

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

The New Mexico Human Services Department (HSD) will hold a public hearing to allow comment on the proposed amendment of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations. The hearing will be held on Friday, July 17, 2015 from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., at the Department of Health (DOH) Harold Runnels Building Auditorium, 1190 St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM.

The Department is promulgating proposed regulations to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Employment and Training (E&T) program. The Food and Nutrition Act (the Act) of 2008 states that the purpose of E&T program is to provide SNAP participants opportunities to gain skills, training or experience that will improve their employment prospects and reduce their reliance on SNAP benefits. Within the proposed regulations the Department is reinstating the program requirements that were in effect prior to the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009.

These changes include:

- Reinstatement of the Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) work program requirements and time limits in accordance with the Food and Nutrition Act and title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations, part 273 as of October 1, 2015.
- Alignment of exemptions from the Employment and Training requirements for Non-ABAWDs with the Federal SNAP regulations in 7 CFR 273.7.

The Department is proposing to align the E&T and TANF regulations for removing disqualifications when an individual has complied within the disqualification period. This proposal will ensure that individuals, who comply within the disqualification time period, will have access to the SNAP benefits earlier, rather than serving out the entire disqualification period.

The Department is also proposing to expand the definition of good cause and define certain circumstances that may preclude the individual from participating in a work activity as well as defining the allowed time period of good cause.

Additionally, the Department is proposing that individuals residing in an area that is determined “rural” area, as defined by the department, will only be required to complete the 12 verifiable employer contacts, within a thirty-day period.

The Department is also proposing to add two additional work activities that non-ABAWDs can participate in to complete their work program requirement.

The Department is also proposing aligning the notice of adverse action time frame in the SNAP regulations with the regulations regarding external communication in the General Provisions regulation at 8.100.180 NMAC. As well as updating “food stamps” to “SNAP”.

The Human Services Register Vol. 38 No. 13 outlining the proposed regulations is available on the HSD’s website at: <http://www.hsd.state.nm.us/LookingForInformation/income-support-division-registers.aspx>. Individuals wishing to testify or to request a copy of the proposed regulation should contact the Income Support Division, P.O. Box 2348, Pollon Plaza, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-2348, or by calling 505-827-7250 or 505-827-7268.

If you are a person with a disability and you require this information in an alternative format, or you require a special accommodation to participate in any HSD public hearing, program, or service, please contact the American Disabilities Act Coordinator, at 505-827-7701 or through the New Mexico Relay system, toll free at #711. The Department requests at least a 10-day advance notice to provide requested alternative formats and special accommodations.

Individuals who do not wish to attend the hearing may submit written or recorded comments. Written or recorded comments must be received by 4:00 pm on the date of the hearing, July 17, 2015. Please send comments to:

Human Services Department  
P.O. Box 2348, Pollon Plaza  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-2348

You may send comments electronically to: [HSD-isdrules@state.nm.us](mailto:HSD-isdrules@state.nm.us)