**

Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff verifies SNAP eligibility monthly for all SNAP recipients who:

- participate in SNAP E&T services; and
- request and receive job retention services, support services, or both.

Because TWIST does not receive all of the SNAP denial transactions through the interface, there can be instances in which Workforce Solutions Office staff will need to check SAVERR or TIERS (if applicable) to verify that an individual is still eligible. If the individual does not appear to be eligible in SAVERR or TIERS, but is eligible in TWIST, it is important for Workforce Solutions Office staff to notify the TWIST Help Desk as soon as possible. See B-105 for additional information.

After Workforce Solutions Office staff verifies that an individual is eligible for SNAP benefits, the date of such verification must be documented in TWIST *Counselor Notes*.

## **B-404: SNAP E&T Good Cause Actions in TWIST**

Boards must be aware of the following:

Good cause can be entered into TWIST either *before* or *after* a penalty has been initiated.

If a SNAP recipient indicates—*before* a penalty is initiated—that he or she has good cause, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff enters the good cause action into TWIST.

*Note:* Because Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff reevaluates a SNAP recipient’s circumstances monthly, Boards also must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff does not close the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* while the SNAP recipient is in good cause status.

### **B-404.a: Good Cause Actions before a Penalty Has Been Initiated**

If SNAP recipients indicate that they have good cause *before* a penalty has been initiated, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- selects the Good Cause Action Type;
- selects a Good Cause Action Reason other than *49-Penalty Reviewed, Good Cause granted*;
- enters a Good Cause Decision Date;
- enters a Good Cause End Date;
- closes all open SNAP E&T activities with an end date of the last day of the month prior to the month in which good cause is granted; and
- enters TWIST service code *91–Determined Good Cause in Service Tracking*.

*Note:* Because Workforce Solutions Office staff is required to reevaluate the individual’s circumstances monthly, the SNAP E&T Program Detail must not be closed.

## **B-404.b: Good Cause Actions *after* a Penalty Has Been Initiated**

If SNAP recipients indicate they have good cause *after* a penalty has been initiated and it is during HHSC's 13-day adverse action period, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- reopens the SNAP E&T Program Detail that corresponds to the most recent penalty transaction and removes the exit reason and date;
- selects the Good Cause Action Type; and
- selects Good Cause Action Reason *49—Penalty Reviewed, Good Cause Granted*.

This action is electronically transmitted to HHSC to notify HHSC that the individual had good cause and to allow the individual to continue receiving SNAP benefits. Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- enters the Good Cause Decision Date;
- enters the Good Cause End Date; and
- enters the Good Cause reason (e.g., temporary illness, court appearance) in TWIST *Counselor Notes*.

*Note:* A penalty must first be initiated before TWIST service code *49—Penalty Reviewed, Good Cause Granted* can be selected.

If the individual's circumstances require more time, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff enters TWIST service code *91—Determined Good Cause in Service Tracking* and reevaluates the recipient's circumstances monthly.

If it is determined that an individual does not have good cause *after* a penalty has been initiated, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff enters the reason good cause was denied in TWIST *Counselor Notes*.

Sometimes months after a penalty has been initiated and imposed, sanctioned SNAP recipients contact Workforce Solutions Office staff to state that they had good cause. Additionally, there are instances in which Workforce Solutions Office staff delays entering good cause into TWIST for more than 30 days after a penalty has been initiated.

To ensure the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* corresponds to the most recent penalty transaction, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff enters good cause by the 30th day after the penalty is initiated (unless HHSC has already imposed it).

If a penalty was initiated, and Workforce Solutions Office staff attempts to enter good cause after 30 days (even if the penalty has not been imposed), an electronic notification *will not* be sent to HHSC indicating that the SNAP recipient had good cause.

If this occurs, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff informs the individual that he or she will need to reapply for SNAP benefits.

### ***B-405: SNAP E&T Activities in Service Tracking***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

All SNAP E&T activities must be entered into TWIST. The daily hours of participation for each SNAP E&T activity must also be entered into TWIST. Only actual hours of participation can be reported. Boards must not assign a standard set of hours for a SNAP E&T activity—e.g., two hours for each job search contact.

Boards must be aware of the following:

TWIST service code *39–Unsubsidized Employment* can be used only to:

- indicate that an ABAWD is employed less than 20 hours per week (if the ABAWD is employed less than 20 hours, the ABAWD also must be participating in another SNAP E&T activity to increase the total number of hours of participation to 30);
- indicate that a SNAP recipient who is part of the SNAP E&T General Population is employed fewer than 30 hours per week (the SNAP E&T General Population also must be participating in another SNAP E&T activity to increase the total number of hours of participation to 30);
- report that an ABAWD has obtained part-time employment of 20 hours after he or she has successfully participated in SNAP E&T activities. All services and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* must be closed once the 20 hours of unsubsidized employment is reported unless the ABAWD wishes to voluntarily participate; or
- report that a SNAP recipient (ABAWD or SNAP E&T General Population) has obtained full-time employment after he or she has successfully participated in SNAP E&T activities.

TWIST service code *39–Unsubsidized Employment* must not be used to report full-time employment that was obtained prior to the initial SNAP E&T appointment.

ABAWDs who are not employed at least 20 hours per week, or who are not meeting the work requirement through participation in WIA or Trade services, will appear on the *SNAP E&T History* tab as Work Code 3 (Mandatory/Not working). The ABAWD's Secondary SIG Code is displayed as C (ABAWD not meeting work requirement).

When an ABAWD successfully participates in SNAP E&T services for two weeks, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff notifies HHSC indicating the ABAWD is participating in SNAP E&T services. Once HHSC receives the notice, HHSC will change the ABAWD's Secondary SIG Code C to a SIG Code D.

## ***B-406: Job Retention Services and Support Services in TWIST***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards must be aware that, effective October 1, 2009:

- allowable SNAP E&T activities listed in B-406.b can be provided for up to 90 days to assist SNAP recipients employed full time with retaining employment—if a determination is made, based on the Decision Table in B-115.h, that job retention services, support services, or both can be provided; and
- support services listed in B-406.c can be provided for up to 90 days to assist SNAP recipients employed full time or part time with retaining employment—if a determination is made, based on the Decision Table in B-115.h, that job retention services, support services, or both can be provided.

### ***B-406.a: Point of Entry into Job Retention Services and Support Services***

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Boards must be aware that service code *39–Unsubsidized Employment* always serves as the gateway, the first point of entry into job retention services, support services, or both. This ensures that all job retention services or support services provided during the 90-day job retention period are associated with, or connected to, the SNAP recipient’s employment entry.

Specifically, service code *39–Unsubsidized Employment*, used with fund code 87 (ABAWDs) or 88 (SNAP E&T General Population) and new sub-fund code *44–SNAP E&T Job Retention*, open the door to job retention services, support services, and the 90-day job retention period. (See B-406.b for information on the new sub-fund code.)

Boards must ensure that once service code *39–Unsubsidized Employment* and new sub-fund code *44–SNAP E&T Job Retention* are entered into TWIST, Workforce Solutions Office staff:

- notifies HHSC of the recipient’s full- or part-time employment entry;
- enters a reconsideration in the *SNAP History* tab; and
- proceeds with the provision of job retention services and support services as outlined in B-406.g.

**B-406.b: Allowable Activities for SNAP Recipients Employed Full Time**

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<b>Service Codes</b>	<b>SNAP E&amp;T Services Allowable for Job Retention</b>
1	Occupational Training
2	Basic Educational Skills/ABE
12	Job Search
44	English as a Second Language
54	GED

**B-406.c: Support Services for SNAP Recipients Employed Full Time or Part Time**

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<b>Support Services Codes</b>	<b>SNAP E&amp;T Support Services Allowable for Job Retention</b>
202	Family/Child Care
203	Transportation
204	Housing/Rental Assistance
207	Other (i.e., tools, relocation expenses, union dues, licensing and bonding fees)
211	GED Test Payment*
212	Work-Related Expense

\*Because SNAP recipients employed part time are still required to participate in regular SNAP E&T services, support services code *211–GED Test Payment* is not an allowable job retention support service for SNAP recipients employed part time. Boards must ensure that support services code *211–GED Test Payment* is not used with new sub-fund code *44–SNAP E&T Job Retention*. (See B-406.d for information on the new sub-fund.)

**B-406.d: Sub-Fund Code 44–SNAP E&T Job Retention**

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Sub-fund code, *44–SNAP E&T Job Retention*, has been created in TWIST for use when entering service code *39–Unsubsidized Employment*, and when providing any of the allowable job retention services and support services listed in the B-406.b and B-406.c tables.

Boards must ensure that sub-fund code *44–SNAP E&T Job Retention* is used in conjunction with SNAP E&T fund codes 87 (ABAWDS) and 88 (General Population).

If support services are needed to accept or retain employment, Boards must ensure that sub-fund code 44 is used.

#### **B-406.e: New Job Retention Services Request Date Field**

In addition to sub-fund code 44–*SNAP E&T Job Retention*, a *Job Retention Services Request Date* field has been added to the *SNAP E&T Program Detail Summary* in TWIST to indicate the date that a SNAP recipient initially requested job retention services, support services, or both.

Boards must ensure that the job retention services request date is entered along with one of the allowable job retention services or support services, and saved under *Service Tracking*.

#### **B-406.f: Job Retention and the SNAP E&T Program Detail**

Prior to October 1, 2009, Workforce Solutions Office staff was instructed to close the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* in TWIST when a General Population SNAP recipient became employed full time (employed or self-employed at least 30 hours per week, or receiving earnings equal to 30 hours per week multiplied by the federal minimum wage).

Boards must ensure that when a SNAP recipient (ABAWD or SNAP E&T General Population) who is participating in regular SNAP E&T services enters full-time employment, the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* in TWIST is left open for 90 days unless:

- the Board indicates that funding for job retention is not available;
- the 90-day job retention period has expired; or
- SNAP benefits are denied.

See B-406.g for information on providing job retention services to SNAP recipients with an open *SNAP E&T Program Detail*.

#### **B-406.g: Job Retention Procedures**

Boards must ensure that the following procedures are followed for providing job retention services or support services when a *SNAP E&T Program Detail* is open in TWIST and the SNAP recipient enters full- or part-time employment.

##### *Full-Time Employment*

- A. When a SNAP recipient participating in regular SNAP E&T services, reports that he or she entered full-time employment, and does not request

job retention services or support services at the time the employment is reported, Workforce Solutions Office staff:

1. closes all open regular SNAP E&T services;
2. enters service code 39 using fund code 87 or 88 and new sub-fund code 44;
3. enters the full-time employment information under *Service Tracking*; and
4. leaves the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* open for 90 days.

If the SNAP recipient requests job retention services or support services during the subsequent 90-day period, and the recipient is still eligible, follow procedures outlined under B. If no job retention services or support services are requested, close the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* once the 90-day job retention period has expired.

- B. When a SNAP recipient who is participating in regular SNAP E&T services reports that he or she entered full-time employment and requests job retention services, support services, or both, at the time the employment is reported or at any time during the 90-day job retention period, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:
1. closes all open regular SNAP E&T services that are not allowable job retention services. (Allowable job retention services are listed in B-406.b);
  2. enters service code 39 using fund code 87 or 88 and new sub-fund code 44;
  3. enters the full-time employment information under *Service Tracking*;
  4. enters the date on which the recipient requested job retention services or support services in the *SNAP E&T Program Detail Summary*;
  5. if the SNAP recipient requests to continue participation for up to 90 days in a regular SNAP E&T service that is also an allowable job retention activity:
    - leaves the activity open, but closes fund code 87 or 88; and
    - adds a new fund row and enters fund code 87 or 88 and new sub-fund code 44 and a new start date that is the same as the recipient's date of entry into full-time employment or the job retention service request date;
  6. enters any other allowable job retention activities and/or support services that the SNAP recipient has requested using fund code 87 or 88 and the new sub-fund code 44;
  7. saves all entries;
  8. documents appropriate job retention information in the *Counselor Notes*; and
  9. closes out all services, support services, and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail*, at the end of the 90-day period.

Boards must ensure that if SNAP benefits are denied before the 90-day job retention period ends, Workforce Solutions Office staff immediately closes all job retention services, support services, and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail*.

#### *Part-Time Employment*

- A. When a SNAP recipient who is participating in regular SNAP E&T services enters part-time employment, and does not request job retention support services at the time the part-time employment is reported, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:
1. requires the SNAP recipient to continue participation in regular SNAP E&T services in addition to the part-time employment for a combined total of 30 hours per week (unless the recipient has already successfully met participation, is an exempt recipient who does not wish to continue participation, or is an ABAWD who participated in regular SNAP E&T services and became employed 20 hours per week);
  2. enters service code 39 using fund code 87 or 88 and sub-fund code 44; and
  3. enters the part-time employment information under *Service Tracking*.
- B. When a SNAP recipient who is participating in regular SNAP E&T services enters part-time employment and requests job retention support services at the time the part-time employment is reported or at any time during the 90-day job retention period, Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:
1. requires the SNAP recipient to continue participation in regular SNAP E&T services in addition to the part-time employment for a combined total of 30 hours per week;
  2. enters service code 39 using fund code 87 or 88 and new sub-fund code 44;
  3. enters the part-time employment information under *Service Tracking*;
  4. enters the date on which the recipient requested job retention support services in the *SNAP E&T Program Detail Summary*;
  5. enters the allowable job retention support services using fund code 87 or 88 and new sub-fund code 44;
  6. saves all entries;
  7. documents appropriate job retention support services information in the *TWIST Counselor Notes*; and
  8. at the end of the 90-day job retention period, closes out all job retention support services and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail*.

Boards must ensure that:

- if job retention support services are provided in addition to regular SNAP E&T services, Workforce Solutions Office staff enters both the job retention and the regular support services under *Service Tracking*; and

- if SNAP benefits are denied before the 90-day job retention period expires, Workforce Solutions Office staff immediately closes the job retention support services, any other services or support services, and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail*.

#### **B-406.h: Job Retention Procedures with a Closed SNAP E&T Program Detail**

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Boards must be aware that when a SNAP recipient has ended participation in regular SNAP E&T services, the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* is closed, and the recipient later enters employment and requests job retention services, services can be provided if the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* was closed for one of the following reasons:

- A General Population recipient fulfilled the work requirement and later entered employment;
- An ABAWD entered employment of 20 hours per week and discontinued participation; or
- An exempt SNAP recipient participated in regular SNAP E&T services, discontinued participation, and later entered employment.

In this situation, follow the procedures outlined in B-406.i before providing job retention services or support services.

#### **B-406.i: Procedures for Providing Job Retention Services When the SNAP E&T Program Detail Is Closed and the SNAP Recipient Enters Full- or Part-Time Employment**

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##### *Full-Time Employment*

Boards must ensure that when a SNAP recipient who ended participation later contacts Workforce Solutions Office staff to report full-time employment and requests job retention services, support services, or both, Workforce Solutions Office staff:

1. determines the individual's current SNAP eligibility status;
2. opens a new *SNAP E&T Program Detail*;
3. enters service code 39 using fund code 87 or 88 and new sub-fund code 44;
4. enters the date the job retention services, support services, or both, were requested in the *SNAP E&T Program Detail Summary*;
5. enters other allowable job retention activities, support services, or both, using fund code 87 or 88 and new sub-fund code 44;
6. saves all entries;
7. documents appropriate job retention services and support services information in *Counselor Notes*;

8. ensures that job retention services and support services are provided for no more than 90 days after the SNAP recipient enters full-time employment; and
9. closes the *SNAP E&T Program Detail*:
  - before the 90-day job retention period has expired if no other job retention services or support services are requested;
  - immediately after SNAP benefits are denied; or
  - after the 90-day job retention period has expired.

#### *Part-Time Employment*

Boards must ensure that if a SNAP recipient who ended participation in regular SNAP E&T services later contacts Workforce Solutions Office staff to report part-time employment and requests job retention support services, Workforce Solutions Office staff:

1. determines the individual's current SNAP eligibility status;
2. opens a new *SNAP E&T Program Detail*;
3. enters service code 39 using fund code 87 or 88 and new sub-fund code 44;
4. enters the date on which the recipient requested job retention support services in the *SNAP E&T Program Detail Summary*;
5. enters the allowable job retention support services using fund code 87 or 88 and new sub-fund code 44;
6. saves all entries;
7. documents appropriate job retention support services information in *Counselor Notes*; and
8. ensures that job retention support services are provided for no more than 90 days after the SNAP recipient enters part-time employment.

### ***B-407: 12-Month Clock***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

SNAP recipients who are part of the SNAP E&T General Population, who are required to participate in SNAP E&T, and who fulfill their work requirements (successful completion) are required to participate only once every 12 months.

A 12-month clock is set when the SNAP E&T General Population is registered for work by HHSC, or when a *SNAP E&T Program Detail* is opened in TWIST (if the 12-month clock is not received from HHSC through the interface).

To ensure that SNAP recipients who successfully complete SNAP E&T activities do not appear in the outreach pool before their next 12-month clock date, all services in TWIST must be closed out, noting that the services were provided.

If the SNAP recipient did not successfully complete his or her work requirements, and the *SNAP E&T Program Detail* is closed for a reason other than successful completion and services provided, the SNAP recipient appears in the outreach pool again in 60 days.

## **B-500: SNAP E&T FULL-SERVICE COUNTY EXPANSION**

### ***B-501: Board Responsibilities***

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Boards must be aware of the following:

Boards periodically submit a request to TWC to expand SNAP E&T services in a county from minimum service to full service. Boards may expand SNAP E&T services in one or more counties in their local workforce development area (workforce area).

Before a request is submitted, it is recommended that Boards research and analyze the demographics and characteristics of SNAP recipients residing in the county that the Board wishes to expand. This preparation assists Boards in determining whether a sufficient number of SNAP recipients in the county will benefit from SNAP E&T services.

Once an analysis of the county is conducted and the Board decides to expand, the Board must:

- send a letter to TWC's Workforce Policy and Program Assistance Department indicating the county or counties in which the Board wishes to expand. Address the letter to: *Texas Workforce Commission, Workforce Policy and Program Assistance Department, 101 E. 15th Street, Room 440-T, Austin, Texas 78778-0001*;
- include an effective date on which the Board wishes to begin providing SNAP E&T services (the effective date must correspond to one of the dates listed on the quarterly county expansion schedule outlined in B-501.a);
- ensure that Local Area Network connectivity and TWIST access are available in the county or counties identified for expansion;
- ensure that authorization and TWIST user permission are granted to all staff who will be outreaching or entering SNAP E&T services into TWIST;
- ensure that staff is trained on SNAP E&T policy and procedures; and
- coordinate with local HHSC staff and inform them of the Board's intent to expand SNAP E&T services in the county.

*Note:* Once a Board designates a county as full service, it must remain a full-service county unless federal funding dictates that the state limit the number of counties in which SNAP E&T services can be offered, or a change in federal or state legislation promulgates rule changes that impact county designations.

**B-501.a: TWC Program Policy Responsibilities**

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Upon receipt of the Board’s request to expand SNAP E&T services, TWC:

- notifies HHSC in writing of the request to expand;
- coordinates with HHSC on the time frames for expansion based on the following quarterly county expansion schedule:

Request Submitted to HHSC by:	Effective Date for Implementing SNAP E&T Services in the New County:
October 1	January 1
December 31	April 1
April 1	July 1
July 1	October 1

- submits a SNAP E&T State Plan amendment to FNS to notify it of the change and to update the minimum- and full-service county tables and the SNAP E&T map that displays the county designations;
- submits a request to TWIST staff to modify the automated system and make the necessary changes to move the minimum-service counties to full-service county status by the effective date; and
- sends a follow-up letter informing the Board of the status of the request.

**B-501.b: HHSC Responsibilities**

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Upon receipt of TWC’s notice, HHSC will confirm whether it is able to accommodate the request and make the necessary automation changes by the effective date. HHSC also will send a notice to local HHSC staff in the county with specific instructions on the changes that need to occur as a result of the change in county designation.

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# SNAP E&T

## Part C – Appendix

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### C-100: FORMS USED FOR SNAP E&T SERVICES

The following forms used to provide services to SNAP E&T participants are available on TWC's Intranet at

[http://intra.twc.state.tx.us/intranet/gl/html/workforce\\_forms.html](http://intra.twc.state.tx.us/intranet/gl/html/workforce_forms.html).<sup>3</sup>

E-2510	Notification of Child Care Eligibility
E-2706	Referral for Services
E-2735	Education Service Provided Referral and GED Testing Authorization
E-2736	Weekly Attendance and Progress Verification
E-2738	TANF/SNAP/WIA Referral and Eligibility Verification
E-2776	Job Search Worksheet
E-2776s	Job Search Worksheet Spanish
E-2778	Employability Plan
FL-67	School Participation Form
FL-68	GED Retest Authorization
FL-69	Attendance Verification and GED Testing Authorization
FL-137	SNAP E&T Program Participant Requirements
FL-139	SNAP E&T Exemption Worksheet
FL-139s	SNAP E&T Exemption Worksheet Spanish

#### **HHSC Form H1822 (Work Requirement Verification)**

The two versions of HHSC Form H1822 follow.

See A-203.a for information regarding the version of Form H1822 to use in your workforce area.

#### **Nonfinancial Cooperative Agreement Template**

TWC's template of the Nonfinancial Cooperative Agreement follows.

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<sup>3</sup> The Intranet is not available to the general public.

### Work Requirement Verification

Case Name:	Case Number:	Date:
Name of Person:		Social Security Number:

**PART I (to be completed by local workforce staff after initial outreach at application):**

The person named above is participating in a satisfactory manner in the E&T program.

**Part II (to be completed by local workforce staff to verify participation during the recertification process):**

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>WIA Program</b> ; Start Date.....	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Trade Adjustment Act Program</b> ; Start Date.....	_____
Average Weekly Participation:	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>20 or More Hours per Week</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Less than 20 Hours per Week</b> ; client participates an average of _____	hours per week.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Food Stamp E&amp;T Program</b> ; Start Date.....	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Workfare</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Education or Training 20 or More Hours per Week</b>	
Name (please type or print)	Agency
_____	
Telephone No.	
_____	
Signature	Date

**HHSC**  
**PO Box 14800**  
**Midland, TX 79711-4800**  
**Fax: 1-877-HHSC-TEX (1-877-447-2839)**

### Work Requirement Verification

Case Name:	Case Number:	Date:
Name of Person:		Social Security Number:

**PART I (to be completed by local workforce staff after initial outreach at application):**

The person named above is participating in a satisfactory manner in the E&T program.

**Part II (to be completed by local workforce staff to verify participation during the recertification process):**

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>WIA Program</b> ; Start Date .....	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Trade Adjustment Act Program</b> ; Start Date .....	_____
Average Weekly Participation:	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>20 or More Hours per Week</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Less than 20 Hours per Week</b> ; client participates an average	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>of</b>	_____ hours per week.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Food Stamp E&amp;T Program</b> ; Start Date.....	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Workfare</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Education or Training 20 or More Hours per Week</b>	
Name (please type or print)	Agency
_____	_____
Signature	Date
	Telephone No.

HHSC Address & Fax Number:

NONFINANCIAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN  
WORKFARE EMPLOYING ENTITY AND  
SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EMPLOYMENT  
AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATOR

**1. AUTHORITY**

The parties are authorized to enter into this nonfinancial agreement by, and all performance under this agreement is subject to, 7 U.S.C., §2029 (workfare).

The parties entering into this contract are the local workfare employing entity and the Local Workforce Development Board (Board) or its designee.

Board/Designee:

Employing Entity:

**2. PERIOD OF AGREEMENT**

This agreement becomes effective on the last signature date of the parties and will continue in effect until terminated by mutual written agreement of both parties or by one party giving 30 days' written notice to the other party.

**3. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this agreement is to establish policies and procedures for workfare experience for Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits at various sites with the employing entity.

**4. GOALS**

- 4.1 The goal is to establish workfare jobsites for ABAWDs.
- 4.2 The primary goal of workfare is to improve employability and enable individuals to move into regular employment [7 CFR §273.7(m)].
- 4.3 The Board or its designee will develop local work plans for each participant in this project. The work plans must include the type of work to be performed, hours, and the contact at the employer site.

## 5. MEETINGS AND COORDINATION

- 5.1 The employing entity and the Board or its designee will meet as needed, but at least quarterly to assess the activities conducted under this agreement and to make necessary adjustments to improve the results of the project.
- 5.2 The employing entity and the Board or its designee will establish a process for the employing entity to report hours of participation, nonparticipation, and/or any other relevant participant information.
- 5.3 The contacts for this agreement are:

### Employing Entity/Workfare Site

Name  
Title  
Address  
Phone Number

### Board/Designee

Name  
Title  
Address  
Phone Number

## 6. MUTUAL AGREEMENTS

- 6.1 Performing the workfare activity tasks on a regular basis must be within the participant's capability, including physical capacity, skills, experience, family responsibilities, and place of residence.
- 6.2 The total hours of participation will be based on the individual's SNAP benefits and will not exceed 30 hours per week.
- 6.3 All participants have the rights available under federal, state, and local law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, sex, national origin, religion, age, or disability. Individuals alleging discrimination may choose to have their complaints processed as a SNAP Employment and Training dispute, or as a violation of other applicable state and local laws prohibiting discrimination in employment.

**7. EMPLOYING ENTITY AGREEMENTS**

- 7.1 No participant may be required, with or without consent, to remain away from home overnight.
- 7.2 Participants are subject to the same health and safety standards established under state and federal law that otherwise apply to non-ABAWDs in similar activities.
- 7.3 Operating agencies shall not provide work to a workfare participant that has the effect of replacing or preventing employment of an individual not participating in the workfare program. Workfare jobs shall in no way infringe upon the promotional opportunities otherwise available to regular employees.
- 7.4 The employing entity shall comply with the local work plan developed for each participant.

**8. TWC AGREEMENTS**

- 8.1 The conditions of participation must be reasonable, taking the proficiency of the participant into account in each case.
- 8.2 Complaints related to workfare services must be filed in accordance with Board policies as outlined in the Texas Workforce Commission’s Integrated Complaints, Hearings, and Appeals rules at 40 Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Chapter 823.

Agreed-to:

NAME  
Title  
Employing Entity  
Date

NAME  
Title  
Board/Designee  
Date

# SNAP E&T

## Part D – List of Revisions

*Note:* The guide contains minor, nonsubstantive editorial changes that are not included on the List of Revisions.

OCTOBER 2011	
SECTION	REVISIONS
All Sections	Updated terminology: changed Texas Workforce Center to Workforce Solutions Office
A-106	FY'12 SNAP E&T Map
A-300	Revised <i>Good Cause</i> to specify actions that should be taken if good cause is initiated prior to a request to sanction, or after a sanction has been initiated
B-108.a(1)	Removed verification procedures for SNAP recipients participating in job search
B-108.f	Revised <i>Unsubsidized Employment</i> to include the second part of the federal definition for full-time employment, and to provide information on actions Boards must ensure Workforce Solutions Office staff take when the recipient enters full-time employment prior to and during participation
B-113	Revised <i>Noncooperation with SNAP E&amp;T Requirements</i> to emphasize that the timely and reasonable attempt policy does not apply to SNAP E&T
B-115h	Modified <i>Job Retention Decision Table</i> to include language on the time frame in which a person can receive job retention services
B-115.s	Added new subsection regarding provision of job retention services when a recipient enters new employment during the 90-day job retention period
B-203	Revised <i>Transportation Assistance</i> to indicate that FNS prohibits use of SNAP E&T funds for automobile repairs for exempt recipients
B-205	Revised <i>Housing Assistance</i> based on guidance from FNS limiting housing assistance to two months in a 12-month period
B-206	Added new child care policy reiterating that Boards must use CCDF funds—not SNAP E&T funds—for recipients participating in SNAP E&T
B-306.c	Removed <i>Verification and Documentation Requirements</i>

B-307	Added note indicating that SNAP recipients meet the full-time employment exemption criteria if they accept a job offer of at least 30 hours per week, and the job is scheduled to begin immediately or within the next 30 days
B-401	Added requirement for Boards to outreach SNAP recipients with Work Code 5
Part C	Removed Part C, Guide Review; added new Part C, Appendix
RESCISSIONS	WD Letter 11-10

**SEPTEMBER 28, 2009**

<b>SECTION</b>	<b>REVISIONS</b>
A-101.c	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 35-09
A-101.c(1)	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 35-09
A-106	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 35-09
B-106.a	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 35-09
B-106.a–f	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 35-09
B-106.f	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 35-09
B-115	New section added in accordance with WD Letter 35-09
B-201	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 35-09
B-202	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 35-09
B-203	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 35-09
B-204	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 35-09
B-205	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 35-09
B-207–209	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 35-09
B-406	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 35-09

**APRIL 20, 2009**

<b>SECTION</b>	<b>REVISIONS</b>
A-101.c	Updated SNAP E&T map
A-204.a(2)	New section added in accordance with WD Letter 15-08
B-108.a(1)	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 41-07, Change 2
B-114	Corrected language

B-306.c	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 62-07, Change 2
B-405	Revised in accordance with TA Bulletin 190
All Sections	Revised in accordance with WD Letter 09-09