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STATE INSTRUCTION NUMBER 17-08

To: DEW Area Directors
DEW Regional Managers
Local Workforce Area Directors

Subject: Effective Use of Initial Assessment for Wagner-Peyser Customers

Issuance Date: March 23, 2018

Effective Date: Immediately

Purpose: This guidance changes the Wagner-Peyser (WP) Initial Assessment procedures for the Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) staff in the comprehensive SC Works centers. This policy does not apply to the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) program. **This policy guidance replaces State Instruction 15-07.**

Background: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) merges core and intensive services into a new category of career services, that includes both basic and individualized services. Basic career services must be made available to all job seekers. Basic career services include services such as labor exchange services, labor market information, job listings and referrals, and information on partner programs. Individualized career services are to be provided as appropriate to assist individuals in obtaining or retaining employment. A key component in determining which level of service is needed is an initial assessment of a customer's knowledge, skills, aptitudes, and abilities to support the employment goal, and to identify supportive service needs.

The purpose of the initial assessment is to understand the customer's occupational goals, existing skills, and work search readiness, and to determine if any barriers to employment exist. This initial assessment is conducted within the context of local labor market conditions and also considers services that may be articulated by the customer, such as a desire to pursue training or education. The initial assessment will result in a determination of next steps for the customer, which may include referral to a Workforce Consultant for individualized career services and the development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP).

Policy: WP customers referred to a Workforce Consultant in a comprehensive SC Works center are to receive an initial assessment by DEW staff prior to the referral. The initial assessment is intended to gauge which level of services a customer requires. It is a preliminary indication of the customer's needs derived from the baseline information gathered during the initial provision of staff assisted services. All subsequent services should be driven by continued assessment of the customer's needs.

Basic Career Services

Customers who possess the following are considered job search ready and are to be provided basic career services:

- an occupational goal with a favorable labor market outlook (determined by using labor market information and tools in the SCWOS database);
- the knowledge, skills, aptitudes, and abilities required for the occupational goal; and
- no barriers that prevent obtaining and retaining employment.

These individuals should not require referral to a Workforce Consultant, but should be provided job search and placement assistance, including referrals to other SC Works center activities, such as résumé preparation and/or interviewing preparation.

Individualized Career Services

Individualized career services, such as career planning and the development of an IEP, are to be provided by a Workforce Consultant to customers who:

- do not possess an occupational goal; and/or
- do not possess the requisite occupational knowledge, skills, and abilities to readily find work related to their occupational goal; and/or
- have barriers that potentially prevent obtaining and retaining employment; and/or
- require further training.

Individuals initially considered job search ready may subsequently be determined to need individualized career services. Individuals initially determined to need individualized career services will likely benefit from basic career services as well.

Initial Assessment Procedures

The attached WP Initial Assessment Form is for staff use only and can assist staff with the interview process when gathering the information necessary to conduct a thorough initial assessment. This form is used to quickly identify the customer's occupational goals, existing skills, and work search readiness, and to determine if barriers to employment exist. This form may contain sensitive information and should be protected from public access and view. Additionally, staff is prohibited from printing the form due to its confidential nature.

The Initial Assessment Form must be completed to evaluate the following:

1. Occupational Goal:

Evaluate the customer's occupational goal as favorable or not favorable in the labor market.

- If the customer does not have a clear occupational goal or the outlook for the occupational goal is not favorable, then the customer is identified for individualized career services and must be referred to a Workforce Consultant.

2. Knowledge, Skills, Aptitudes, and Abilities:

If the goal is for an occupation or occupational cluster that has a favorable outlook in the labor market, then review the customer's skills to determine if the customer has the necessary educational proficiency, experience, training, and aptitude to compete in the current job market.

- If knowledge, skills, and abilities are deficient, then the customer must be referred to a Workforce Consultant.

3. Barriers to Employment:

If the customer has the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities, then any barriers or obstacles that may prevent the customer from finding and retaining employment should be identified (examples: health and physical considerations, poor work history, lack of references, child care or elder care issues, criminal record, transportation issues, limited English skills, homelessness, or other personal issues).

- If barriers to employment exist, and cannot be addressed during the initial assessment or a subsequent appointment, then the customer must be referred to a Workforce Consultant.

4. Job Search Skills:

The customer's job search planning, preparation, and job seeking skills must also be evaluated. These skills include interviewing and communication skills, knowledge of where to look for work and how to research companies, knowledge of how to appropriately update a résumé, basic computer skills to apply for work online, ability to conduct internet-based job searches, social networking and self-marketing skills, motivation to find work, and possessing a work search plan.

- If job search skills are deficient, and cannot be addressed during the initial assessment or a subsequent appointment, then the customer must be referred to a Workforce Consultant.

Upon completion of the WP Initial Assessment Form, activity code 137: WP Initial Assessment must be entered into SCWOS. A corresponding case note indicating the outcome of the assessment (i.e. referral to a Workforce Consultant or job search ready) must be entered with the completed WP Initial Assessment Form attached as a PDF to prevent a viewing rights issue.

If the completed WP Initial Assessment Form indicates a referral to a Workforce Consultant is required, staff must also enter activity code 188: Interagency Referral in SCWOS. A corresponding case note detailing the nature of the referral must be sent to the Workforce Consultant with the completed WP Initial Assessment Form attached as a PDF. The Workforce Consultant will then schedule an appointment with the customer to provide the appropriate individualized career services as determined by the form.

DEW Regional Managers are responsible for the equitable distribution of referrals within their comprehensive SC Works centers.

Action: SC Works center DEW staff are to ensure WP customers receive an initial assessment prior to being referred to a Workforce Consultant, in accordance with this policy.

Inquiries: Questions may be directed to Grey Parks at bparks@dew.sc.gov or (803) 737-0086.



Patricia Sherlock, Director
Policies and Procedures

Attachment: *WP Initial Assessment Form*

Initial Assessment Form

For staff use only. Check Yes or No for each statement regarding the customer.

Occupational Goal

Yes No

Has no goal or goal is not relevant for local labor market	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lists too many unrelated occupations under "goals" or "type of work looking for" or is unsure of goal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities (All questions should relate to the occupational goal)

Has insufficient work experience (recent employment is of insufficient duration)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Needs GED or HS Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Displays an inability to clearly articulate skills/abilities (no skills identified)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Needs training to support occupational goal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Needs translating assistance for English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Needs assistance in speaking, reading, or understanding English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lacks basic reading and writing skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Needs basic computer skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Needs help identifying which jobs are appropriate for his/her aptitudes or would benefit from assistance in identifying transferable skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Health and Wellness Issues/Barriers

Customer identified a health restriction or other wellness-related barrier that would impact employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Customer requested auxiliary aids or services that indicate a need for a workplace accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Customer disclosed a history of a learning disability or received assistance in school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Employment Related Issues/Barriers

Has gaps in employment or a history of terminations or job hopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Needs help identifying jobs that are appropriate to his/her aptitudes, interests, or work values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is likely to have background check issues or needs additional assistance due to previous convictions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Currently lacks transportation to get to work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has child, elder care, or other personal family issues that affect his/her ability to work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lacks positive references	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exhibits hygiene issues that would impact a successful job search	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is a Veteran who is not living in stable housing that he or she owns, rents, or stays in as part of a household (A "YES" response indicates Veteran homelessness and needs a referral to a Veteran Representative.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any other issues that affect the customer's ability to work or ability to find work? If "YES," list:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Any YES above indicates customer needs referral to a Workforce Consultant:

<input type="checkbox"/> Referred to a Workforce Consultant Customer needs further assistance with issues/barriers marked above. <i>*Completed form must be attached as a PDF to the referral case note sent to the Workforce Consultant in SCWOS.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Job Search Ready Customer has a relevant labor market goal of _____ and has the necessary proficiencies to support the goal. <i>*Completed form must be attached as a PDF to a case note in SCWOS indicating customer is job search ready.</i>
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Staff Signature _____

Job Title _____

The information collected may be confidential and must be protected from public access and view.