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**Division of Medicaid Services**  
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To: FSET Handbook Users

From: Jori Mundy, Bureau Director  
Bureau of Eligibility and Enrollment Policy

Re: **FSET Handbook Release 21-02**

Release Date: 12/13/2021

Effective Date: 12/13/2021

<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	The following policy additions or changes are <b>effective 12/13/2021</b> unless otherwise noted. <b>Underlined text denotes new text. Text with a strike through it denotes deleted text.</b>
<b>POLICY UPDATES</b>	
<b>1.4.6 FSET Component Activities: Job Retention</b>	Clarified job retention policy and added examples.
<b>6.5.1 Tracking FSET Participation: Monthly Participation</b>	Clarified job retention participation policy and added an example.
<b>6.6 Good Cause</b>	Clarified conditions for use of good cause.
<b>10.4 Appendix D: Supportive Services Allowable Expenses</b>	Added other details for Gas as a supportive service allowable expense.

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# 1.4 FSET Component Activities

## 1.4.6 Job Retention

The only activity under the job retention component is job retention. It is a qualifying activity that provides services for a minimum of 30 days and each job retention service assignment may be offered for no more than 90 days to participants who have secured employment while enrolled and participating in the FSET program.

A good faith effort must be made to provide at least 30 days of job retention services to FSET participants enrolled in the job retention component. Good faith efforts may include informing participants in the job retention component of the 30-day minimum and developing a job retention case management plan that extends at least 30 days. When offering job retention, workers must document in PIN comments that the job retention activity was explained, offered, and whether job retention was accepted or declined.

Both of the following must be true in order for an individual to participate in job retention:

- The individual was enrolled in FSET prior to obtaining employment; and
- The individual received FoodShare benefits the month of or the month prior to when job retention services would begin.

The criteria above must be met each time the job retention component is assigned. The start date of the job retention activity assignment must be on the day that job retention is accepted by the participant or the start date of the employment, whichever is later. Individuals may accept job retention services while they maintain employment at any time prior to disenrollment.

Example:	<u>Sam participates in adult basic education and obtains their GED, gains full time employment, and declines job retention services. The following month, Sam received feedback from their employer and needs to work on time management. Sam is again offered and accepts job retention services.</u>
Example:	<u>Mark participates in career planning, gains full time employment, declines job retention services, and requests to end services. Mark is disenrolled from FSET. Later that year, Mark re-enrolls in FSET and asks for job retention for the employment gained prior to re-enrollment in FSET. The FSET case manager denies job retention services.</u>

An individual, who received job retention services for employment and then obtained new employment, may be eligible for additional job retention services, if the individual participated in an FSET component in addition to job retention prior to gaining the new employment. If the individual is currently participating in an FSET component and obtains another job while receiving job retention services, the individual may be assigned a second period of job retention.

Example:	Sheena participates in <del>employment</del> <u>supervised job</u> search, gains
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	employment, and receives 90 days of job retention services. Sheena later participates in <del>employment</del> <u>supervised job</u> search and job skills training to find a better job. Sheena obtains another job and qualifies for an additional 90 days of job retention services.
Example:	<u>Juan participates in job skills training, gains part-time employment, and begins job retention services. Juan continues to participate in supervised job search while in job retention services, and after 70 days, they obtain a second part-time job. The FSET case manager may provide case management services to help Juan maintain both part-time jobs. The FSET case manager may assign a second period of job retention services once the first 90-day period ends because Juan was participating in an FSET activity in addition to job retention services at the time that he obtained the second employment.</u>

There is no limit on the number of times an individual may receive job retention services if the individual participated in FSET activities, other than job retention, prior to obtaining the new employment.

Job retention includes:

- Job retention reimbursement for reasonable and necessary expenses to assist individuals in maintaining employment; and
- Case management services that address workplace demands and employer expectations.

Individuals receiving job retention services ~~usually~~ sometimes will not continue to participate in other FSET components, but they ~~may~~ have the option to choose to continue participation. In some cases individuals may become FoodShare ineligible while enrolled in job retention services. Job retention services may continue after an individual becomes FoodShare ineligible as long as the individual became ineligible for a reason other than an intentional program violation (IPV) or failure to comply with FoodShare work requirements without good cause. If an individual obtains employment but continues to participate in other allowable FSET components, he or she is eligible to receive supportive services if reasonable, necessary, and directly related to participation in the FSET components. For more information on supportive services, see FSET Handbook Chapter 5.0 Supportive Services.

## 6.5 Tracking FSET Participation

### 6.5.1 Monthly Participation

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FSET agencies must collect and record attendance information in CWW for assigned activities for all ABAWD and non-ABAWD participants. All participation documentation must be obtained from the FSET participant, work site or other education and training providers on a monthly basis (at minimum). The documentation must be maintained in the participant's electronic case file (ECF). FSET agencies must provide participants with a variety of methods for submitting participation hours including, but not limited to, in-person, over the phone, email, 24-hour drop boxes, and fax.

FSET agencies are responsible for collecting group activity participation when multiple participants are engaged in the same activity at one location. It is the primary responsibility of the participant to return the paperwork to the agency verifying participation in activities that involve an activity log. The agency should make arrangements to get the paperwork directly from the service provider when possible. FSET agencies can encourage participants to turn in participation hours on a weekly basis, however, FSET agencies must notify participants that they should at a minimum submit documentation of participation hours by the end of the current month of participation.

Individuals assigned to job retention should be assigned ~~to exactly one hour per month of job retention~~ a minimum of one hour per month of job retention. However, tracking hours of participation in job retention depends on the actual number of hours the person receives job retention services. Track the actual number of hours of job retention that is completed by the participant as you would track any other assigned activity.

Example 1:	<u>Veng participates in post-secondary education, and gains employment, and agrees to participate in job retention. Veng's FSET case manager updates his EP and assigns 1 hour of job retention for the current month. Veng participates in 3 hours of job retention services in March, so the FSET case manager tracks 3 hours of job retention.</u>
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See FSET HANDBOOK 1.4.6 JOB RETENTION for more information on this activity. Record the number of work hours under the employment activity code. Any additional activities should be recorded under that specific activity code.

## 6.6 Good Cause

The FSET agency is responsible for documenting FSET non-participation in assigned activities, while taking into consideration reasons that justify granting good cause.

Good cause should only be applied to participants that are subject to meeting the ABAWD work requirement. Granting good cause allows an ABAWD participant to maintain FoodShare eligibility if he or she remains enrolled in FSET but is temporarily unable to meet the work requirement. Before the FSET agency indicates that an individual's monthly work requirement was unmet, a decision must be made to determine if there was good cause for the non-participation. The FSET worker indicates good cause on a monthly basis as part of tracking FSET participation hours, if necessary. When making decisions about granting good cause, the FSET worker should consider all facts and circumstances and seek additional information from other sources for clarification, as needed. FSET agencies also have the ability to question good cause when it seems questionable and request verification.

## 10.4 Appendix D: Supportive Services Allowable Expenses

Item	Almost Always	Sometimes	Never	Other Details
Auto insurance			X	
Auto ownership tag, title, licensing		X		Only if required for FSET participation and no other transportation option is available.
Auto purchase			X	
Auto repairs		X		<u>ONLY UNDER SPECIFIC CONDITIONS.*</u>
Background checks		X		Only if required for employment and training.
Books	X			
Clothing for job interview	X			
Clothing required for a job		X		Uniforms almost always. Otherwise clothing costs are limited and must be reasonable and necessary for employment as a part of job retention.

Commercial driver's license		X		Only if required for employment.
Computers, laptops, etc.			X	
Course registration fees	X			
Dental work		X		To the extent that it is required for employment and as funds allow for reimbursement. Dental work costs are limited to minor work, such as a cleaning. Major work, such as oral surgery, bridge work, braces, and dentures, are not allowable expenses.
Dependent care costs	X			
Driver license applications and renewal fees		X		Must be reasonable and necessary for participation in an employment and training component or employment as a part of job retention.
Drug/alcohol counseling			X	Refer participant to another agency.
Drug tests		X		Only if required for employment.
Equipment		X		Must be reasonable and necessary for participation in an employment and training component or employment as a part of job retention.
Fines			X	No exceptions for any type.
Fingerprinting		X		Only if required for employment.
Gas	X			<u>Includes reimbursement for gas when it is reasonable and necessary for the participant to rely on someone else to provide transport to and from assigned FSET activities.</u>

Legal services		X		Must be very minor (i.e. notary) and directly related to employment.
Licensing and bonding fees for work or work experience	X			
Living expenses and stipends			X	
Medical expense		X		Only if minor and required for employment, such as a tuberculosis test.
Mental health counseling or treatment			X	Refer participant to appropriate agency.
Relocation expenses		X		Must be reasonable and necessary for employment as part of a job retention component.
Safety items (on the job)	X			
Student activity fees		X		Only if required to participate in class.
Student loans			X	Participants should apply for financial aid.
Taxi driver's license		X		Only if required for employment.
Test fees		X		Must be directly applicable to employment and all other funding sources exhausted.
Temporary housing		X		Housing assistance may be provided on a case-by-case basis for emergency situations, and only when all other funding sources have been exhausted. The rationale for housing assistance must also be documented in PIN comments in the FSET Tool. Housing assistance may be provided for a period of one month maximum per an individual's FoodShare certification period.**



Tools		X		Must be reasonable and necessary for participation in an employment and training component or employment as part of job retention.
Training materials	X			
Transportation expenses (gas, bus fare)	X			
Tuition and fees		X		
Uniforms	X			
Union dues		X		Only if required for employment.
Vision needs (glasses or eye exam)		X		Must be reasonable and necessary for participation in an employment and training component or employment as a part of job retention.