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National Unemployment Rate Hits 50 Year 27,000 Able-Bodied New Mexicans Without Dependents Remain on SNAP

(Albuquerque, NM) – The US unemployment rate just hit 50 year lows last week, but an estimated 27,000 Able-Bodied New Mexicans without Dependents Remain (ABAWDs) on the federal food stamp (SNAP) program.

New Mexico remains one of [four states](#) with full statewide waivers in place.

New Mexico's current statewide unemployment is 5.1% -- almost half of the 10% threshold set in the food stamp statute to trigger waivers. That's one of the lowest unemployment rates in State history. Eddy County and Los Alamos County have unemployment rates of 3.2%, but are still waived.

NM has more than 27,000 ABAWDs on the program, per the state's Employment & Training state plan.

According to federal data, 75% of ABAWDs in New Mexico do not work at all.

New Mexico employers have nearly [30,000 open jobs posted online, per the Conference Board](#).

New Mexico employers [experience nearly 104,000 job openings per year](#), according to the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions.

While data show that New Mexico's [children suffer from worst-in-the-nation hunger problems](#), elimination of the waiver would only impact able-bodied adults without children.

As Rio Grande Foundation president Paul Gessing points out, "Limited resources should be targeted at real problems like alleviating childhood hunger, not allowing able-bodied adults without children to avoid getting back to work. It is time for Gov. Lujan-Grisham to end this waiver so more New Mexicans can get back to work.