

DMCPS Internal Document

Initial Assessment Specialist Certification (IASC) Program Syllabus

Last Updated/Reviewed: October 29, 2019
Effective Date: August 2021
Contact Name/Phone: [Mika Makarovich](#), Professional Development
Section Manager
Sarah Henery, Administrator

SUMMARY

The Purpose of this Initial Assessment Specialist Certification (IASC) Program syllabus is to outline the entire program that needs to be completed by all Initial Assessment Specialists (IAS) hired by the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS). All changes to this outline will be documented and change details and dates will be added to the IASC Program Syllabus: Change Log. It is highly recommended that changes to this program be made no more than once annually, unless compelling circumstances exist.

The purpose of this training is to prepare all new DMCPS IAS' to fulfill their CPS/child welfare responsibilities at a basic level of proficiency in accordance with the Wisconsin Child Protective Services Safety Intervention Standards, Access and Initial Assessment (IA) Standards and Wisconsin Children's Code. New staff will receive structured written feedback with plans for improvement as needed as well as verbal feedback from trainers, training staff and supervisors. All documentation related to the completion of Skills Assessments and Assignments shall be kept in the employees training folder.

The DMCPS Certification program is supported through a partnership between the DMCPS and Wisconsin Child Welfare Professional Development System (WCWPDS). This plan includes training for new hires and existing staff for the purposes of certification, recertification and ongoing professional development and education.

Related Resources:

[DMCPS Initial Assessment Specialist Certification Policy, IA 4.00](#)
DMCPS Initial Assessment Specialist Certification Change Log

Online Modules

| Module | Description |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Pre-service modules are taken as online courses | Pre-Service online modules. |

WCWPDS Trainings

| Training | Description |
|---|---|
| Professionalism in Child Welfare | The professional tenets, values and ethics in Child Welfare. |
| Introduction to Culturally Competent Practice in Child Welfare | Participants will learn the role culturally competent practice has in child protective services. |
| Fundamentals of Family Centered Case Management | Provides basic information to participants about family-centered child welfare practice. |
| Engaging to Build Trusting Relationships | Provides an in-depth look at how to put family-centered strengths-based principles into practice. |
| Information Collection and Decision Making in Child Protective Services | Provides an overview of the information collection process in Child Protection Services and the importance of utilizing standards. |
| Safety in CPS: Present Danger | This training will describe and apply the process for assessing Present Danger Threats and examine the list of standardized threats. |
| Safety in CPS: Impending Danger | This training will describe and apply the process for assessing Impending Danger Threats and examine the list of standardized threats, danger threshold criteria, as well as safety analysis and safety planning. |
| Initial Assessment (IA) | This course is designed to provide a solid foundation of the purpose and approach of IA casework and use and requirements of the Standards. |

DMCPS Trainings

| Training | Description |
|--------------------------|---|
| e-WiSACWIS: Introduction | Provides a basic understanding of how to navigate e-WiSACWIS. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Car Seat Safety | Provides education on car seat laws and best practice for safest transport. |
| Protective Planning | Offers opportunity to assess for Present Danger, develop and implement a Protective Plan. |
| e-WiSACWIS: Initial Assessment | Provides a basic understanding of how to navigate e-WiSACWIS to complete the tasks related to the Initial Assessment. |
| Intensive In-Home Services (IIHS) | Provides an overview of the forms and technical requirements for when IIHS are implemented. |
| Temporary Physical Custody (TPC) | Provides a foundational understanding of the steps and actions needed during the TPC process. |
| Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) | Provides an understanding of the substantiation process, requirements, and the appeals process in accordance with CAPTA. |

Court Preparedness

| Training | Description |
|------------------------------|---|
| Basic Intake Worker Training | Provides IAS with the basic knowledge to take and hold a child/juvenile in custody and timelines that must be adhered to during the intake process, as specified in state statutes. |
| Court Preparedness | Provides IAS' with an overview of court etiquette and basic legal procedures encountered in the role of an IAS. |

Mentor Topics

| Training | Description |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Work Web | Navigation through the DCF Intranet to locate job aids, policies, and resources. |
| Random Moment of Time Study (RMTS) | Introduces new workers to the Random Moment of Time Study and its importance for our work. |
| Interpreters | Informs new workers of interpreter services used by DMCPs and tips for working with an interpreter. |
| Time Management | Provides new workers with information on the daily activities of an IAS and information on organization to work effectively. |

| | |
|--|---|
| Initial Assessment Documentation Tips | Provides information on the IA documents and the expectation for information, grammar, and analysis of information. |
| Interview Protocol | Educates new staff on the protocol for interviewing those involved in both Primary and Secondary cases, per IA Standards. |
| Joint Protocol | Educates new workers on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Child Abuse Review Team (CART) and ability to share information. |
| Worker Safety | Provides new workers with general tips for worker safety. |
| Child Interviews | Informs new workers on Access and IA Standards regarding legal rights to interview a child, how to prepare for child interviews, introductions during child interviews, and reducing child anxiety during interviews. |
| Field Documents and Community Resources | Introduces new workers to community resources and forms commonly used during the IA process. |
| Domestic Violence (DV) | Provides an overview of what DV is and is not, an overview of the dynamics in violent relationships, and assessing for safety when DV is of concern. |
| Family Case Transfer Meetings (FCTM) | Discusses the process of a FCTM and the IAS' role in its facilitation in accordance with Ongoing Standards. |
| Birth to 3 | Provides new workers with an overview of the Birth to 3 Program. |
| Medical Evaluation & Forensic Interviews | Provides information on when medical evaluations and forensic interviews should occur and how to obtain consent. |
| Child Development | Provides new workers with a basic understanding of child development. |
| Indian Child Welfare Act/ Wisconsin Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA/WICWA) | Provides new workers with a basic understanding of the ICWA/WICWA acts and the implications they have on CPS work. |
| Crisis Intervention | Provides a framework of how to engage with families and deescalate agitated individuals. |
| Writing an Initial Assessment (IA) | Provides a structure to the areas of assessment, information needed, and required analysis of information. |

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Independent Investigations | Provides an overview of the intent of the Independent Investigation and the process/procedure. |
|----------------------------|--|

Practica

| Training | Description |
|----------------|---|
| Engaging | Provides participants the opportunity to role play the different engaging skills/tools learned in Engaging training. |
| Safety | Provides participants with the opportunity to practice the application of the child protective service safety intervention concepts. |
| IA | Provides participants the opportunity to role play and explain their role, purpose and an explanation of the IA process to a client. As well as collect information through engagement. |
| Court Practica | IAS provides testimony during a mock trial on their safety decision making which lead to TPC. |

Skills Assessments

| Training | Description |
|--------------------|---|
| Safety | Oral presentation and assessment of safety- related case information to a panel. |
| Engagement | Oral demonstration of engagement and interviewing skills with an actor in front of a panel. |
| Initial Assessment | Oral presentation and assessment of a case to a panel. |

Assignments

| Training | Description |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Shadowing Reflection | IAS reflects on their professional biases and how this may impact them during interactions with families. |
| Professional Integrity Presentation | IAS will select a topic related to the Social Work Code of Ethics, Cultural Competency, Family Systems Theory, or Professional Identity, to present to the Professional Development Section. |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Initial Face to Face (IFTF) Case Note | IAS will complete IFTF case note to include information to support safety decision making. |
| Protective Plan | IAS will develop a Protective Plan on a training case. |
| TPC Document | IAS will complete a legal document to support TPC. |

Cases

| Training | Description |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Shadow IAS, IA Primary Case | IAS will shadow all contacts on a case with an IAS to experience a case in its entirety. |
| IA Primary Case | IAS will take the lead with engagement, information collection and safety analysis with the support of IAS-Senior/Advanced. |

Recertification

The goal of the re-certification process is to ensure that Certified IAS' maintain a basic level of proficiency through regular trainings and refreshers. Each IAS must complete at least 30 hours of professional development during each two-year cycle after two years of employment OR each two-year cycle following the social work certification timelines (odd years).

Each Certified IAS must attend Car Seat Safety, Safety Booster, Ethics and Boundaries as well as any other related trainings to ensure for compliance with DCF 43.

| Training | Description |
|-----------------------|--|
| Car Seat Safety | Provides education on car seat laws and best practice for safest transport. |
| Safety Booster | Refresher on safety decision making model. |
| Ethics and Boundaries | Curriculum to support professionalism and integrity when working with children and families. |