

WSR 25-20-012

PERMANENT RULES

DEPARTMENT OF

SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

(Economic Services Administration)

[Filed September 19, 2025, 8:18 a.m., effective October 20, 2025]

Effective Date of Rule: Thirty-one days after filing.

Purpose: The department of social and health services is adopting amendments to WAC 388-482-0005 How does being a student of higher education affect my eligibility for the Washington basic food program? These amendments are necessary to align WAC with federal rules regarding student eligibility and remove language regarding the temporary expansion of student eligibility for food assistance during the public health emergency, which ended May 11, 2023.

Citation of Rules Affected by this Order: Amending WAC 388-482-0005.

Statutory Authority for Adoption: RCW 43.20A.760, 74.04.500, 74.04.510, and 74.08A.120.

Other Authority: 7 C.F.R. 273.5(b).

Adopted under notice filed as WSR 25-16-109 on August 6, 2025.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Comply with Federal Statute: New 0, Amended 1, Repealed 0; Federal Rules or Standards: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Recently Enacted State Statutes: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted at the Request of a Nongovernmental Entity: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted on the Agency's own Initiative: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Clarify, Streamline, or Reform Agency Procedures: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted using Negotiated Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Pilot Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Other Alternative Rule Making: New 0, Amended 1, Repealed 0.

Date Adopted: September 19, 2025.

Katherine I. Vasquez
Rules Coordinator

SHS-5095.1

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 21-17-093, filed 8/13/21, effective 9/13/21)

WAC 388-482-0005 How does being a student of higher education affect my eligibility for the Washington basic food program? (1) If you are enrolled at least half-time in an institution of higher education, you are ineligible for basic food unless you qualify for an exemption in subsection (4) of this section.

(2) You are considered a student of higher education for basic food purposes if you are:

(a) Enrolled in an institution of higher education at least half-time as defined by the institution; and

(b) Enrolled in coursework considered to be higher education.

(3) An institution of higher education is:

- (a) Any educational institution that requires a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate;
- (b) A business, trade, or vocational school that requires a high school diploma or high school equivalency; or
- (c) A two-year or four-year college or university that offers a degree but does not require a high school diploma or high school equivalency.

(4) If you are a student of higher education, you must also meet at least one of the following exemptions to be eligible for basic food:

- (a) You are age (~~(seventeen)~~) 17 or younger;
- (b) You are age (~~(fifty)~~) 50 or older;
- (c) You are physically or mentally (~~(unable)~~) unfit to work while attending school (we determine if you are unable to work);
- (d) You have paid employment and work an average of at least (~~(twenty)~~) 20 hours per week each month;
- (e) You are self-employed, work, and earn at least the amount you would earn working an average of (~~(twenty)~~) 20 hours per week at the federal minimum wage each month; or
- (f) You (~~(were)~~) are participating in a state or federal work study program during the regular school year.
 - (i) To qualify under this exemption, you must:
 - (A) Have approval for work study at the time of application for basic food;
 - (B) Have work study that is approved for the school term; and
 - (C) Anticipate actually working during that time.
 - (ii) The work study exemption begins:
 - (A) The month in which the school term starts; or
 - (B) The month work study is approved, whichever is later.
 - (iii) Once begun, the work study exemption shall continue until:
 - (A) The end of the month in which the school term ends; or
 - (B) We find out you refused a work study assignment.

~~((g) Starting January 16, 2021, you are determined eligible to participate in state or federal work study by your institution of higher education during the regular school year. Requirements under subsections (4) (f) (i) (iii) of this section are suspended until the COVID-19 federal public health emergency ends as described under subsection (5) of this section.~~

~~(h))~~ (g) You are responsible for (~~(more than half)~~) the care of a dependent person in your assistance unit (AU) who is age five or younger;

~~((i))~~ (h) You are responsible for (~~(more than half)~~) the care of a dependent person in your AU who is between age six and (~~(eleven)~~) 11, if we have determined that there (~~(is not)~~) isn't adequate child care available during the school year to allow you to:

- (i) Attend class and satisfy the (~~(twenty)~~) 20-hour work requirement; or
- (ii) Take part in a work study program.

~~((j))~~ (i) You are a single parent who is a full time student that is responsible for the care of your natural, step, or adopted child who is (~~(eleven)~~) 11 or younger;

~~((k))~~ (j) You are an adult who has the parental responsibility of a child who is age (~~(eleven)~~) 11 or younger if none of the following people live in the home:

- (i) The child's parents; or
- (ii) Your spouse.

~~((1))~~ (k) You participate in the WorkFirst program under WAC 388-310-0200;

~~((m))~~ (l) You receive TANF or SFA benefits;

~~((n))~~ (m) You attend an institution of higher education through:

(i) The Workforce Investment Act (WIA);

(ii) The basic food employment and training program under chapter 388-444 WAC;

(iii) An approved state or local employment and training program; or

(iv) Section 236 of the Trade Act of 1974.

~~((o) Starting January 16, 2021, you have an expected family contribution (EFC) of zero dollars in the current academic year as determined by part F of Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.~~

~~(5) The conditions in subsection (4)(g) and (o) of this section will continue as follows:~~

~~(a) For initial applications, until thirty days after the COVID-19 federal public health emergency ends.~~

~~(b) For recertifications, no earlier than your first recertification thirty days after COVID-19 federal public health emergency ends.~~

~~(6))~~ (5) If you are a student of higher education, your status as a student:

(a) Begins the first day of the school term; and

(b) Continues through vacations. This includes the summer break if you plan to return to school for the next term.

~~((7))~~ (6) We do not consider you a student of higher education if you:

(a) Graduate;

(b) Are suspended or expelled;

(c) Drop out; or

(d) Do not intend to register for the next normal school term other than summer school.