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Division of Family Assistance

For Immediate Release: August 21, 2026

DHS URGES ABLE-BODIED ADULTS WITHOUT DEPENDENTS (ABAWDs) TO SUBMIT SNAP DOCUMENTATION BY AUGUST 27, 2026

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS - The Virgin Islands Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Family Assistance, (DFA) is reminding Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients who are classified as **Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs)** to submit any required work-related documentation by August 27, 2026, to avoid a disruption or loss of SNAP benefits.

The Division of Family Assistance wishes to inform SNAP recipients of the recent changes to the federal regulations that require certain SNAP recipients to meet specific work requirements to continue receiving benefits. Effective September 1, 2026, SNAP recipients who do not meet the following work requirements will no longer be eligible to receive benefits.

The ABAWD work requirement applies to you if you:

- Are between the ages of 18 and 64 years old;
- Do not have a dependent child under 14 years old in the SNAP household; and
- Are considered physically and mentally able to work at least 20 hours per week

If the ABAWD work requirement applies to you, you must:

- Work an average of 20 hours per week, or
- Earn at least \$217.50 per week before taxes, or
- Participate in qualifying volunteer activities, educational programs, or job training programs

If you are in school or a training program, you must have total class time of 20 hours each week or be enrolled at least half-time. If you do not meet this requirement, you will only be able to get SNAP benefits for three months over a three-year period.

You may be excused from the ABAWD work requirement if you are:

- Exempt from the general work requirements, except when the exemption is solely due to being 18-59 years
- Younger than age 18, or age 65 or older
- Living with someone under age 14 in the SNAP household
- Pregnant
- Are "an Indian", An Urban Indian" or "A California Indian".
- Experiencing a physical or mental barrier that prevents employment for at least 30 days and is certified by a licensed physician or certified psychologist.

What Should You Do?

DHS encourages all affected SNAP participants to review any notices received by mail and submit the required documentation as soon as possible. Notices have been mailed to potentially affected households using the mailing address on file.

The Department remains committed to helping SNAP recipients understand these changes and how you can remain eligible for benefits. Notices have been mailed to affected households, providing more

information on the changes to SNAP work requirements via the mailing addresses on file. Keep listening to the radio and other news outlets for updates on these changes.

- **For St. Thomas/St. John clients**, please call (340) 774-0930 with extensions 4386, 4387, 4388, or 4390.
- **For St. Croix clients**, please call (340) 772-7100 with extensions 7199, 7025, or 7105.

We urge all of our SNAP clients to remain vigilant and report any suspicious communications to DHS. Your cooperation is essential in safeguarding your benefits and personal information. For further updates and guidance, please visit the official Virgin Islands Department of Human Services website or follow our official social media channels.

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