Changes to W-2 Manual Regarding Assessment

NOTE: The W-2 Manual sections are attached with all policy changes incorporated. Underlined text will be added, while text with strikeouts will be deleted. New sections will be clearly denoted as new sections.

2.10.6.5 Time Limit Extension Decisions and Assessment

The FEP must complete and submit ~~offer~~ the WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow ~~BST~~ if an initial 24-month placement time limit or 60-month state lifetime limit extension is going to be denied and the WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow ~~BST~~ has not been completed ~~or declined~~ within 12 calendar months prior to the participant's 24th or 60th month. The FEP cannot deny a time limit extension until the WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow ~~BST~~ is completed and submitted ~~offered to the participant using the W-2 Barrier Screening Tool Agreement Form (13578). A check of CARES screen WPRU will assist the FEP in determining the last date the BST was completed, declined or updated.~~

If the WWP Informal Assessment ~~BST results~~ indicates the need for a formal assessment, a time limit extension cannot be denied until the formal assessment is complete. ~~(See 5.4.1)~~

> ~~**Example:** Jonna moved to Wisconsin with 46 months of TANF assistance received from Illinois. She was placed in W-2 T in March 2011. The BST was administered during the application process in March 2011. Jonna left W-2 in May 2011. She returned to W-2 in December 2011 but the W-2 agency was not required to offer the BST because her case had not been closed for a period of one year or more. Jonna will reach her 60th month in October 2012. In Jonna's 54th month, which is April 2012, the FEP must have a discussion with Jonna regarding the opportunities for a time limit extension. At that time, the FEP sees that Jonna has not had the BST offered in over 12 months (since March 2011) when she first became eligible for W-2. If the FEP is considering denying a time limit extension for Jonna, the FEP must again offer the BST.~~

5.1 Introduction

Under W-2, assessment is the process of gathering the needed information to develop an Employability Plan customized for the participant that will result in either a successful employment outcome which starts the individual on a career path; or, if appropriate, a path to eligibility for SSI and/or SSDI benefits.

Certain types of ~~screening and~~ assessment are required for all W-2 applicants and participants, including:

- Informal Assessment; and
- Educational Needs Assessment~~;~~.
- ~~The offer to complete the BST.~~

The information gathered through these required processes will assist the FEP in identifying whether additional Formal Assessments are needed to develop the participant's EP.

Under W-2, the assessment process is conducted in collaboration with the applicant or participant. The results of each assessment must be discussed with the participant and the participant must be given the opportunity to provide input on his or her W-2 placement and the activities that are assigned as part of the EP.

5.1.1 Assessment at Application

5.1.1.1 Assessment with Former W-2 Participants at Application
5.1.1.2 Referral for Formal Assessment at Application

During the application process and prior to placing the individual in a W-2 placement, the W-2 agency:

- Must work with the applicant to complete an informal assessment; (See 5.2)
- Must work with the applicant to complete an educational needs assessment ; (See 5.3) and
- Must obtain the results of any vocational evaluation/assessments or formal assessments if available from prior W-2 episodes. (See 4.6.3)
- ~~Must offer the BST; (See 5.4.1.1) and~~

Using the assessment information gathered at application, the worker ~~M~~may require the applicant to participate in up-front job search activities as a condition of eligibility. (See 2.9.2)

To make the initial W-2 placement and to develop the EP, the FEP must use the best information available during the application timeframe:

- ~~r~~Results of the informal assessment~~,~~;
- ~~r~~Results from the educational needs assessment~~,~~;
- ~~the BST results if available,~~
- Career assessment results, if available;
- ~~and the~~ ~~p~~Progress made during assignment to up-front job search activities, if assigned; and

- Results of any other vocational evaluation/assessments or formal assessments, if available.

5.1.1.1 Assessment with Former W-2 Participants at Application (New Section)

When an individual applies for W-2, the W-2 agency must determine if the individual received W-2 in the past and obtain prior assessment information. If prior assessment information is current and relevant to the individual's current situation, this information may be used to aid in decision-making for the initial placement and EP.

If the individual received W-2 in the past, the W-2 agency must check the WWP Participant Barriers page to see if any formal assessments were completed previously. If so, the applicant's W-2 agency must obtain all copies of formal assessments, treatment notes, and additional information from ECF.

If the formal assessment is not available in ECF and the individual was previously assigned to a different agency, the current W-2 agency must contact the previously assigned agency. The previously assigned W-2 agency is required to provide all copies of requested documentation to the current W-2 agency so that it is received within 7 working days. (See 4.6.3)

The FEP should consider a formal assessment acceptable if completed within one year prior to W-2 T placement. Results from a prior formal assessment may only be used if the assessment contains the necessary elements and is relevant to the employment barrier in question. If the prior formal assessment results have an expiration date that indicates the results are no longer valid or there is reason to believe the formal assessment information does not reflect the participant's current circumstances, then a new formal assessment must be completed. (See 5.5.1.1)

5.1.1.2 Referral for Assessment at Application (New Section)

During the application process, the FEP may also refer the applicant for vocational evaluation/assessment and/or formal assessment of employment barriers. (See 5.5.1) However, completing referrals for vocational evaluation/assessments or formal assessments are not eligibility requirements.

~~When an applicant needs extra time to gather verification for eligibility, the FEP can extend the application time frame up to 30 days.~~ Because career assessments, additional vocational evaluation/assessments, and formal assessments are not eligibility requirements, the FEP must never delay eligibility determination and initial placement because one of these ~~a formal~~ assessments is pending. The placement decision must be made using the best available information during the application timeframe. (See 1.4.4) The W-2 placement may be adjusted later, if needed, when the additional ~~formal~~ assessment information is received.

To gather assessment results, W-2 agencies are also encouraged to consult with other employment and training resources, and accept previous assessments done by other agencies if appropriate~~, including assessments completed in the past by other W-2 agencies~~.

5.1.2 Assessment as Part of Ongoing ~~On-Going~~ Case Management

Prior to making a change in W-2 placement, the W-2 agency:

- Must work with the participant to complete and submit the WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow; (See 5.2) and
- Must work with the participant to complete an educational needs assessment (See 5.3).

~~An informal assessment must be made prior to moving an individual to W-2 placement.~~

The following ~~informal~~ assessments are considered an ongoing ~~on-going~~ activity and are part of general W-2 case management:

1. **Educational Needs Assessment:** Educational needs assessment can be completed throughout ongoing case management as the participant's education and training needs may change.
    - ~~The~~ Standardized educational needs assessment tools should be used to determine a participant's educational levels. Educational needs assessment tools, like the TABE or BEST, test skills and aptitudes in reading, language, math computation, and applied math in order to identify current math and reading comprehension levels and any literacy or numeracy deficiencies. ~~is part of the ongoing case management process. Accordingly, the participant must be reassessed for education and training needs anytime there is a change in W-2 placement.~~ (See 5.3.1)
2. **Career Assessment:** Career assessments can be administered throughout ongoing case management as the participant's skill levels and work-readiness may change.
    - Career assessments should be used to identify *work styles*, *skills*, and *interests* in order to develop EPs and assign meaningful activities that allow participants to reach their goals.
        - *Work styles* – Refers to the participant's patterns of action or conduct, such as attendance, punctuality, appropriate appearance, ability to work with others, obeying rules, following directions, and completing tasks. Work style-focused career assessments can demonstrate the participant's attitudes and job readiness.

- *Skills* – Refers to the participant's skills or understanding of specific tasks related to employment, like cooking or computer programming. Skills-focused career assessments can include knowledge, aptitude, and ability. Skills can relate to a particular occupation, as typically listed in a job announcement to describe the tasks of a position.
- *Interests* – Refers to the participant's likes of particular objects, activities, and personalities using the theory that individuals with the same career tend to have the same interests. Interest-focused career assessments help participants identify work-related interests and find the types of careers that match. The results can be used to help participants learn which careers they are most likely to enjoy, including careers they may not have had knowledge of.

~~Career assessments can be administered throughout ongoing case management as participant's skill levels and work-readiness may change.~~

- ~~In some circumstances the BST must also be offered to W-2 participants as part of ongoing case management. (See 5.4.1.1)~~

~~The results of each assessment must be discussed with the participant and the participant must be given the opportunity to provide input on his/her W-2 placement and the activities that are assigned as part of the EP.~~ Do not use educational needs assessments in place of career assessments. Use educational needs assessments in tandem with career assessments to identify the participant's needs in order to improve work readiness and skills. The results of both assessments complement each other and inform the EP development and assignment of meaningful activities.

3. **WWP Informal Assessment:** The FEP may also choose to complete or edit the WWP Informal Assessment when there is reason to believe that reviewing the WWP Informal Assessment questions or specific pages may help initiate conversation about a potential barrier that is affecting the participant's ability to work or participate in assigned activities.

4. **Additional Approaches to Informal Assessment:** The W-2 agency may also use alternative approaches to supplement the information gathered through the WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow. (See 5.2.1).

5.2.1 Informal Assessment

Informal assessment is an ongoing case management practice, which starts during the W-2 application period and continues until the individual no longer receives W-2 services. A comprehensive informal assessment via the WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow must be completed and submitted prior to initial W-2 placement and at each placement change.

The purpose of the informal assessment process under W-2 is to gather information about an individual and his or her family to determine the:

- Individual's ability to become employed and remain employed;
- Services and activities necessary for the individual to become employed and remain employed;
- Appropriate placement of a participant;
- Need for further career assessment and planning;
- Need for vocational evaluation/assessment;
- Existence of potential disabilities or other specific limitations ~~through screening with a validated screening tool~~; and
- Need for a formal assessment of any disabilities or other employment barriers by a qualified assessing agency or individual.

~~Informal assessment is an ongoing case management practice which starts during the W-2 application period and continues until the individual no longer receives W-2 services.~~ Multiple approaches to informal assessment are generally used based on individual needs. ~~The CARES Work Program Assessment Driver Flow is required to be completed at initial W-2 placement and must be redone at each placement change.~~ Additional approaches to conducting informal assessment may include:

- Paper and pencil tools designed by the W-2 agency;
- Automated screening and assessment tools available within the W-2 agency;
- Information gathered through face-to-face case management meetings;
- Worksite performance evaluations;
- Goal setting exercises/tools (e.g., where do you want to be in six months? Two years?, etc.); and
- Experience with following through on job search and other assigned activities.

5.2.2 Informal Assessment Inventory

The WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow covers the following assessment categories related to an individual's ability to become employed and remain employed:

- Languages
- Work History
- Participation in Other Work Programs
- Education History
- Post-Secondary Education

- Military Service
- Housing
- Transportation
- Legal Issues
- Participant Barriers
- Child and Youth Supports
- Family Barriers

The WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow also includes a **Non-Custodial Parents** page that provides an opportunity for applicants/participants who are noncustodial parents (NCP) to discuss their role as a mother or father, and share basic information about the custodial parent and their child(ren) . In addition, the **NCP Referral** page is intended to help the W-2 worker determine if the agency could offer services to help the NCP of the applicant or participant's child(ren).

While moving through the WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow, the W-2 worker must gather information about applicants/participants' personal strengths, work styles, interests, and skills that may help them in their search for employment or that may be further developed through activities assigned in the EP. The W-2 worker must work with the applicant or participant to identify resources that will address any unmet needs identified during the informal assessment process.

In addition to the information gathered through completion of the WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow, the ~~The~~ following inventory must be covered as part of the informal assessment process and reviewed with each W-2 applicant or participant at application and as a part of ongoing case management.

- Personal strengths, interests and goals;
- Job skills (including transferable skills)~~, prior education and training~~;
- ~~Employment history and~~ Recent ~~recent~~ job search efforts;
- Results from career assessments that evaluate work styles, skills, and interests;
- ~~Emergency supportive service needs;~~
- Current ~~living situation,~~ neighborhood environment~~,~~ and schools;
- Household budgeting/money management strategies;
- ~~If recent move, from where and when;~~
- ~~Involvement in legal system that may impact ability to work;~~
- ~~Employment support (i.e. Work Connection and Retention Services);~~
- ~~Access to child care (including after-school);~~
- ~~Access to transportation, including current and valid driver's license;~~
- ~~Concerns related to personal and family health including mental health;~~

- ~~Educational experience, including any diagnosis related to learning disabilities;~~
- ~~Behavioral and other issues that a child in the W-2 Group may have that could impact W-2 participation;~~
- ~~Service needs and accommodations related to domestic violence and sexual assault;~~
- Access to social supports (e.g., family members, church, friends);
- Other needs or barriers identified by the applicant or participant that impede~~s~~ his or her ability to participate in W-2 activities or find and retain a job.

~~The FEP must gather information about applicants'/participants' personal strengths, work styles, interests, and skills that may help them in their search for employment or that may be further developed through activities assigned in the EP. In addition, the FEP must work with the applicant/participant to identify resources that will address any unmet needs identified during the informal assessment process.~~

Informal assessment must also include observations by the W-2 worker about the individual's ability to follow through on assigned activities and/or perform job search. When an applicant or participant is having difficulty completing assigned activities, this may be an indication of underlying barriers to employment and should result in further conversations with the individual about the appropriateness of the activities being assigned and the need for additional supportive services.

5.2.3 WWP Informal Assessment (New Section)

The WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow is intended to provide a framework to guide the interactive conversation needed to complete a comprehensive informal assessment. The W-2 worker is required to ask all questions that appear in the WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow, including additional questions that appear based on the W-2 applicant or participant's answers. The W-2 worker must also ask follow-up questions and engage the applicant or participant in further conversation beyond the prescribed questions to obtain information needed to determine how the life area affects employability. This process is also intended to ensure that the W-2 worker has sufficient detail on the W-2 applicant or participant's skills, abilities, interests, and goals to inform case management decision-making.

5.2.3.1 WWP Participant Barriers Questions (New Section)

The WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow includes a Participant Barriers page with questions to collect information about the applicant or participant's health and personal life that may affect the individual's ability to obtain and maintain employment. The WWP Informal Assessment - Participant Barriers page consists of five sections:

1. Physical Health
2. Mental Health
3. Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA)
4. Cognitive and Learning Needs
5. Domestic Abuse Screen

The responses to the WWP Informal Assessment Participant Barriers questions provided by each applicant or participant will assist the FEP in determining whether the individual could benefit from a formal assessment by a qualified professional or assessing agency (See 5.5.2). The responses will also provide basic information to inform case management decision-making until the formal assessment information is received.

When administering the Participant Barriers questions as part of the WWP Informal Assessment, the W-2 worker must explain to the applicant or participant the purpose of the Participant Barriers questions and the type of follow-up services that may result from providing answers to the questions. It is critical that the W-2 worker explain the Participant Barriers questions using positive language that reinforces how the applicant or participant may benefit from answering the questions.

The W-2 worker must ask each of the Participant Barriers questions; however, the applicant or participant may decline to answer the questions on this page without risk of sanction or case closure. If the applicant or participant declines to answer a Participant Barriers question, the W-2 worker must indicate this in WWP by checking the corresponding *refused* box and move on to the next question.

If the applicant or participant indicates that any of the issues identified on the Participant Barriers page may impact his or her ability to participate in W-2, the FEP must document the barrier in WWP and refer the individual for formal assessment. The FEP must document the formal assessment referral date on the corresponding WWP Barrier Details page. If the individual declines the offer for formal assessment, the FEP must indicate that the referral was declined on the corresponding WWP Barrier Details page.

Due to the potential for safety risks, there are several exceptions to the instructions for the Participant Barriers questions and formal assessment referral specific to the

Domestic Abuse Screen questions. The FEP must follow all instructions for administering the Domestic Abuse Screen in Section 5.6.1.

5.2.3.2 Required Timing for WWP Informal Assessment (New Section)

The WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow is required to be completed and submitted prior to initial W-2 placement and each placement change. The WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow must always reflect the most recent and up-to-date information the W-2 worker has about the participant and his or her family. The FEP must revisit the informal assessment inventory as needed and edit the appropriate WWP Informal Assessment pages to document any reported changes and part of the ongoing case management process.

The FEP must also complete and submit the WWP Informal Assessment to aid in identifying potential barriers to gaining or maintaining employment or additional service needs:

- When the individual requests to have the WWP Informal Assessment questions reviewed;
- When the FEP is considering denying an initial extension for a 24-month placement time limit or the 60-month state lifetime limit and the WWP Informal Assessment has not been completed or updated within 12 calendar months prior to the participant's 24th or 60th month in an ongoing case. (See 2.10.6.5).

The FEP may also choose to complete the WWP Informal Assessment when there is reason to believe that reviewing the WWP Informal Assessment questions may help initiate conversation about a potential barrier that is affecting the participant's ability to work or participate in assigned activities.

5.2.3.3 WWP Informal Assessment with Two-Parent Households (New Section)

If the W-2 group is a two-parent household, the WWP Informal Assessment must be completed with each parent separately, unless both parents request the WWP Informal Assessment be completed with the other parent present. (See 14.2.1) An applicant or participant must never be asked to complete the Domestic Abuse Screen while his or her partner or any other individual is present. (See 5.6.1)

5.2.3.4 WWP Informal Assessment with Children Present (New Section)

The WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow touches on sensitive topics that applicants/participants may not feel comfortable discussing in front of their children.

When completing the WWP Informal Assessment, the W-2 agency must make the individual aware of child care options that may be used while completing the driver flow. If requested, the W-2 agency should assist with connecting the participant to these child care options before completing the informal assessment questions.

5.2.3.5 WWP Informal Assessment Notes and Details (New Section)

The WWP Informal Assessment Driver Flow also includes Notes and Details fields for the W-2 worker to document additional information on any entry or response that is not fully explained, or captures additional information gathered during the conversation that is pertinent to the case management process.

5.2.3.5.1 Documenting Confidential Information in WWP Informal Assessment Notes and Details (New Section)

The W-2 worker must never enter confidential information in the WWP Notes and Details fields, with the exception of the Participant Barriers and Family Barriers pages. The Participant Barriers and Family Barriers pages prompt workers to ask questions about conditions that are considered confidential for purposes of the W-2 program and have security features to restrict access to these pages. See 4.2.2.1 for a listing of confidential information that must never be entered on WWP pages without the additional security protections.

5.4 Reserved for Future Policy ~~BST~~

Reserved

5.5.1.1 When to Use a Formal Assessment

A FEP can determine the need for a formal assessment at any point; however, a formal assessment must be offered within thirty (30) calendar days of any of the following situations:

1. When an applicant or participant presents medical or other information, including the applicant's or participant's own statements that indicate he or she may have a disability or other barrier to participation in the W-2 program or employment; or

~~2. When a participant is placed in a W-2 T position. Participants placed in W-2 T must have a formal assessment scheduled and documented in CARES within 30 calendar days of placement into W-2 T;~~

2~~3~~. When W-2 agency staff or contractors observe behavior that indicates the need for a formal assessment.~~; or~~

~~4. When the results of Informal Assessment and/or the BST indicate a need for further evaluation for identification of a disability or other barrier to participation in the W-2 program or employment. The formal assessment must be scheduled and documented in CARES within 30 calendar days after the BST is completed.~~

The FEP must offer a referral for formal assessment in any of the following situations:

1. When a participant is placed in a W-2 T position. Participants placed in W-2 T must have a formal assessment scheduled and documented in CARES within 30 calendar days of placement into W-2 T; and
2. When the results of the WWP Informal Assessment indicates a need for further evaluation for identification of a disability or other barrier to participation in the W-2 program or employment.

> **Note:** ~~A participant who is initially placed in W-2 may already have a formal assessment scheduled or completed at the time the BST is administered. In these circumstances, the BST results are still important as they may help the FEP and the assessing agency determine if other unknown conditions exist that are causing barriers to employment or W-2 participation.~~ When a participant is referred for a formal assessment based on the ~~results of the~~ information discussed during the WWP Informal Assessment ~~BST~~, ~~those results~~ any relevant information must be shared with the assessing agency if the participant agrees to sign a release of information.

When offering a formal assessment, the FEP must document the formal assessment referral date on the WWP Participant Barriers or in the Family Barriers page. Participants offered or referred for formal assessment must have a formal assessment activity scheduled and documented in CARES within 30 calendar days of the referral date indicated on the corresponding WWP Barrier Details or Family Barriers page.

Consider a formal assessment acceptable if completed within one year prior to the WWP Informal Assessment ~~BST screening~~ or W-2 T placement. It may be necessary for the W-2 agency to follow-up with the agency or individual who completed the assessment to interpret the assessment results and determine if any new treatment is being explored. If the prior formal assessment results have an expiration date that indicates the results are no longer valid or there is reason to believe the formal assessment information does not reflect the participant's current circumstances, then a new formal assessment must be completed.

Results from a prior formal assessment may only be used if the assessment contains the necessary elements and is relevant to the employment barrier in question. For example, if a formal assessment completed eight months ago evaluated the need for AODA services, but the potential employment barrier indicated in the WWP Informal Assessment ~~BST~~ relates to learning needs, then a new formal assessment must be completed.

5.5.1.2 How to Use a Formal Assessment

The FEP must use the W-2 Formal Assessment Agreement (form 2565) to help explain to the applicant or participant the purpose of the formal assessment and the type of follow-up services and activities that may result from completing it. It is critical that the FEP explain the formal assessment process using positive language that reinforces how the applicant or participant may benefit from completing it. Through the discussion, the applicant or participant must be made aware that assessment results will enable the individual and his or her FEP to make informed decisions about:

- his or her W-2 placement;
- his or her employment goals and the activities that will help reach those goals;
- his or her ability to engage in training and education; and
- any special services and work site accommodations that he or she may need.

The applicant or participant must indicate at the bottom of the agreement his or her decision to complete or decline a formal assessment.

The FEP must use the best information available from an informal assessment to initially place an individual in an employment position when a formal assessment is pending. Participating in a formal assessment may be counted as participation in an employment position. The FEP must document all formal assessment information in WWP and CARES utilizing the ~~appropriate~~ WWP Participant Barriers and Family Barriers pages and CARES screens, including case comments, as appropriate.

Within 30 days after receiving the results of the formal assessment, the FEP must make necessary adjustments to the participant's placement and revise the EP based on the formal assessment. The services and accommodations that are recommended in the formal assessment to help a participant succeed in a work setting must be incorporated into the participant's EP.

This may include:

- Obtaining needed medical treatment or counseling;
- Receiving needed services from other providers in the community;
- Ensuring participants have the necessary services, reasonable modifications and accommodations to successfully engage in assigned W-2 activities; and
- Working with employers to put needed accommodations into place for participants making the transition to unsubsidized employment.

As part of the process of revising the EP, the FEP must:

1. Provide the participant with a written description of any needed services, activities, and reasonable modifications or accommodations using the form, Services and Accommodations To Help You Do Your W-2 Activities (form 2564). If the FEP does not incorporate all of the recommended accommodations or modifications into the participant's EP, the FEP must document on the corresponding WWP Participant Barrier page ~~CARES screen WPBD~~ the reasons(s) the recommendation(s) were not incorporated. Any placement change based on a formal assessment must also be discussed with the participant and the participant's EP must be updated accordingly.

No change to remainder of 5.5.1.2

5.5.3 Necessary Elements

The qualified assessing agency must provide an individualized written assessment that enables the FEP to adapt W-2 activities to accommodate the needs of the participant. The assessment must include at a minimum, the following elements:

1. Personal conditions/diagnosis that impact ability to function in activities of daily living and the ability to perform work;
2. Functional abilities
3. Functional limitations related to employment and employability, and implications of those limitations on finding and maintaining employment;
4. General aptitude/cognitive level (applicable for formal assessments related to learning needs and traumatic brain injury);
5. Areas of deficit;
6. Range of recommended reasonable modifications and accommodations /assistive technology for the participant's EP (i.e., both work training under W-2 and in unsubsidized employment);

7. The ability to engage in training and education; ~~and~~
8. Recommended reassessment date; and
9~~8~~. Summary of findings, including rationale for any disability determinations/diagnosis; prognosis; and recommendations for additional services, as appropriate.

The FEP must offer assistance to the participant when requesting a formal assessment. Selecting the appropriate assessing agency or individual is critical to the success of the participant. In some instances, a participant may need to be referred for multiple assessments if he or she is identified as being at-risk for two or more disabilities or conditions.

Those participants whose WWP Informal Assessment ~~BST~~ results indicate the potential for a particular disability or condition must be referred to an appropriate ~~one of the~~ provider for formal assessment ~~types listed in the BST directions~~. Once completed, a~~A~~ll formal assessment information must be documented on ~~CARES screen WPBD~~ the WWP Barrier Details page..

5.5.4 Obtaining a Complete Assessment

The process for gathering formal assessment information will vary depending on the medical condition or employment barrier being addressed:

1. For a learning or cognitive disability the case worker may need to specify in writing to the assessing agency what type of information is needed. This may include:
   - A specific diagnosis;
   - Test findings that document both the nature and severity of the disability;
   - Any limitations to learning or other major life activities resulting from the disability and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the context of learning;
   - The impact the diagnosed learning or cognitive disability has on a specific major life activity;
   - Specific recommendations for accommodations as well as an explanation as to why each accommodation is recommended.
2. For a mental health condition and/or AODA, assessment information may be gathered using the Mental Health Report (form 126). If the assessment information is collected through other methods such as a written evaluation developed by the assessing agency, it is important that the document covers the same content as the Mental Health Report to ensure that the caseworker

is receiving adequate information to make case management decisions with the participant.

3. For other types of medical conditions, assessment information may be gathered using the Medical Examination & Capacity (form 2012). Conditions that could be appropriately documented with the Medical Examination & Capacity form may include, but are not limited to:

- Short-term medical conditions and injuries that may require surgery, medical treatment and/or physical rehabilitation;
- Pregnancies;
- Long-term medical conditions which may be disabling, such as multiple sclerosis, fibromyalgia, arthritis; and
- When a participant presents him or herself as unable to participate due to a medical problem(s), but the individual is unable or unwilling to articulate ~~what~~ the medical condition ~~is;~~.
- ~~When the BST instructs the case worker to refer the participant to a physician.~~

No change to remainder of 5.5.4

5.5.7 Payment Reductions

Under the ADA, an individual cannot be required to disclose that he or she has a disability or be required to participate in a separate program for disabled individuals. W-2 agencies must comply with this federal law when assigning activities to W-2 participants. A participant must be given the opportunity to disclose a disability or other barrier to participate in the W-2 program or employment before payment reductions are imposed. The following W-2 policies provide these assurances to participants:

~~1. If a participant who is *placed in W-2 T or CSJ and has not been offered the BST prior to the initial W-2 placement, the individual* may not receive a payment reduction for failing to participate in any assigned activity until the BST is either completed or declined.~~

~~2~~1. W-2 payment reduction cannot be imposed on a participant for declining to complete a formal assessment.

~~3~~2. A participant placed in W-2 T or CSJ who has agreed to and is referred for a formal assessment may not receive a payment reduction for any assigned activity until:

a. The formal assessment results are received by the W-2 agency and the formal assessment activity has been end-dated on CARES screen WPCS; or

b. The W-2 agency has determined that the participant will not comply with the assigned formal assessment activity and the activity has been end-dated on CARES screen WPCS.

No change to remainder of 5.5.7

5.6.1 Domestic Abuse Screening (Formerly Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault Services Information and Referral)

The Domestic Abuse Screen section of the WWP Participant Barriers page helps the W-2 worker and applicant or participant determine if referrals for a domestic abuse assessment and services are needed. The W-2 agency must also allow an individual to voluntarily and confidentially disclose that he or she is or has been a victim of domestic abuse or is at risk of further domestic abuse.

The W-2 worker must only ask the Domestic Abuse Screen questions if it is safe to ask. An applicant or participant must never be asked to complete the Domestic Abuse Screen while his or her partner is present, or if there are any other individuals present, including children. In addition, if an applicant or participant voluntarily discloses that he or she is or has been a victim of domestic abuse or is at further risk of domestic abuse, he or she is not required to be screened.

If the W-2 worker determines that it is safe to ask the Domestic Abuse Screen questions, the W-2 worker must first read the initial statement to the applicant or participant as it is written. The W-2 worker must also read each screening question to the participant exactly as it is written in WWP.

The applicant or participant may decline to answer any or all of the Domestic Abuse Screen questions without risk of sanction or case closure. If the applicant or participant declines to answer a screening question, the W-2 worker must indicate the refusal in WWP. The applicant or participant may also decline to complete the remaining questions at any time during the screening. If this happens, the W-2 worker must leave the remaining questions blank.

The applicant or participant may request to revisit the screening questions at any time. The W-2 agency may also administer the Domestic Abuse Screen at any time that the W-2 worker has reason to believe that the participant may need domestic abuse services.

One or more “yes” answers in response to the Domestic Abuse Screen questions may indicate the need to refer the applicant or participant to local domestic abuse and/or sexual assault services for safety planning, counseling or housing needs. (See 5.6.2)

5.6.2 Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault Services Information and Referral (Formerly 5.6.1)

A referral to a local domestic abuse and/or sexual assault agency may be made as a result of how the applicant or participant responded to the Domestic Abuse Screen or as a result of the W-2 worker’s informal observations and discussions with the applicant or participant. (See 5.6.1)

If a FEP or other W-2 agency employee identifies a participant, or a participant self-identifies, as a past or present victim of sexual assault or domestic abuse or as being at risk of domestic abuse, the FEP or other W-2 agency employee must provide information on community-based sexual assault and domestic abuse services. Information must be provided on shelter and other programs for battered individuals, sexual assault provider services, medical services, sexual assault nurse examiners services, domestic abuse and sexual assault hotlines, legal and medical counseling and advocacy, mental health care, counseling and support groups.

The FEP must talk to the participant about these services and offer a resource list in writing that the participant may take with them. If a participant wishes to receive a referral to counseling or to a supportive service provider, the FEP or other W-2 agency employee must also make a referral to the appropriate local agency. <u>The participant may choose to decline the referral. The participant may not be penalized for declining or opting out of the referral.</u>

The FEP must also make an individual’s case confidential in CWW when the individual is a victim of or is under the threat of domestic violence or other physical harm. (See 4.5.2)

5.6.3 Work Place Safety for Domestic Abuse Victims (Formerly 5.6.2)

When developing or modifying the EP, the FEP must take into consideration the results of the Domestic Abuse Screen and any follow-up assessment information to ensure the participant is not at-risk of violence by a partner while the participant is engaging in assigned W-2 activities. Consideration should be given to time of day, location and on-sight supervision for each activity.

14.2.1 W-2 Placements for Two-Parent Households at Application

While the goal for W-2 two-parent households is to increase both parents’ earning capacity, only one parent in a W-2 two-parent household can be placed in a W-2 position at any one time. Because only one parent can be placed, the FEP must determine which parent is “most employable” and place that parent in the appropriate W-2 placement.

Note: The other parent is not required to participate in W-2 activities unless the family receives Wisconsin Shares. (See 14.3)

The “most employable” parent is the parent who is best able to most quickly increase the family’s income by getting and keeping employment. Below are some examples:

- In a W-2 two-parent household where neither parent is working, the FEP must place the parent who is best able to find the highest paying job the quickest.
- In a W-2 two-parent household where one parent is working, the FEP must place the parent who is best able to increase the family’s income the quickest.
- If the parent who is working is unable to increase the family’s income by increasing his or her work hours or wages, the FEP must place the non-working parent.

In situations where one or both of the parents in a W-2 two-parent household are not able to get and keep employment due to a disability that would qualify for SSI, SSDI or other disability benefits, the FEP must place the parent who is best able to most quickly increase the family’s income from either disability benefits or employment.

The FEP determines which parent to place in close consultation with each of the parents by carefully assessing all of the following factors:

- The short and long-term employability of each parent;
- The wages each parent is able to earn based on his or her skills, abilities and the jobs available in the workforce;
- The activities needed to prepare each parent for unsubsidized employment;
- Total family strengths and barriers, including the need for child care and other supportive services; and
- The amount of income a parent who is unable to work due to disability will receive in the foreseeable future from SSI, SSDI or other disability benefits.

The FEP assesses these factors by meeting with each parent in a W-2 two-parent household and by completing an informal assessment of each parent. The FEP must complete the WWP Informal Assessment with ~~offer~~ each parent ~~the BST~~ at application and at other times as required by the informal assessment ~~BST~~ policy. (See 5.2~~4~~) Unless both parents request the WWP Informal Assessment ~~BST~~ be completed with ~~administered~~ the other parent present ~~to them together~~, the WWP Informal Assessment ~~BST~~ must be completed with ~~administered to~~ each parent separately. An applicant or participant must never be asked to complete the Domestic Abuse Screen while his or her partner is present.

No change to remainder of 14.2.1