

THIS LETTER APPLIES TO THE FOLLOWING COUNTIES ONLY:

| | | | |
|------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|
| Alexander | Granville | Martin | Rockingham |
| Alleghany | Duplin | McDowell | Rutherford |
| Anson | Durham | Mecklenburg | Sampson |
| Ashe | Edgecombe | Moore | Scotland |
| Bladen | Forsyth | Nash | Rutherford |
| Burke | Franklin | New Hanover | Sampson |
| Buncombe | Guilford | Onslow | Surry |
| Cabarrus | Haywood | Orange | Transylvania |
| Caldwell | Henderson | Pamlico | Tyrrell |
| Catawba | Hertford | Pasquotank | Union |
| Chowan | Hoke | Pender | Vance |
| Cleveland | Jackson | Person | Wake |
| Columbus | Johnston | Pitt | Warren |
| Craven | Lenoir | Randolph | Wilkes |
| Cumberland | Lincoln | Richmond | Yancey |
| Davidson | Madison | Robeson | |

**DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER NO. ECONOMIC SERVICES 4-2005, Continuing
ABAWD Exemption Under the Extended Benefits Waiver (May 16, 2005)**

(Food Stamps)

TO: County Directors of Social Services

ATTENTION: Food Stamp Supervisors

DATE: May 16, 2005

RE: Continuing ABAWD Exemption Under the Extended Benefits
Waiver

**EFFECTIVE
DATE:** Upon Receipt

I. BACKGROUND

The Food Stamp Program requires able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) between the ages of 18 and 49 to participate in work activities as a condition of eligibility, except when they reside in counties deemed Labor Surplus

Areas (LSA) by the United States Department of Labor or in counties operating under the Extended Benefits (EB) waiver that is offered by the US Department of Agriculture. The Labor Surplus Area waiver ended March 31, 2005. Counties operating under that waiver were allowed to continue exempting ABAWDs under the statewide EB waiver through June 30, 2005. See DSS Administrative Letter #2-2005 dated March 4, 2005.

An extension of the Extended Benefits waiver through November 30, 2005, has been approved by the US Department of Agriculture. The above listed counties are those operating under the waiver. Some counties on the original list were removed as they are currently exempt from work requirements because there is no contract for services with Employment Security Commission in their county. The complete list of counties and exempt status is in Food Stamp Manual Section 241.00, Figure 240-2.

II. POLICY AND PROCEDURES

A. Households containing an ABAWD can continue to be certified longer than three months while under the EB waiver. Work registration requirements are still applicable under the EB waiver. Employment and Training (E&T) requirements and sanctions for non-compliance continue to apply.

B. January 2006 starts the second three-year cycle for ABAWDs. ABAWDs begin with a "clean slate." Unless an individual is exempt from the ABAWD policy as described in Section 245.01 or complies with the requirements listed in Section 245.02, an ABAWD can receive benefits only three months within a thirty-six month period. Use an ABAWD tracking chart (Figure 245-1) to track the 36-month period. Check the FSIS screen and documentation in the case file before authorizing benefits. ABAWDs covered under the EB Waiver will remain eligible for the month of December 2005 by counting them under the regulatory provision that exempts up to 15% of the state's ABAWDs from the time limits.

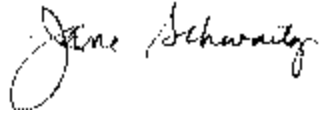
C. Households containing an ABAWD should not be certified beyond March 2006, unless the case is flagged for review of the ABAWD's continued eligibility. This will prevent an ABAWD from receiving more than three free months in the second three-year cycle.

III. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

No additional implementation instructions are required. Please continue to follow the instructions currently outlined in DSS Administrative Letter #2-2005.

If you have any questions concerning the policy contained in this letter, please contact your Food Assistance and Energy Representative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jane Schwartz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Jane Schwartz, Chief

Economic Services Section

JS/DP