

COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION REFERRAL CRITERIA

General Instructions

None of the following pathways are required; however, this information is designed to help DSHS WorkFirst staff make an informed decision about which pathway(s) is/are most appropriate for a participant.

Comprehensive Evaluation (CE) recommendations should help WorkFirst staff design an Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP) that will meet participants' needs while maximizing our ability to meet federal participation requirements. Refer to the **STACKING ACTIVITIES CHART** when determining the appropriate stackable activities for the participant.

Prior to approving a referral to any of the pathways listed, WorkFirst staff must advise participants of WorkFirst program requirements and their responsibility to participate in the activities identified in their IRP.

Participants should have approved childcare and transportation plans in place prior to referral; otherwise, this can result in a refer-back because they are unable to participate.

If the CE results don't identify an appropriate pathway based on the following criteria, a Continuous Activity Plan (CAP) may be conducted immediately. The CAP is an informal consultation or joint evaluation with available WorkFirst partners, DSHS co-workers, or other service providers.

Job Search

Referrals to Job Search may be appropriate for participants who:

- Are currently employed or have had employment within the last 90 days
- Are receiving UI benefits or have a 'pending' UI claim

Note: JS should be the requirement for participants in this category.

- Indicate an interest in pursuing employment
- Are ready and able to accept employment within 4 weeks
- Have recently completed an education or supported work program
- Are participating in another core activity for no more than 20 hours per week and need another activity to meet federal requirements and can accept employment within 4 weeks
- Would benefit from On-the-Job Training (OJT)

Exception: Participants who are working full-time and want assistance finding a better job are appropriate for Job Search as long as they can come into the office at least once a week to receive assistance. Otherwise, refer them to WorkSource Center as a self-directed job seeker.

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Education & Training Activity

Referrals to Education & Training may be appropriate for participants who:

- Have little or no work history
- Are currently engaged in an educational activity Indicate interest in pursuing educational opportunities or want to enter an occupation that requires training
- Haven't completed a high school diploma or GED and want to complete
- Completed high school or obtained a GED but need/want to brush up their skills
- Have had difficulty in school with reading, writing, math, following verbal directions, etc. and want to improve their basic skills in order to get a job or a better job
- Are participating in a college work study
- Are participating in a paid or unpaid work experience, practicum or internship

Department of Commerce Work Programs

Community Jobs

Referrals to **full-time Community Jobs** may be appropriate for participants who:

- Are currently working on barrier/issue resolution and are ready to combine issue resolution with work in a supportive setting
- Are ready to learn to self-manage issues that affect their ability to obtain or keep employment
- Aren't viable candidates for placement through Job Search
- Are open in WF sanction and are interested in curing the sanction
- Are ready and able to be employed full-time (32-40 hours per week) within six months of the CJ enrollment
- Are able to participate full-time (40 hours per week) right now
- Have childcare and transportation plans
- Have demonstrated workplace behaviors that adversely affect the participant's ability to fully engage in Job Search
- Have participated in other activities without success
- Don't currently hold an unsubsidized job unless these hours are minimal and career progression is unlikely. These will be approved on a case by case basis by Commerce Headquarters

Referrals to **part-time Community Jobs** may be appropriate for participants who:

- Are single parents with a child under the age of six
- Aren't viable candidates for placement through Job Search
- Are open in WF sanction and are interested in curing the sanction
- Are ready and able to be employed at least part-time (20 hours per week) within six months of the CJ enrollment
- Are able to participate 23 hours per week
- Have childcare and transportation plans
- Are managing known barrier removal issues (such as mental or physical health, chemical dependency and family violence)
- Don't currently hold an unsubsidized job

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Community Works

Referrals to Community Works may be appropriate for participants who:

- Are employed less than 32 hours per week
- Are participating in other activities, but need additional hours to meet WorkFirst participation requirements
- Are transitioning between activities
- Need a beginning level of activity for very hard to serve families whose participation capabilities are limited
- Need additional support for re-training or additional experience to be competitive in the labor market
- Have the ability to participate at least five hours per week in Community Works
- Are engaged in an education pathway and would benefit from a work experience to enhance their educational plan

Unsubsidized Employment

Participants may be in this pathway full- or part-time if they:

- Have a paid, unsubsidized job
- Are self-employed

LEP Pathway

Referrals to the LEP Pathway may be appropriate for participants who:

- Receive TANF/SFA
- Have difficulty understanding or communicating in English
- Are an LEP participant with ESL Level 5 or 6 who is identified by college staff or an employment counselor as needing specialized assistance to participate

Issue Resolution

Participants may be in this pathway full- or part-time, depending on their ability to participate in work or work-like activities. Whenever possible, these issue resolution activities should be stacked with one of the above activities as appropriate.

Issue resolution activities assist in helping participants (such as parenting minors, teen head of households or pregnant, hard to engage, sanctioned, and disabled/incapacitated individuals) resolve issues, including:

- Mental, physical, and/or learning disabilities
- Caring for a child with special needs
- Alcohol or substance abuse/chemical dependency
- Family violence
- Homelessness
- Family planning
- Parental education or support
- Pregnancy to Employment
- Child Protective Services

Comprehensive Evaluation Referral Criteria

Exempt

Referrals to the Exempt Pathway may be appropriate for participants who:

- Are a needy caregiver relative and aged 55 or older
- Have a severe and chronic disability (including those likely to be approved for SSI or other federal benefits)
- Are required to be in the home to care for a child with special needs
- Are required to be in the home to care for an adult relative with a disability

3rd trimester of pregnancy Deferral

Participants in the third trimester of pregnancy can choose not to participate in WorkFirst activities if there are no identified mental health and/or chemical dependency issues.

Infant Exemption

The Infant Exempt may be appropriate for participants who are parenting an infant age 12 months or less (12 months in a lifetime infant exemption). A parenting minor may use the Infant Exemption until the infant is 12 weeks old.

Note: Participants who have already claimed the infant exemption for a maximum of 365 days can request an additional 12-week **postpartum exemption period** (84 days) if they have another child. This period allows them to spend the first 12 weeks with the newborn before they are required to participate in WorkFirst activities if there are no identified mental health/chemical dependency issues.