

3.2.1 Comprehensive Evaluation

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Legal References:

- [RCW 74.08A.260](#)
- [RCW 74.08A.275](#)
- [RCW 74.08A.285](#)
- [RCW 74.12.410](#)
- [WAC 388-61-001](#)
- [WAC 388-310-0400](#)
- [WAC 388-310-0700](#)
- [WAC 388-310-0200](#)

Note: ~~The DSHS Annual and Returner Updates will not be available until August 22, 2014.~~

~~The Comprehensive Evaluation section is divided into three separate sub-sections:~~

- ~~Section 3.2.1—Comprehensive Evaluation describes the purpose and content of the CE and continuous activity planning. This section includes:~~

This WorkFirst Handbook (WFHB) section describes the purpose and content of the comprehensive evaluation, -continuous activity planning, and engagement pathways - including:

- [3.2.1.1](#) What is the comprehensive evaluation?
- [3.2.1.2](#) How do I complete the comprehensive evaluation interview?
- [3.2.1.3](#) What topics does the comprehensive evaluation cover?
- ~~3.2.1.4~~ What does "special records" category mean?
- ~~3.2.1.45~~ What is the Fdoes "financial Literacy evaluation" mean?
- [3.2.1.456](#) Who must receive a comprehensive evaluation and when and when should it be conducted?
- [3.2.1.567](#) What is does "Continuous Activity Planning (CAP)" mean?
- [3.2.1.678](#) When is a new comprehensive evaluation or a CAP Continuous Activity Planning required?
- [3.2.1.789](#) What is does "likely to be approved" mean?
- [3.2.1.8910](#) What are the engagement pathways following of the comprehensive evaluation?
- ~~3.2.1.11~~ Where is the Comprehensive Evaluation documented?
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- [3.2.1.91013](#) How are will the results of the comprehensive evaluation be used to develop an Individual Responsibility Plan?
- [3.2.1.1024](#) Can a participant parent be placed in sanction for not failing to participating in the comprehensive evaluation?
- [3.2.1.1135](#) Comprehensive Evaluation - Step-by Step Guide

Section 3.2.2 Initial Comprehensive Evaluation describes how to create and complete an active CE.

Section 3.2.3 Comprehensive Evaluation Updates describes how DSHS and WorkFirst partners update recipients' and returners' CEs.

3.2.1.1 What is the comprehensive evaluation?

Everyone has skills and abilities needed in today's workforce. Weaving those skills and abilities with labor market realities and education levels is the cornerstone of the Comprehensive Evaluation (CE). The CE is an automated tool for WorkFirst Program Specialists or WorkFirst Social Service Specialists to learn more about an individual's strengths, readiness and ability to succeed in the work place. There are a series of evaluations designed to help parents achieve better and quicker engagement in employment-related activities that lead to self-sufficiency.

The primary objectives of the CE are to:

- Adopt a strength-based, whole family approach;
- Gather better information about parents' skills and abilities and more quickly place them in an appropriate activity;
- Identify barriers to WorkFirst participation that may need to be addressed upfront versus barriers that can be addressed along with work-related activities;
- Gather information from the parent so staff can identify when the parent meets program criteria and can help parents make objective decisions about what activities are appropriate;
- Increase parent's involvement in developing their plan for participating in WorkFirst, resulting in more parent buy-in and better results; and
- Increase consistency in how the WorkFirst program operates across the state.

The CE is the key tool in leading parents directly to employment since job search continues to be the most appropriate pathway for the majority of parents. For other parents, the CE leads to employment through training or employment programs and also identifies areas in which the parent may need additional support. In some instances, parents receive services to help resolve issues while participating in work-related activities.

Active participation by the parent is essential. The CE is designated both as an engagement tool and the vehicle to move parents quickly to the most appropriate WorkFirst activity. The parent's involvement in the decision-making process helps ensure the parent's success.

As we learn more about WorkFirst families and document that information in the comprehensive evaluation and the on-going observation notes, we can make better informed choices about their participation and achieve the goal of self-sufficiency.

eJAS notes provide a standalone screening for each category. This is an important feature for family violence, because this allows family violence screening to be completed when it is safe for the family member to do so.

The purpose of the comprehensive evaluation is to learn more about the participant's strengths, readiness, and ability to succeed in the work-place. It helps to identify both strengths the family has and challenges they the participant and their family may be facing. When the comprehensive evaluation is used correctly, it helps both the participant and WorkFirst sStaff may be able to better identify what services and activities will help the family move to engage the participant in, toward leading to stability and self-sufficiencyeconomic stability.

Everyone has skills and abilities needed in today's workforce. Weaving those skills and abilities with labor market realities and education levels is the cornerstone of WorkFirst. The comprehensive evaluation is the first step to achieving this goal. Its primary objectives are:

- Gather information about a participant's skills and abilities to place them in appropriate activities, using a strength-based, family-driven approach
- Identify barriers to WorkFirst participation that need further immediate assessment versus obstacles or challenges that can be addressed alongside work-related activities
- Involve the participant in WorkFirst plan development, in order to better meet their goals
- Achieve participant engagement in activities that support the family's success
- Capture the family's story in a way which builds rapport and supports ongoing case management

3.2.1.2 How do I complete the What is a Comprehensive Evaluation?

~~First, set a positive tone about getting to Career Scope and work. Ask: "How can I help you get to work?"~~

~~Explain to the person that we ask screening questions to:~~

- ~~Help the parent succeed in the workplace;~~
- ~~Ensure that their family circumstances are not a barrier to workplace success;~~
- ~~Provide necessary support services;~~
- ~~Resolve issues without delay;~~
- ~~Stack services, so the parent can make faster progress and preserve/bank months of WorkFirst Cash Assistance; and~~
- ~~Ensure the parent not only finds, but also keeps, a job.~~

~~Second, start acquainting the person with workplace expectations, such as the need to show up on time, every day, and how to have reliable back up plans for child care and transportation.~~

~~Third, some of the questions in the CE touch on sensitive topics (like family planning, substance abuse, or domestic violence). Set some expectations with the person to make the conversation go easier. Tell the person that your interview will:~~

- ~~Identify areas in which he or she may need additional help, supplemental accommodations or services that will help him or her be successful in WorkFirst.~~
- ~~Not require a lot of details.~~
- ~~Result in a referral to experts immediately if there is a serious crisis.~~
- ~~Result in other referrals once the comprehensive evaluation is completed.~~

WorkFirst staff use the Pathway Development Tool (PDT) to complete a participant's comprehensive evaluation. The Personal Pathway is also available to support this process. Both tools are available in eJAS for WorkFirst staff use. How to use these tools is discussed in WFHB 3.2.2 and 3.2.3.

Before beginning this process, set a positive tone by explaining its purpose. By completing the comprehensive evaluation, WorkFirst staff:

- Help the participant succeed in assigned activities and in employment
- Better understand the family's circumstances and whether there may be barriers to workplace success
- Understand what services to offer, so the participant can make progress towards their personal goals
- Provide support services and resources that help the participant to resolve issues without delay

Questions within the PDT touch on sensitive topics (like family planning, substance abuse, or family violence). Acknowledging this can help prepare the participant for the discussion. This includes:

- When screening for family violence, asking if it's safe to do so and only screening with one parent at a time (for two-parent households);

- Identifying areas in which the participant may need accommodations; or services to help them be successful in WorkFirst
- Noting that specific and sensitive details aren't required. Our goal isn't to re-traumatize participants; We want to be able to understand how trauma may impact the participant's experience;
- Responses to these topics may result in an immediate action, including consulting with experts at the request of the participant;
- Responses may also result in -immediate referral for situations that require reporting of information, under mandatory reporting (see EA-Z Manual for more information);
- Responses may result in other referrals once the comprehensive evaluation is completed;

3.2.1.3 What topics does the comprehensive evaluation cover?

As shown in the chart below, the CE covers all the topics needed to determine where the person is placed on the employment pathway. It also includes legally required screening for specific issues.

Below you will find a list of categories reflecting the required screenings for WorkFirst families. Dependent teens do not have a CE requirement; however, it is recommended to document the dependent teen's educational activities, or other pertinent information in the dependent teen's eJAS case in the appropriate category. Equal Access status and limited English proficiency screening occurs in ACES.

CE Topics

Part 1— Screening for Urgent/Emergent Needs

- Housing
- Medical Conditions
- Mental Health
- Substance Abuse
- Family Violence

Part 2— Family Issues

- Strengths, Supports & Goals
- Children's Education & Health
- Caregiving
- Housing Stability
- Family Violence*
- Mental Health/Substance Abuse*
- Adult Health (includes optional special records for HIV/AIDS/STD*)

Part 3— Employability

- Financial Literacy
- Employment
- Legal Issues
- Transportation
- Education

*This is a special record screen and highly protected.

The comprehensive evaluation covers a number of topics – all help determine what activities best meet the participant's specific needs and goals. Some of these topics are legally required. However, covering all

topics with the participant ensures that CSD is completely evaluating the household's circumstances and engaging using a whole family approach.

Topics covered in the comprehensive evaluation include:

- Family
- Employment & Work Experience
- Education & Training
- Financial Literacy
- Family Violence
- Substance Use
- Emotional Health
- Medical/Health
- Housing
- Transportation
- Legal Issues
- Other Agencies

For more information on these topics, please refer to WFHB 3.2.3.2.

NOTE:

- The entire PDT is considered special records and is highly protected. Partners aren't able to review the tool. For information on what topics fall under the special records category, please see WFHB 1.6.4.
- Equal Access and limited English proficiency screening occurs in ACES.

3.2.1.4 What does special records category mean?

All individual information is confidential under state and federal law. In eJAS, there are also four categories of client information, called "Special Records", with increased protection. These categories contain information about:

- Mental Health
- Family Violence
- Chemical Dependency, and
- HIV/AIDS and STD* (Optional category)

* Please note that DSHS staff is not required to screen for HIV/AIDS/STD. This is an optional category to be used when a parent voluntarily provides information about HIV/AIDS/STD issues that could interfere with WorkFirst work activities.

It is important to document these four topics only in the matching note type in eJAS. Invite the person to discuss the matter(s) directly with her or his service provider (such as her or his job service specialist).

3.2.1.45 What is the does f"Financial Lliteracy" evaluation mean?

For a variety of reasons many parents may lack the basic financial knowledge necessary to spend their money wisely, save for the future and manage money challenges. Financial literacy can provide families with

tools for a smoother transition from a benefit based to a wage based income, and keep them from unknowingly entering into financially devastating credit arrangements. It is an essential element in parents' achieving financial stability, self sufficiency and long term financial well being.

During the CE determine if financial literacy activity might be beneficial to the parent, and, regardless of the results, ask if the parent wants a referral to money management training available in the local community. (This is not a mandatory activity and does not have an eJAS code).

The comprehensive evaluation covers the topic of "Financial Literacy."

Financial literacy services and supports can provide families with the tools for a smoother transition from a benefit based income to a wage based income, and keep them from unknowingly entering into financially devastating credit arrangements. It is an essential element to a family achieving financial stability, self sufficiency, and economic mobility.

During the evaluation, WorkFirst staff discuss this topic with the participant and whether an activity geared towards supporting financial literacy may benefit the participant.

NOTE: WorkFirst staff ask the participant if they would like a referral to money management training available in their local community – this is considered a life skill and is not a mandatory activity. Staff can find a list of resources that provide financial literacy programs at the Washington Department of Financial Institutions – Statewide Financial Education Class Calendar, and the Washington Asset Building Coalition website.

3.2.1.456 Who must receive a Comprehensive Evaluation and when and when should it be conducted?

The CE is conducted by the WorkFirst staff for:

- Newly approved applicants, and,
- Likely to be approved applicants,
- Participants currently in sanction (after July 1, 2021).

Child only cases do not require the Comprehensive Evaluation.

NOTE: CSOs refer "likely to be approved" applicants to the CE to save time and engage the participant quicker (see likely to be approved definition)

The CE is completed when the participant is approved (or likely to be approved) for WorkFirst cash assistance and stays active until the participant has been off TANF for at least 12 months., However, a new CE may be done any time at staff discretion. (See Section 3.2.2 – Initial Comprehensive Evaluation.) Staff update the active CE when a participant exits and reapplies within 12 months. DSHS and WorkFirst partners also update recipient's CE periodically. (See Section 3.2.3 – Comprehensive Evaluation Updates.)

A comprehensive evaluation is completed when a participant is approved or likely to be approved for WorkFirst cash assistance. For two-parent households, separate comprehensive evaluations must be completed, using the Pathway Development Tool. In most circumstances, the comprehensive evaluation should be completed immediately following financial intake.

If the participant didn't complete the comprehensive evaluation immediately following financial intake,;

- Schedule an appointment using the AP component with an end date to match the scheduled appointment, providing adequate advance notice for the participant to complete this process
- Schedule an appointment use the AP component with end date to match the scheduled appointment to complete it. Use the eJAS AP component and IRP Template, Send Use either the ACES General Appointment Letter (50-05); or eJAS Appointment Letter using “WF PDT Appt” canned text in Barcode
- Provide A, allowing adequate advance 10 day notice for the participant to complete this process.
- Use the AP component to track the future appointment ensuring contact and additional outreach.
- If the participant fails to show to their appointment, outreach immediately following the missed appointment.

Participants in sanction status who desire to reengage in WorkFirst participation must also have their comprehensive evaluation reviewed and updated so it reflects their current circumstances and supports activity engagement.

NOTE:

- Child-only TANF cases aren't required to have a comprehensive evaluation.
- Dependent teens aren't required to have a comprehensive evaluation. It is recommended that WorkFirst staff document the dependent teen's education activities and other pertinent information in the dependent teen's eJAS Client Notes.

A comprehensive evaluation is considered active for up to 12 months. Sometimes re-evaluations need to occur for a participant. This includes:

<u>Scenario</u>	<u>WorkFirst staff</u>
<u>The participant leaves TANF cash assistance and then returns.</u>	<u>Create a new PDT to reflect any changes in the family's circumstances.</u>
<u>If the participant's circumstances have changed.</u>	<u>Determine if a new PDT is needed to support engagement in new or existing activities.</u>

NOTE: The PDT “copy over” function can be used for up to 12 months. For more information on how to use the PDT, see WFHB 3.2.3.

3.2.1.567 What is does "Continuous Activity Planning (CAP)" mean?

"Continuous Activity Planning" (CAP) is an informal meeting or joint evaluation with the parent, available WorkFirst partner(s), DSHS co-workers and the WorkFirst Program Specialist (WFPS) or WorkFirst Social Service Specialist (WFSSS). This meeting is to discuss the parent's progress and participation as well as a recommendation for the parent's next activity. This meeting can be conducted via phone or in person and must be documented in eJAS under the "Continuous Activity Planning" note type.

The WFPS or WFSSS must document:

- The names of all the participants in the meeting
- How the meeting was conducted (phone or in person)
- When the CAP took place

- ~~Results (the outcome of the meeting)~~

Continuous Activity Planning (CAP) is an informal meeting or joint evaluation with the participant, CSD WorkFirst staff, WorkFirst partner(s), and others to discuss the participant's progress in an activity and recommendations for the next activity. It can also be a tool for problem-solving when the participant isn't successfully engaging. This meeting can be conducted via phone or in person. It's documented using the eJAS case staffing/extension review tool and in client notes under the *Continuous Activity Planning* note type.

WorkFirst staff must document:

- The names of all the participants in the meeting
- How the meeting was conducted (phone or in person)
- When the meeting took place
- Results or outcome of the meeting

3.2.1.678 ~~When is a new comprehensive evaluation CE or a CAP required?~~

~~The WFPS/WFSSS decides whether the parent needs a new CE or a CAP based on the last complete CE. This decision cannot be made based on a partial or incomplete CE.~~

-	Timeframe (from CE finish date)	Situation	Required Action
Complete	Within 6 months	A parent is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitioning to a new activity, • Not progressing in an activity, or • Failing to complete the current activity 	Conduct a "Continuous Activity Planning" meeting.
	Over 6 months	A parent is progressing in the plan identified in the previous CE and moving onto the next step.	Conduct a "Continuous Activity Planning" meeting.
		Not progressing or participating	Update the CE as needed unless the parent is going back to their last required activity.
-	Every 12 months	The family violence and family planning screenings are due.	Complete the DSHS Annual CE Update (which completes the family violence and family planning screening).

After the initial comprehensive evaluation, there may be times where a new comprehensive evaluation or a CAP is required in order to understand how the participant is progressing in WorkFirst. The decision to

complete a comprehensive evaluation or a CAP is based on results from the last **finalized** comprehensive evaluation, and when that evaluation occurred.

<u>Comprehensive evaluation finalized</u> <u>...</u>	<u>Participant is ...</u>	<u>WorkFirst Staff Next Steps</u>
<u>Within last 6 months</u>	<u>Transitioning to a new activity</u>	<u>Conduct Continuous Activity Planning meeting</u>
	<u>Not progressing in an assigned activity</u>	
	<u>Failing to complete the current activity</u>	
<u>Over 6 months ago</u>	<u>Progressing in their IRP and moving onto the next step/activity.</u>	<u>Conduct Continuous Activity Planning meeting. Review comprehensive evaluation and if needed, create a new PDT to reflect changes in circumstances.</u>
	<u>Not progressing in their IRP or participating</u>	
<u>12 months ago (or longer)</u>	<u>Due for the family violence and family planning annual screenings</u>	<u>Complete annual comprehensive evaluation using PDT.</u>

NOTE: The PDT “copy over” function can be used for up to 12 months. For more information on how to use the PDT, see WFHB 3.2.3.

3.2.1.789 What is ~~does~~ "likely to be approved" ~~mean~~?

Definition: "Likely to be approved" means those who appear to meet financial ~~and resource~~-eligibility based on available information and their. ~~The only reason the~~ application is pending ~~is~~ for verification of items such as:

- Personal identification
- Pregnancy verification
- Household composition
- ~~Shelter costs~~

- ~~**Pending verification** : If eligibility is pending for other verification, such as applying for Unemployment Insurance, job start verification, or income, these parents may not be good candidates for a referral for a CE under the new "likely to be approved" definition. Applicants who do not appear to meet financial and resource eligibility should not be referred for a CE until eligibility is verified.~~
- ~~**Participation** : The parent begins to participate in activities that resulted from the CE when financial eligibility is determined. Parents are not required to participate in WorkFirst activities until financial eligibility has been approved. Parents cannot be sanctioned for not participating while their application is in pending status.~~

Applicants whose eligibility is pending for **financial-related verification** (e.g. income verification, appear eligible and applying for Unemployment Compensation, possible job start) are less likely to be approved. In these circumstances, the comprehensive evaluation can be completed after financial eligibility is verified.

Participants are not required to participate in WorkFirst activities until their case is approved. If a participant decides to engage in activities prior to application approval, they cannot be sanctioned for not participating while their application is in pending status.

3.2.1.8910 What are the **engagement pathways following of the cComprehensive eEvaluation?**

The following criteria is designed to help the WFPS make an informed decision about which employment pathway(s) is most appropriate for a participant after completing the CE.

CE recommendations should be designed to meet participants' needs while maximizing federal participation requirements. Refer to the Stacking Activities Chart when determining the appropriate stackable activities for the participant.

Engagement pathways are WorkFirst activities included in the Individual Responsibility Plan. The criteria below are provided to assist the WorkFirst staff and participant in making an informed decision about which pathway(s) is most appropriate based on information gathered during the comprehensive evaluation. Refer to the Stacking Activities Chart when determining the appropriate mix of activities for the participant.

The Navigation section of the PDT can assist in determining next appropriate steps for the participant – see WFHB 3.2.3 for more information.

Prior to ~~approving-referring participants~~ ~~to any of the employment pathways listed~~, WorkFirst staff must advise ~~them participants~~ of WorkFirst program requirements and their responsibility to participate in the activities identified in their Individual Responsibility Plan. WorkFirst sStaff are to ensure all participants have a plan to address child care and transportation needs plans in place prior to referral. Participants reporting to an activity without arranged child_care and transportation may be referred back, as they aren't ~~unable~~ to begin participating ~~as required without these supports in place.~~

If the comprehensive evaluation CE does no't results don't identify an appropriate pathway(s) based on the following criteria, ~~a Continuous Activity Plan (CAP)~~ may be conducted immediately to supportdevelop a plan for engagement.

Career Scope (Job Search)

Referrals to Career Scope may be appropriate for participants who are “work ready.” This means they meet one or more of the following criteria :

- Have current employment or employment within the last 90 days
- Are receiving Unemployment Compensation benefits or have a 'pending' Unemployment Compensation claim (~~-Note: JS should be the requirement for parents in this category-~~)
- Indicate an interest in pursuing employment
- 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 four (4) weeks

Additional information to assess work readiness is details are available in WFHB section 4.1.3 for assessing "work ready" participants

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

Education & Training Activity

Referrals to Education & Training may be appropriate for participants who meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Have little or no work history
- Currently attend an educational activity
- 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
- Indicate Show an interest in getting a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate
- Completed high school equivalency, but need or want to brush up on their skills
- ~~—~~
- Indicate interest in pursuing post-secondary educational opportunities or want to enter an occupation that requires training
- ~~— Indicate an interest in getting a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate~~
- ~~— Completed high school equivalency (HSE) but need or want to brush up on 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~~

Community Jobs

Referrals to full-time Community Jobs may be appropriate for participants who meet one or more of the following criteria:

- 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 the ability to obtain or keep employment
- Aren't work ready viable candidates for placement through Job Search (see WFHB 4.1)
- ~~— Are open in WorkFirst 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 Community Jobs enrollment
- Are able to participate full-time (40 hours per week) right now
- Have child care 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 situations are will reviewed and be approved on a case-by-case basis by Commerce Headquarters staff.

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

Are single parents with a child under the age of six and also meet one or more of the following criteria:

- ~~— Aren't viable candidates for placement through Job Search~~
- Aren't work ready (see WFHB 4.1)

- Are open in ~~WorkFirst~~ 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 ~~Community Jobs~~ enrollment
- Are able to participate 23 hours per week
- Have child care 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

~~-NOTE: Community Jobs referrals should only be made for participants not likely to succeed in attaining unsubsidized employment. Based on comprehensive evaluation results, Community Jobs is an option for those who have participated in other activities and haven't been successful or where other activities aren't appropriate.~~

Community Works Program

Referrals to Community Works may be appropriate for participants who:

- Are currently enrolled/interested in an education component-
- Are employed ~~less~~fewer than 32 hours per week-
- ~~Need~~ additional hours to meet WorkFirst participation requirements or -
- ~~Are~~ transitioning between activities-
- Need additional support for re-training or additional experience to be competitive in the labor market
- Able to ~~Will~~ be in the work activity for one to ~~1~~ 12 months for at least five hours per week

Unsubsidized Employment

Participants ~~may be~~ in this pathway are (-full- or part-time):

- ~~In p~~Have a paid, unsubsidized employment~~job~~
- ~~S~~Are self-employed
- ~~P~~Are participating in a college work study
- ~~P~~Are participating in a paid work experience, practicum or internship

Limited English Proficient (LEP) Pathway

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

- ~~Receive Cash Assistance~~
- Have difficulty understanding or communicating in English
- ~~An LEP participant with~~Have an English as a Second Language (ESL) proficiency -~~Level 1 through 6 and are who is~~ identified by college staff or an employment counselor as needing specialized assistance to participate
- Individuals receiving Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) or Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA)

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 appropriate, ~~these~~ issue resolution activities should be stacked with one of the employment and training activities associated with an pathways listed above ~~activities pathways, as~~ appropriate.

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

- ~~Emotional, m~~ Mental and, physical health, and/or learning disabilities
- Caring for a child with special needs
- Alcohol or substance abuse/chemical dependency
- Family violence
- Homelessness
- Family planning
- Parenting struggles or issues ~~at education or support~~
- P ~~Those related to p~~ Pregnancy to Employment related
- Those related to engagement with Child Protective Services ~~(CPS) engagement~~

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
- Are the parent of a child two years or younger (Infant/Toddler Exemption which has a 730 day lifetime limit)
- Have recently had a child and already exhausted the Infant/Toddler Exemption (the postpartum exemption period).

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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.~~

NOTE:

- Participants eligible for young child or pregnancy related exemptions may still be required to participate if they have mandatory requirements (e.g. identified mental health, chemical dependency, or parenting issues).

For local offices engaged in the Home Visiting/Parent Education Program, if issues related to parenting are identified through the comprehensive evaluation and subsequent assessments, participation in home visiting or parent education activities may be required for the participant – see WFHB 5.1.

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Infant and Toddler Exemption

3.2.1.11 Where is the Comprehensive Evaluation documented?

~~The CE is recorded in the CE screens in eJAS. The information, except special records, is accessible and readable by all the WorkFirst partners and will be used to make decisions regarding program participation and expectations.~~

3.2.1.102 What does "parent involvement in decision making" mean?

Parent input is essential to an effective CE. We want and value the parent's input and take their desires and wishes into account when developing a plan.

However, a parent's wishes alone do not substitute for the CE and program pathway criteria. Parent input should not be the sole basis for deciding what activity a parent will participate in. A parent's wishes need to be factored into the larger picture, which includes family and health issues, education, skills and abilities, job availability, and training or rehabilitation resources.

Decisions on what pathway a parent participates in must first be made on the basis of program criteria and policy. At that point the parent's wishes should be a major factor in deciding on the pathway choice.

3.2.1.9403 How are will the results of the cComprehensive eEvaluation be used to develop an Individual Responsibility Plan?

The results of the CE will be used to develop the IRP. It will indicate the best pathway for the parent and what support services WorkFirst will provide the parent to participate. Decisions will be made objectively and consistently, based on program policy criteria—See "Criteria for Decision Making". The IRP will be developed by the WFPS and the parent to:

- Describe the parent's responsibilities, activity requirements and authorized support services.
- Maintain progress towards independence.
- Document the action steps the parent agreed to do. (This is essential to holding the parent responsible for her or his participation.)
- Describe DSHS responsibilities and which support services will be provided.
- Describe for the parent the consequences of not meeting the requirements.

IRPs will be developed for longer term activities if parents are participating in consecutive program elements. The expectation is that all activities are preparing parents to go to work. IRPs will be developed to find the best mix of activities, including for those clients who are participating in issue resolution activities. Parents will be expected to participate full time.

WFPSs will use the criteria for developing an IRP and making referrals to a pathway as outlined in "Criteria for Decision Making".

Community Jobs referrals will be made only for the parents least likely to succeed in attaining unsubsidized employment. Based on the CE results, CJ will be an option for those parents who have participated in other activities and have not been successful or where other activities may not be deemed appropriate.

Comprehensive evaluation results and subsequent discussion with the participant regarding pathway options and criteria; steer development of the Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP). They also aid in identifying what support services the participant needs to effectively engage in activities and services.

The IRP is developed by the WorkFirst staff and participant to describe:

- The participant's activity requirements and responsibilities
- Action steps the participant agreed to do
- DSHS responsibilities and which support services are available to support participation

- What happens if the participant fails to engage in agreed to activities outlined within their plan without a good reason

IRPs may be developed to support short and long-term goals. For long term plans, consecutive activities may be included to support participants in long-term goals. They should also include the best mix of activities to support the participant and their family.

Participants are expected to participate full-time, or as close to full-time as they are able based on their situation. All activities within a plan should be geared towards preparing the participant for future employment and economic stability.

3.2.1.1014 Can a participant parent be placed in sanction for failing to not participatinge in the cComprehensive eEvaluation?

Yes. If a parent fails to show to any CE appointment, the worker must go through the good cause process to determine if the parent had a good reason for not completing the CE. For more on excused and unexcused absences, see section 3.7.1.5 – How do we treat excused and unexcused absences?

Sanction is a tool of last resort which will be used as a consequence for parents who refuse to participate in the WorkFirst program. It is very important to determine and document whether a person is refusing, or simply unable to comply.

If a participant fails to attend their comprehensive evaluation appointment, staff must go through the good cause process and determine if the participant had a good reason for not coming to the appointment. WorkFirst staff should determine and document whether a participant is refusing to participate, or simply unable to due to circumstances outside of their control.

For information on the good cause and non-compliance sanction process, see WFHB 3.5.1.

3.2.1.1125 Comprehensive Evaluation _ Step-by-Step Guide

Refer to the Application and Screening section for a step by step guide of the process leading to the determination of eligibility and the CE. Application information will be used as appropriate in terms of the CE and developing the parent's IRP.

The WFPS:

1. Conducts Positive Prevention strategies as part of the WorkFirst Cash Assistance application process. Child care, transportation and/or other needed support services are provided by DSHS staff at the time of positive prevention so the parent can complete the CE and prepare for employment pathway participation.
2. Documents whether the person will need Equal Access accommodations to complete the application process and actively participate. (See Up front referrals.)
3. Uses the questions in the CE section in eJAS to complete the CE. (To view a list of all areas covered in the CE, refer to What topics does the CE cover? Section 3.2.1.3.) Determine who are returners and conduct the returner portion of the CE.

4. ~~Determines the appropriate employment pathway(s) using the information documented and the parent's input. (To view the employment pathways refer to What are the pathways of the Comprehensive Evaluation? Section 3.2.1.9.)~~
 - o ~~If the CE results do not identify an appropriate pathway(s) based on the following criteria, a CAP may be conducted immediately.~~
5. ~~Develops the IRP by:~~
 - a. ~~Using the criteria for developing an IRP and making referrals to employment pathway(s) activities as outlined in "Criteria for Decision Making".~~
 - b. ~~Documenting results from the CE in eJAS.~~
 - c. ~~Updating the IRP outlining the required activities and level of participation the parent must achieve.~~
 - d. ~~Opening the appropriate referral code(s) in eJAS.~~

If participant is ready to engage, WorkFirst staff:

- ~~Works with the applicant to assess possible alternative sources of income or benefits to support their family. Conducts Positive Prevention strategies (WFHB 1.5.2 through 1.5.5) as part of the Financial Intake Interview.~~
1. Documents whether the participant needs Equal Access accommodations to complete the application process and actively participate (see WFHB 1.3).
 2. Conducts the comprehensive evaluation:
 - a. Offers and completes the Personal Pathway with the participant (see WFHB 3.2.2).
~~Uses the Pathway Development Tool to complete the participant's comprehensive evaluation (see WFHB 3.2.3).~~
 - b.
 - c. If the participant can't complete the comprehensive evaluation immediately following financial intake:
 1. Schedule an appointment using the AP component with an end date to match the scheduled appointment, providing adequate advance notice for the participant to complete this process
 2. Send either the ACES General Appointment Letter (50-05) or eJAS Appointment Letter using "WF PDT Appt" canned text in Barcode
~~Schedule an appointment use the AP component with end date to match the scheduled appointment~~
~~Send either the ACES General Appointment Letter (50-05) or eJAS Appointment Letter using "WF PDT Appt" canned text in Barcode~~
~~Provide adequate advance notice for the participant to complete this process~~
- If the participant can't complete the comprehensive evaluation immediately following financial intake, schedule an appointment using the with them by sending an appointment letter using the eJAS AP component and IRP Template, ACES General Appointment Letter (50-05), or eJAS Appointment Letter. Allow 10 day notice for the participant to complete this process.
- b.
- 2.3. Determines with the participant the appropriate activity pathway using information documented in the Pathway Development Tool (see WFHB 3.2.3).

- a. If unable to identify an appropriate pathway based on criteria noted in WFHB 3.2.1.9 or 3.2.3, schedule a CAP meeting immediately.
4. Develops the IRP based on the pathway agreed to by the participant.
 - a. Opens appropriate component codes in eJAS (referral, activity, or indicator).
 - b. Updates the IRP in eJAS, outlining the required activities and level of participation for the participant.
 - ~~a. Opens appropriate component codes in eJAS (referral, activity, or indicator).~~
 - c. Issues support services necessary for participant to engage in IRP activities.
5. Documents comprehensive evaluation results and IRP development discussion in eJAS.

NOTE: If the comprehensive evaluation is scheduled to be completed in the future, discuss and provide child care referral, transportation resources and/or other needed support services in order to support the participant's future appointment.

Resources

Related WorkFirst Handbook Chapters

- [1.2 Required Participation](#)
- [1.6 Required Documentation](#)
- [3.2.2 Personal Pathway](#)
- [3.2.3 Pathway Development Tool](#)
- [3.3.1 Individual Responsibility Plan](#)
- [3.4 Case Staffing](#)
- [3.5.1 Entering Sanction & Non-Compliance Sanction](#)
- ~~[6.1 Resolving Issues - Overview](#)~~
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Forms & Other Resources

- [Customer-Driven Severity Scale – only accessible to CSD staff](#)
- ~~[WorkFirst Comprehensive Evaluation Referral Criteria](#)~~
- ~~[WorkFirst Comprehensive Evaluation Documentation Guidelines](#)~~
- ~~[WorkFirst Comprehensive Evaluation Flow Chart](#)~~
- ~~[WorkFirst Comprehensive Evaluation Client Flow Chart](#)~~
- ~~[WorkFirst Website](#)~~
- ~~[Personal Pathway \(DSHS 11-154\)](#)~~
- ~~[WorkFirst Partner Directory – only accessible to CSD staff](#)~~
- ~~[Customer Driven Severity Scale](#)~~

~~[Related WorkFirst Handbook Sections](#)~~ [WorkFirst Website](#)

- Personal Pathway (DSHS 11-154)
- WorkFirst Partner DirectoryWorkFirst Partner Directory – only accessible to CSD staff
- Customer Driven Severity Scale– only accessible to CSD staff
- WorkFirst Website

• 1.2 Required Participation

• 1.6 Required Documentation

• 3.2.2 Personal Pathway

• 3.2.3 Pathway Development Tool

• 3.3.1 Individual Responsibility Plan

• 3.4 Case Staffing

• 3.5.1 Entering Sanction & Non-Compliance Sanction

• 6.1 Resolving Issues – Overview