

SOUTHWESTERN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Use of Assessments Policy 18-07.2

Effective Date

August 14, 2025

Applicability

WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker and Youth.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide local American Job Center (AJC) offices with guidance regarding established standards for the use of assessments that minimize duplication and provide information on the provision of basic and individualized career services for initial and objective assessments. It further provides information on the types of assessments utilized and accepted within the Southwestern area AJC system.

Background

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) reaffirms the AJC's commitment to providing high-quality services to customers that deliver seamless service and minimize duplication. As part of the framework to accomplish this, it is necessary to establish a uniform methodology and crosswalk for assessments for use and acceptance within the AJC.

Definitions

Assessment: For AJC offices, assessment is a process that helps staff identify their strengths, transferable skills, interests, work values, and personal priorities as they relate to employment.

Basic Skills Assessment: This assessment evaluates an individual's proficiency level in reading, writing, and mathematics. This assessment is conducted using a standardized assessment tool, such as the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), GAIN, CASAS, and MAPT, among others.

Career Assessment: Is a process of assessing the interests, skills, personality traits, and values, and applying those to occupational options to identify which occupations best match the individual.

Initial Assessment (IA): The gathering of information from observations, personal interviews, and any information provided by the customer. IA should be part of the eligibility process and needs assessment.

Needs Assessment: Working with the customer, the AJC staff must identify and document barriers that would hinder or prevent the customer from fully engaging in and achieving career objectives. Staff must identify and record those needs and then identify local resources available to meet those needs.

Objective Assessment (OA): Objective Assessment is a comprehensive and exploratory approach to evaluating customer needs, regardless of the services or programs available. It should include the whole composite of interviews, career exploration, interests, basic skill levels, and behavioral observations

Action

During the enrollment process in the AJC, individuals must receive an assessment. Assessments are a holistic, ongoing process and should not be viewed as a one-time event. They provide valuable information that allows center staff to guide individuals best as they strive to meet their employment goals. The results of assessments must be explained to the job seeker and analyzed to guide the determination of action steps and services to be included in their individual employment plan.

One-Stop Centers are required to provide a direct link to the one-stop services offered in the One-Stop system. Appropriate one-stop partners and services for an individual are determined through the assessment process, based on the participant's desire to work with various partner agencies. Active Resource Coordination is the first step in developing a seamless service delivery system.

Initial Assessment

Initial assessment is part of the overall intake process and includes the initial determination of the following:

- A. Basic skills
- B. Identification of strengths
- C. Identification of workplace skills
- D. Career interests
- E. Work values
- F. Identification of prior work history
- G. Family situation
- H. Service needs

When an Initial Assessment is completed, staff should enter the Initial Assessment service and a case note describing the assessment results .

Objective Assessment

The results from an Objective Assessment assist in the development of a Title I participant's employment plan. An Objective Assessment is not required for Title III Wagner-Peyser participants. Formal assessment results within the last six months, that the participant may have, or a partner agency provides, are acceptable to use in place of new formal Assessments.

- A. Youth: An objective assessment must be completed during the youth enrollment process prior to a youth becoming a participant.

The Objective Assessment shall include a review of the following:

- a. Basic skills (to determine basic skills deficiency, see SAWDB eligibility policy)
 - b. Identification of strengths
 - c. Identification of workplace skills
 - d. Career interests
 - e. Work values
 - f. Identification of prior work history
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- g. Family situation
- h. Service needs

Encouraged Assessments:

- a. Digital Literacy
- b. Financial situation
- c. Reality check

Basic Skills Assessment

To minimize duplication of effort for customers, the SAWDB will accept formalized assessments performed by partner agencies or community colleges, provided the results are documented in a manner that is acceptable for documentation purposes (See Documentation 1). For the purposes of establishing basic skills deficiency, Attachment A provides a list of some of the acceptable assessments and their corresponding English as a Foreign Language (EFL) from National Reporting System (NRS) Testing Benchmarks. This Attachment will be updated as other possible assessments are identified and will not require reapproval of the policy.

Documentation

For offices to utilize assessments provided by other entities, an actual copy of the results must be obtained for the E-file, then the following steps must be performed:

- A. Assessment result copies should be uploaded to the documentation portion of the NMJobs and entered into the assessment portion of the NMJobs utilizing the appropriate file naming conventions established by the SAWDB and document tags.
- B. Assessment results should also be entered into the assessment portion of the NMJobs. If no assessment in NMJobs matches the provided assessment, include a summary in the case notes and upload it as previously described.
- C. When an Objective Assessment service is recorded, a note indicating the assessments completed and the overall results should be entered.

If an Adult or Dislocated Worker refuses to complete a basic skills assessment to determine their basic skills levels within 60 days of eligibility, they may still receive program services under basic or individualized career services. However, if a participant is eligible for training services such as ITA or OJT/TJ but refuses to complete the basic skills assessment and 60 days have passed, we will not provide training services until the evaluation is completed.

Inquiries

Questions related to this policy should be directed to the Administrative Entity at (575) 744-4857.

Attested

This policy was reviewed and approved by the SAWDB on August 14, 2025.

SAWDB Chair