



## RANDOLPH COUNTY Department of Social Services

**Beth W. Duncan**  
Director

**Samuel R. Frazier**  
Board Chair

### PRESS RELEASE FACT SHEET

#### “Food and Nutrition Services Help Over 11,400 Families in Randolph County Every Month”

*Food and Nutrition Services* (FNS), a.k.a. Food Stamps, assists low income households with buying the food they need for a nutritionally adequate diet. This program serves over 11,400 families (25,000 individuals) in Randolph County totaling more than \$3 million a month and close to \$40 million a year.

FNS is a federal entitlement program. In other words, anyone can receive food assistance if they meet eligibility requirements. This is where the local county Department of Social Services (DSS) steps in. DSS is the local government agency that accepts applications, collects information, and determines eligibility for the FNS program.

If eligible, monthly allotments of FNS benefits are issued via Electronic Benefit Transfer cards (EBT cards). The amount of the monthly allotment varies from household to household and is based on income and number of household members served. Benefits may be used to purchase most foods at participating stores. Benefits may not be used to purchase tobacco, pet food, paper products, or alcoholic beverages.

Effective January 1, 2016, North Carolina reinstated a work requirement in the FNS Program that was put on hold during the “great recession.” The rule says that adults who are ages 18 through 49, who are able to work, and do not have children under the age of 18 included in their FNS benefits, must work 20 hours per week to receive FNS benefits. This rule, called **ABAWD** (Able-Bodied Adult without Dependents), means these individuals can only get FNS benefits for 3 months during the next 3 years unless they are exempt or meet certain work requirements. Exemptions include:

- Under 18 or 50 years of age or older;
- Physically or mentally unable to work 20 hours per week (even temporarily);
- Pregnant;
- Part of a FNS benefit household with a child under 18 (the child need not be yours);
- Providing care for an incapacitated person;
- Participating in a substance abuse program;
- Receiving unemployment benefits; or
- In school at least half time (as defined by any recognized school, training program, or institution of higher education).

For additional information, call or visit your local DSS or see: <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/low-income-services/food-nutrition-services-food-stamps>.

**P.O. Box 3239 • Asheboro, North Carolina 27204**

[www.co.randolph.nc.us/dss/](http://www.co.randolph.nc.us/dss/)

**Serving by empowering, protecting, educating, and promoting stability.**