

**DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES 18-2020
EFS_FNS_AL-18-2020**

Food and Nutrition Services

TO: County Directors of Social Services

ATTENTION: Food and Nutrition Services Managers and Supervisors

DATE: June 4, 2020

SUBJECT: Batch process to correct Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) that did not receive the COVID-19 work non-participation evidence

EFFECTIVE: June 8, 2020

PRIORITY: For Information and Action

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Due to the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, NC FAST automatically added a work non-participation evidence of COVID-19 to exempt all ABAWDs that were not currently exempted for any other reason and met the conditions outlined in Administrative letter 3-2020. ABAWDS that were already exempt for other exemption reasons listed in FNS manual 245.01, did not automatically receive the work non-participation exemption evidence COVID-19. Those ABAWDS that subsequently lost their exemption are eligible to start receiving the COVID-19 exemption. There are approximately 2100 ABAWDS who's non-COVID-19 exemption ended, and the worker failed to enter the COVID-19 exemption. ABAWDS that have not been coded with the COVID-19 work non-participation evidence for the months of April, May, or June 2020 have had at least one free or bonus month counted in error. NC FAST will run another batch process to automatically add the exemption to these individuals.

II. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

A. ABAWDs AFFECTED:

This policy only applies to ABAWD individuals that meet the following criteria:

1. An ABAWD individual that did not receive the COVID-19 work non-participation exemption automatically because they were exempt for any other reason listed in FNS manual 245.01; **and**
2. The exemption was removed, and the worker did not enter the COVID-19 exemption; **and**
3. The ABAWD had at least one free or bonus month counted in error in April, May, or June 2020.

B. EFFECT ON ABAWDs:

ABAWDS will be exempt from work requirements for any months received between April 1, 2020 and the last day of the month following the month that the COVID-19 public health emergency declaration by the Secretary of Health and Human Services is lifted. Any month(s) during this time period that are indicated as free or bonus months are being counted toward the ABAWD's 3-month time limit in error.

C. NC FAST PROCESS ON THE WEEKEND OF JUNE 6, 2020:

NC FAST has identified all ABAWDS that have at least one countable month since April 1, 2020 and will automatically enter the COVID-19 exemption.

D. WORKER'S ACTIONS:

Based on the application date, the worker will take the following actions for applications that contain an ABAWD:

1. Cases with On-hold decisions: NC FAST will enter the work non-participation COVID-19 evidence but will not release the on-hold decision. Workers must review and release the on-hold decisions as appropriate to allow NC FAST to recode as appropriate.
2. ABAWD individuals that lose one of the exemptions listed in 245.01: During the effective period listed in Administrative Letter 3-2020, workers **must** add the COVID-19 work non-participation evidence when the ABAWD loses their current exemption.

Note: Workers must explain ABAWD requirements and evaluate for all ABAWD exemptions, including COVID-19 exemption, per instructions in FNS manual section 245.05.

III. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy is effective June 8, 2020 for all applications, recertifications, and changes in situation. Submit any questions regarding this policy to Operational Support Team (OST) at DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,



David Locklear, Deputy Director
Economic and Family Services Section

DL/rc