

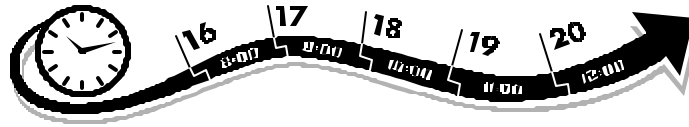
The “3-Month Rule”

The 3-month rule is a special Food Stamp rule for people age 18-49, do not have children who live with them, and are not deferred from the rule.

Food Stamp recipients who are subject to the 3-month rule must work at least 20 hours per week to continue receiving Food Stamps. Childless adults who do not work an average of 2- hours per week can only get Food Stamps for 3 months within 3 years. Instead of counting a new 3 years for each person, the 3-month rule uses one 3-year period for the entire state.

A new 3-year period begins for everyone in Michigan on December 1, 2002

If you have used up your 3 months anytime since December 1999 (even if it was during this year), you can get Food Stamps for another 3 months starting in December 2002.



Am I deferred from the 3-month rule?

The 3-month rule should not apply to you if you are:

- Unable to work because of physical or mental problems (you will have to show a doctor’s note), or
- Caring for someone who is disabled, or
- Pregnant, or
- Applying for or receiving unemployment insurance, or
- Disabled, or
- Participating in a substance abuse treatment program

What if I can’t find a job?

There are other ways to meet the work requirement for the 3-month rule if you can’t find a job. You can also volunteer somewhere or participate in the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program.

The Food Stamp Employment and Training Program (E&T)

The Food Stamp E&T Program provides work and training for adults who are subject to the 3-month rule. If you participate in the E&T program and you meet other Food Stamp requirements, you will not lose your Food Stamps after 3 months.

1. **Get a referral from FIA.** This Michigan Works! Agency runs the E&T program. To participate you must get a referral from your FIA caseworker. If you can’t attend the orientation on the day it is offered, ask your FIA caseworker for another day.
2. **Go to job search for 1 month.** After orientation, you will have to participate in job search for 1 month. You can get help with your resume and your interviewing skills.
3. **Community work experience.** If you don’t find work after 1 month, the E&T program will find you an unpaid community service work experience job. You will have to work the same number of hours as your Food Stamp amount divided by the minimum wage. You cannot be required to work more than this number of hours without pay.

NOTE: you may be required to do other activities, like job search, in addition to your

unpaid work. You can't be required to do more than 30 hours of activities per week total.

4. Education and Training. You can use up to 15 hours of education and training per month to meet your work requirement for the 3-month rule. Talk to your FIA caseworker for more information.

5. Employment Support Services. You can receive up to \$25 per month through the E&T program for work- or E&T-related expenses, like transportation, work clothes or tools.

Community Service

You can keep your Food Stamps for more than 3 months by volunteering somewhere each month. You must volunteer for the same number of hours as your Food Stamp amount divided by the minimum wage.

You have to find a volunteer site on your own. Your FIA caseworker may have a list of agencies you can call. You will have to have your supervisor at the volunteer site fill out a form that certifies you have volunteered for the agency during the month.

You must volunteer every month to avoid the 3-month time limit!

For more information on how to receive Food Stamps, visit www.foodstamphelp.org or call

1-800-481-4989



Finding Legal Help:

Contact your local legal services office, listed under "attorneys" in the yellow pages, or call the Michigan State Bar Lawyer Referral hotline at 1-800-968-0739

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The Food Stamp 3-month rule

Information on how to get or keep Food Stamps for 18-49 year old childless adults



If you lost your Food Stamps since December 1999 because you used up your 3 months, you may be able to get Food Stamps again in December 2002.