

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE MANUAL</b>	
<b>ASSESSMENT-</b>	<b>COMAR 07.03.03.04</b>	<b>Section 204</b>

### **204.1 BACKGROUND**

The assessment is the road map to tell the case manager and the customer where the customer has been, where the customer is, and where the customer is going in the future. Assessing the customer's abilities, needs, interests and goals is a vital step in helping him or her reach the goal of being independent from public assistance. The assessment should be clear and detailed.

### **204.2 REQUIREMENTS**

- A. Assessment begins the day the customer files an application for TCA and ends when the TCA case closes. It includes the questions and answers used to determine eligibility for TCA.
- B. If the applicant is a caretaker relative who is not needy and is not financially responsible for the children, the focus of the assessment is on the needs of the children and the resources available to them.
  - The needs of the caretaker relative should be assessed with respect to the caretaker's ability to care for the children.
- C. The assessment includes:
  1. The reason the customer is applying for or continuing to rely on assistance
  2. Other resources and options available to the family
  3. Family needs
  4. Educational level, job skills, job readiness, and areas of interest for all work mandatory assistance unit members. Determine:
    - a. Appropriate and available work programs
    - b. Jobs which can be pursued now
    - c. Available options if the person is disabled either temporarily or permanently.
    - d. Available personal and family resources
    - e. Support to retain, achieve, and maintain independence
    - f. Needed and available medical care
    - g. Needed and available child or adult day care

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- h. Availability of potential resources, such as
    - i. Unemployment Insurance
    - ii. Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
    - iii. Social Security Benefits
  - i. Is there a history of family violence?
    - i. Who is involved?:
    - ii. Who is the aggressor and who is/are the victims?
    - iii. Is the family in counseling?
    - iv. Where?
    - v. What is the plan to protect and help the family
    - vi. What resources does the family have if they have to leave the home without notice?
    - vii. How does the family situation affect the family in achieving independence?
    - viii. What if any program requirements are waived because of the family violence? For how long?
    - ix. What are family members expected to do?
  - j. Family history of substance abuse
    - i. Is treatment needed?
    - ii. If treatment was received, where and when?
    - iii. What is the effect on employability
- D. Each local department has an assessment guide.
- The assessment must be reviewed and updated at each redetermination and change in the customer's situation.
- E. Based on the assessment, the case manager and the customer:

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1. Determine the services and resources needed for the family to achieve independence and
  2. Develop the Family Independence Plan
  3. Develop an agreement with the applicant to define the independence plan implementation steps
- F. All LDSS case managers, employment specialists, vendors and others working with the family must continually review and update the assessment and the FIP plan to ensure the family is progressing and all needed resources are available.
- G. All LDSS employees and their representatives (vendors) working with the family must keep the lines of communication open and work as a team to help the family. Whether the interaction is with the case manager or the employment specialist all customer information must be shared with other members of the team.

**Example:** Martha Johnson tells the case manager that she can't go to her activity because she is moving. There has been family violence and she is afraid for her children and herself. The case manager does not forward the information to the employment specialist. A week later the case manager receives a notice from the vendor that Ms. Johnson failed to attend her activity and they have been unable to contact her. A Notice of Non-Compliance (NONC) was sent to Ms. Johnson's address and was returned by the Post Office.

- Ms. Johnson advised the case manager she would miss her activity.
- Ms. Johnson has good cause for missing her activity because of the incidence of family violence, which she reported.
- She reported she was moving.
- Had the case manager let the vendor know the situation, the vendor would not have sent the NONC.

Similar problems can occur when the vendor does not let the case manager know information.