

5.1.1.2 Referral for Formal Assessment at Application

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.

Because career assessments, **job readiness assessments**, additional vocational evaluation/assessments, educational needs assessments using a standardized educational needs assessment tool, and formal assessments are not eligibility requirements, the FEP must never delay eligibility determination and initial placement because one of these 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 assessment information is received.

No change to remainder of 5.1.1.2

5.1.2 Assessment as Part of Ongoing 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).

The following assessments are considered an ongoing 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.

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. (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.

The Career Assessment page in WWP is a stand-alone page that is designed Career assessments should be used to identify work styles, skills, and interests. **Completing the Career Assessment page will ensure that workers have sufficient detail** 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.

Do not use educational needs assessment tools in place of career assessment tools. Use educational needs assessment tools in tandem with career assessment tools to identify the education and training needed to allow individuals to obtain employment that fits their work styles, skills, and interests. The results of both assessments complement each other and inform the EP development and assignment of meaningful activities.

3. Job Readiness Assessment: Job readiness assessments can be administered throughout ongoing case management as the participant’s skill levels and work readiness may change.

The Job Readiness page in WWP is a stand-alone page with questions that are designed to guide conversation to complete a thorough job readiness assessment. Completing the Job Readiness page will ensure that workers have sufficient detail on work preferences, history, applications, interviews, and contacts to develop EPs and assign meaningful activities that allow participants to reach their goals.

4.3- 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.

5.4- 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)

No change to remainder of 5.1.2

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

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- 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 and participants who are noncustodial parents (NCP) to discuss their roles as mothers or fathers 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 the applicant or participant's personal strengths, work styles, interests, and skills that may help the individual 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 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);
- **Job readiness (including work preferences, history, applications, interviews, and contacts):**
- Recent job search efforts;
- Results from Career Assessment that evaluate work styles, skills, and interests;
- Current neighborhood environment and schools;
- Household budgeting/money management strategies;
- Access to social supports (e.g., family members, church, friends);
- Other needs or barriers identified by the participant that impedes his or her ability to participate in W-2 activities or find and retain a job.

Because these additional informal assessment inventory items are not eligibility requirements, the FEP must never delay eligibility determination and initial placement because one of these items is pending. The placement decision must be made using the best available information during the application timeframe. (See 1.4.4)

If an applicant is new to W-2 or is re-applying and does not have the Job Readiness page completed in WWP, the job readiness assessment must be scheduled within 30 days of application and completed within 30 days of placement. If a current participant does not have the Job Readiness page completed in WWP, the job readiness assessment must be scheduled within 30 days of an EP review and completed before the next EP review.

If an applicant is new to W-2 or is re-applying and does not have the Career Assessment page completed in WWP, the career assessment must be scheduled within 30 days of application and completed within 30 days of placement. If a current participant does not have the Career Assessment page completed in WWP, the career assessment must be scheduled within 30 days of an EP review and completed before the next EP review.

No change to remainder of 5.2.2

W-2 Policy Manual updates are effective March 27, 2020

5.4.2 Career Assessment at Application

FEPs must use informal assessment information when determining the initial placement for W-2 applicants. (See 7.1) While career assessment is a component of the informal assessment, FEPs are required to develop career goals with all W-2 participants using the information available at initial placement.

Career assessment must be offered to all applicants and assigned as an activity on the initial EP. If an applicant is new to W-2 or is re-applying and does not have a career assessment documented **in WWP**, a career assessment must be scheduled within 30 days of application and completed within 30 days of placement. If an applicant is not ready to identify a specific career field when the EP is initially developed, the focus of the program employment goal may be broadened to a field of interest or an industry sector. (See 6.1.1)

No change to remainder of 5.4.2

5.4.3 Using and Documenting Career Assessment Results

Career assessments and career exploration tools are used to help identify sectors, career pathways, training needs, and family-sustaining employment goals that match the results of the assessed work styles, skills, and interests. Career assessment tools can be administered throughout ongoing case management as an individual's skills, goals, and work readiness may change.

As an EP is developed, it is important to consider how the program employment goals fit into the applicant's or participant's longer-term career plan. Many industries have career pathways that enable employees to start in lower-skilled jobs and progress into increasingly higher-paying jobs through training. The EP should identify any goals that are part of the individual's longer-term career plan. (See 6.1.1)

If a current participant does not have a career assessment documented **in WWP**, the career assessment must be scheduled within 30 days of an EP review and completed before the next ~~six-month~~ EP review.

Assign Career Assessment as a component activity in CARES on screen WPCS. (See 6.4.1)

- Assign Activity Code UC (Up-front Career Planning) for applicants who receive up-front career planning services geared toward assessment of their career interests and guidance in the career planning process. This activity must be ended at time of W-2 placement.
- Assign Activity Code CE (Career Planning & Counseling) for participants who receive career planning and counseling services geared towards assessment of their career interests and guidance in the career planning process.
- Assign Activity Code OC (Occupational Testing) for participants engaged in occupational testing related to employment. For example, some employers may require a typing test for a clerical position.

The FEP must discuss career assessment results with the individual and document on CARES screens WPJS (EP-1) and WPAS (EP-2). Individuals must be given the opportunity to provide input on their W-2 placement and the activities that are assigned as part of the EP.

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~~PIN-level comments must reflect discussion of career assessment results with the applicant or participant. At a minimum, the FEP must document: assessment type and results, including identified work styles, skills and interests; career fields for the individual to pursue; and any training that might be needed to match the individual to employment opportunities in the identified career field.~~

Post career assessment results on the **Career Assessment** page in WWP, including related occupations and how the career assessment results are being applied to the EP and activities. (See 5.2.2)

No change to remainder of 5.4.3