



## SNAP WORK REQUIREMENTS AND ENROLLMENT BY TOWN

By: Mary Fitzpatrick, Legislative Analyst II

### SNAP ELIGIBILITY (INCOME AND ASSETS)

In Connecticut, most Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients must meet a gross income limit of 185% Federal Poverty Limit (FPL) and a net income limit (i.e., gross income after certain deductions) of 100% FPL.

Seniors and those living with a disability with a gross income over 185% FPL may also qualify for SNAP but must meet an asset limit of \$3,250.

For a family of three:

- 185% FPL is \$3,098 per month and
- 100% FPL is \$1,675 per month.

For more information, see OLR Report [2016-R-0106](http://www.cga.ct.gov/olr/olr@cgac.t.gov), *SNAP Financial Eligibility and Benefits*.

### ISSUE

This report describes enrollment by town and work requirements for Connecticut's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, i.e., food stamp program).

### SUMMARY

In 2015, over 412,000 individuals in Connecticut received SNAP benefits. The towns with the highest percentage of residents receiving SNAP were Hartford (39%), Waterbury (34%), New Haven (31%), New Britain (31%), and Windham (31%).

As of January 1, 2016, Connecticut is no longer eligible for a statewide waiver from a federal time limit on SNAP benefits for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) who do not meet certain work requirements. The state is now eligible for a partial waiver, under which 82 towns continue to be exempt from the ABAWD time limit, according to the Department of Social Services (DSS). In the remaining 87 towns, ABAWDs who receive SNAP benefits and do not comply with certain work requirements will only be eligible for SNAP benefits for three months in a 36-month period.

## SNAP ENROLLMENT BY TOWN

Table 1 shows the number of SNAP recipients in each town, the town's population, and the percentage of the town's population receiving SNAP benefits in FY 2015 (i.e., before the statewide ABAWD waiver expired). Table 1 is arranged by the percentage receiving SNAP benefits, from greatest to least.

**Table 1: SNAP Recipients by Town (FY 2015)**

<i>Town</i>	<i>SNAP Recipients</i>	<i>Town Population</i>	<i>Percentage Receiving SNAP</i>
Hartford	51,890	132,036	39.30%
Waterbury	35,571	106,082	33.53%
New Haven	38,859	124,269	31.27%
New Britain	21,810	70,948	30.74%
Windham	6,634	21,703	30.57%
New London	7,454	25,263	29.51%
Bridgeport	39,490	137,923	28.63%
Norwich	9,750	36,190	26.94%
East Hartford	11,034	47,700	23.13%
Meriden	12,796	57,009	22.45%
Ansonia	3,312	17,807	18.60%
Putnam	1,529	8,971	17.04%
Canaan	178	1,059	16.81%
West Haven	8,651	51,996	16.64%
Manchester	8,525	51,259	16.63%
Killingly	2,633	16,127	16.33%
Sprague	469	2,980	15.74%
Plainfield	2,221	14,554	15.26%
Sterling	420	2,757	15.23%
Middletown	6,453	43,498	14.84%
Torrington	5,060	34,668	14.60%
Derby	1,727	11,923	14.48%
Griswold	1,516	10,674	14.20%
Bristol	8,159	59,152	13.79%
Naugatuck	3,892	30,226	12.88%
Vernon	3,506	29,580	11.85%
East Haven	3,106	26,563	11.69%
Winchester	1,337	11,488	11.64%
Danbury	7,456	65,470	11.39%
Bloomfield	2,130	19,004	11.21%
Brooklyn	751	6,940	10.82%

Table 1 (continued)

<i><b>Town</b></i>	<i><b>SNAP Recipients</b></i>	<i><b>Town Population</b></i>	<i><b>Percentage Receiving SNAP</b></i>
Chaplin	226	2,212	10.22%
Voluntown	226	2,248	10.05%
East Windsor	991	9,892	10.02%
Stratford	4,609	49,068	9.39%
Montville	1,594	17,139	9.30%
Windsor Locks	1,105	11,979	9.22%
Hamden	4,879	53,165	9.18%
Ashford	359	3,921	9.16%
Stamford	10,043	109,997	9.13%
Norwalk	6,752	77,937	8.66%
Stonington	1,462	16,953	8.62%
Plymouth	1,034	12,069	8.57%
Windsor	2,351	27,446	8.57%
Groton	3,631	42,922	8.46%
Hampton	134	1,600	8.38%
Enfield	3,577	43,136	8.29%
Seymour	1,144	14,150	8.08%
Thompson	728	9,019	8.07%
Plainville	1,305	16,779	7.78%
Stafford	894	11,567	7.73%
Lebanon	472	6,392	7.38%
Canterbury	334	4,636	7.20%
Bozrah	169	2,356	7.17%
Lisbon	277	3,912	7.08%
Colchester	867	12,732	6.81%
Wethersfield	1,672	24,985	6.69%
Portland	588	8,823	6.66%
West Hartford	3,641	56,349	6.46%
Westbrook	357	5,554	6.43%
Thomaston	462	7,304	6.33%
Coventry	660	10,907	6.05%
New Milford	1,524	25,343	6.01%
Branford	1,631	27,235	5.99%
Ledyard	886	14,839	5.97%
Watertown	1,282	21,556	5.95%
Newington	1,641	28,156	5.83%
Wallingford	2,325	40,671	5.72%
Preston	292	5,116	5.71%
Eastford	80	1,425	5.61%
Clinton	729	13,096	5.57%

Table 1 (continued)

<i><b>Town</b></i>	<i><b>SNAP Recipients</b></i>	<i><b>Town Population</b></i>	<i><b>Percentage Receiving SNAP</b></i>
Waterford	1,009	18,128	5.57%
Wolcott	779	14,099	5.53%
Pomfret	183	3,344	5.47%
Beacon Falls	279	5,135	5.43%
Salem	192	3,557	5.40%
Milford	2,651	49,619	5.34%
Shelton	1,977	37,159	5.32%
Southington	1,969	38,091	5.17%
North Stonington	251	4,987	5.03%
Cromwell	623	12,521	4.98%
East Hampton	544	10,994	4.95%
Berlin	842	17,061	4.94%
Woodstock	315	6,523	4.83%
East Lyme	767	16,170	4.74%
Columbia	227	4,793	4.74%
Ellington	537	11,588	4.63%
Willington	283	6,153	4.60%
Bethel	816	17,757	4.60%
Rocky Hill	748	16,377	4.57%
Franklin	83	1,818	4.57%
Andover	125	2,740	4.56%
Morris	94	2,111	4.45%
Deep River	197	4,455	4.42%
Sharon	131	2,979	4.40%
East Haddam	323	7,347	4.40%
Middlefield	170	4,076	4.17%
North Haven	913	22,020	4.15%
Scotland	57	1,397	4.08%
South Windsor	875	22,325	3.92%
Kent	119	3,064	3.88%
Barkhamsted	136	3,512	3.87%
Old Saybrook	376	9,730	3.86%
North Branford	524	13,717	3.82%
East Granby	164	4,351	3.77%
Prospect	302	8,111	3.72%
Litchfield	318	8,627	3.69%
Suffield	410	11,128	3.68%
Bolton	173	4,698	3.68%
Farmington	765	20,775	3.68%
Mansfield	699	19,069	3.67%

Table 1 (continued)

<b>Town</b>	<b>SNAP Recipients</b>	<b>Town Population</b>	<b>Percentage Receiving SNAP</b>
Union	24	662	3.63%
Glastonbury	1,019	28,275	3.60%
Oxford	325	9,019	3.60%
Bethlehem	111	3,260	3.40%
Somers	320	9,414	3.40%
Cornwall	50	1,491	3.35%
Chester	127	3,799	3.34%
Norfolk	68	2,047	3.32%
Harwinton	177	5,353	3.31%
Hebron	251	7,789	3.22%
Middlebury	191	6,001	3.18%
New Hartford	191	6,083	3.14%
Canton	248	8,038	3.09%
Essex	187	6,133	3.05%
Hartland	58	1,920	3.02%
Brookfield	433	14,475	2.99%
Woodbury	254	8,544	2.97%
Old Lyme	193	6,569	2.94%
Southbury	471	16,320	2.89%
Tolland	341	12,063	2.83%
Sherman	83	2,943	2.82%
Haddam	198	7,153	2.77%
Guilford	551	19,923	2.77%
Goshen	64	2,439	2.62%
New Fairfield	348	13,370	2.60%
North Canaan	90	3,472	2.59%
Killingworth	137	5,449	2.51%
Simsbury	539	21,610	2.49%
Trumbull	821	33,274	2.47%
Greenwich	1,437	58,343	2.46%
Granby	230	9,399	2.45%
Marlborough	137	5,623	2.44%
Newtown	540	22,504	2.40%
Fairfield	1,279	53,491	2.39%
Salisbury	95	4,131	2.30%
Burlington	175	7,622	2.30%
Orange	284	12,440	2.28%
Cheshire	579	25,986	2.23%
Monroe	395	17,982	2.20%
Lyme	43	2,013	2.14%

Table 1 (continued)

<i>Town</i>	<i>SNAP Recipients</i>	<i>Town Population</i>	<i>Percentage Receiving SNAP</i>
Bethany	98	4,730	2.07%
Woodbridge	160	8,028	1.99%
Durham	126	6,382	1.97%
Washington	77	4,045	1.90%
Avon	254	13,725	1.85%
Colebrook	26	1,423	1.83%
Madison	289	15,956	1.81%
Roxbury	34	1,982	1.72%
Westport	406	24,172	1.68%
Warren	20	1,293	1.55%
Bridgewater	26	1,739	1.50%
Easton	81	6,573	1.23%
Ridgefield	246	21,666	1.14%
Redding	87	8,067	1.08%
New Canaan	178	17,921	0.99%
Darien	179	18,125	0.99%
Wilton	128	16,320	0.78%
Weston	63	8,778	0.72%

Sources: DSS average monthly assistance units and recipients by town, SFY 15; annual population estimates, as reported by the [Department of Labor](#) (2015)

## **WORK REQUIREMENTS**

### ***Able-Bodied Adults***

Federal law generally requires most able-bodied adults who receive SNAP benefits to:

1. register for work (usually with the SNAP state agency or state employment office);
2. accept a suitable job if offered one;
3. fulfill any work, job search, or training requirements required by SNAP state agencies; and
4. give the state public assistance agency information regarding their job availability.

The law also prohibits them from voluntarily quitting a job without good cause or reducing their work week below 30 hours ([7 CFR 273.7\(a\)](#)).

Certain people are exempt from these requirements, including those who are (1) under age 18 or over age 59, (2) physically or mentally unfit for work, (3) already subject to work requirements through another assistance program (e.g., Temporary Family Assistance), or (4) residents of substance abuse treatment programs, among others. Those 16 or 17 years old are exempt if they are (1) not the head of the household or (2) attending school or an employment training program ([7 CFR 273.7\(b\)](#)).

### ***Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD)***

In addition to requirements described above, able-bodied adults between the ages of 18 and 49 who have no dependents are subject to a time limit for receiving SNAP benefits unless they meet additional work requirements ([7 CFR 273.24](#)). Generally, these ABAWDs can only receive three months of SNAP benefits in a 36-month period, unless they:

1. work at least 20 hours per week, averaged monthly;
2. participate in and comply with work program requirements for 20 hours per week, as determined by the state agency;
3. work and participate in a work program for a total of 20 hours per week; or
4. participate in a state's "workfare" program (i.e., unpaid work in exchange for cash assistance).

Federal law allows states to provide "15% exemptions," which extend SNAP eligibility to ABAWDs who would not otherwise be eligible. The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) allots these exemptions to states, allowing them to exempt from work requirements up to 15% of the portion of their caseload that would be ineligible for SNAP benefits due to the ABAWD time limit ([7 CFR 273.24\(g\)](#)).

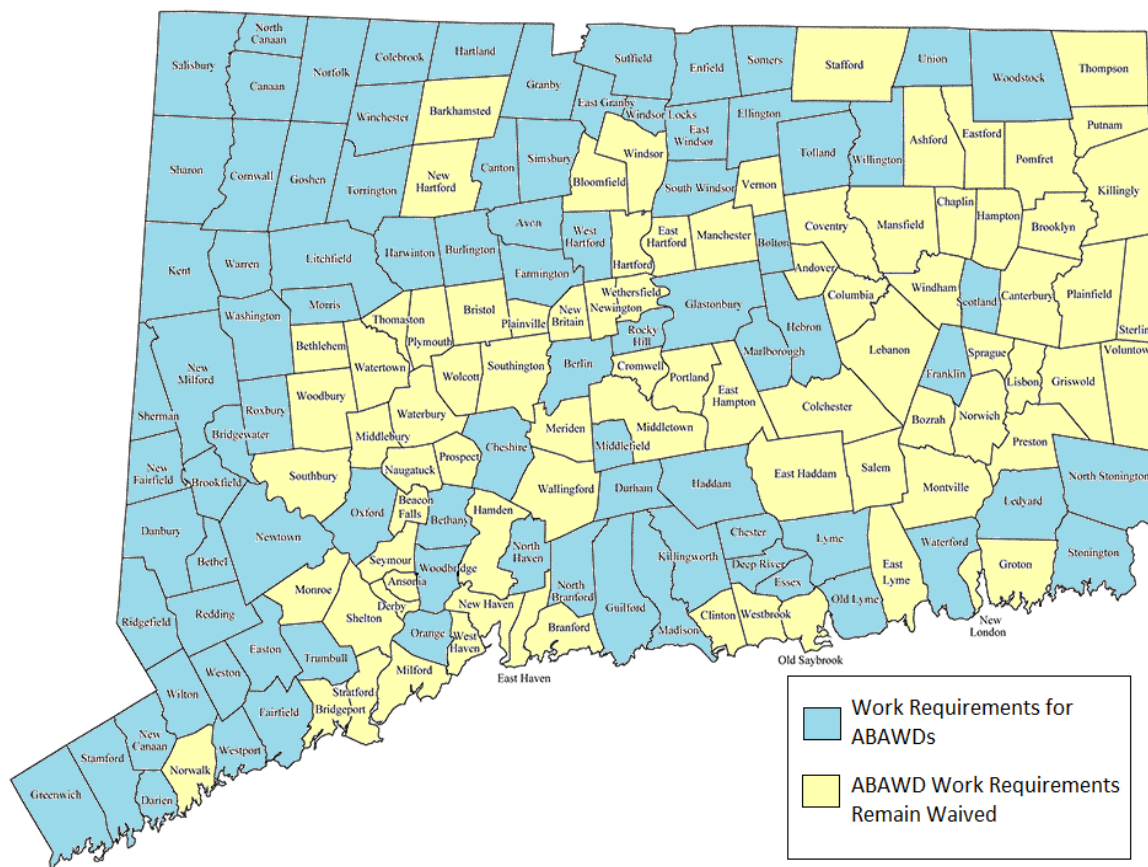
Federal time limit and work requirements for ABAWDs have been in place since 1996 and include provisions allowing states to apply for a waiver from the requirements for areas (either statewide or for geographic subdivisions) that have an unemployment rate of over 10% or do not have sufficient jobs to provide employment for affected individuals ([7 CFR 273.24\(f\)](#)). The federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act suspended ABAWD time limits nationwide from April 2009 to September 2010. In the years that followed, many states, including Connecticut, applied for and received statewide waivers to the rule. As the economy has recovered, many states are no longer eligible for ABAWD waivers.

## Connecticut's Current ABAWD Requirements

Since eligibility for waivers is tied to economic recovery, as of January 1, 2016, Connecticut is no longer eligible for a statewide waiver. According to [DSS, 82 towns](#) will continue to be subject to the waiver, while [87 towns](#) now have work requirements for ABAWDs (see Figure 1).

According to DSS, when the state became ineligible for a statewide ABAWD waiver, it consulted with the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) to analyze areas that might remain eligible and assist DSS with preparing waiver requests for those areas. CBPP analysts calculated unemployment rates for groups of towns belonging to the same [labor market areas](#). Those groups of towns with an average unemployment rate 20% higher than the national average over a certain 24-month period qualified for a waiver. In these towns, ABAWDs are not subject to ABAWD work requirements and time limits. In all other towns, ABAWDs who do not meet ABAWD work requirements are generally only eligible for SNAP benefits for three months in a 36-month period.

Figure 1: ABAWD Work Requirements by Town



Source: OLR, based on [DSS list of towns](#)



## **HYPERLINKS**

Connecticut Department of Labor: [Annual Population Estimates](#). October 2015.

Connecticut Department of Labor: [State of Connecticut Towns Listed by Labor Market Area](#). March 2015

Department of Social Services: [New Eligibility Time Limits for Some SNAP Participants](#). December 2015.

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