

Welfare-to-Work Handbook 42-7.26:

Welfare-to-Work Appraisal

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Update:

The purpose of this revision is to inform the Workforce and Benefits Administration (WBA) staff of changes related to introducing CalWORKs 2.0 (CW 2.0) approaches in WBA's employment services.

Summary:

The State has adopted the use of the Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool (OCAT) to conduct Welfare-to-Work appraisals.

The purpose of this handbook is to inform staff on the process for conducting an Appraisal under the implementation of Assembly Bill (AB) 74. The Bill has changed the flow of Welfare-to-Work (WTW) activities.

I. General:

To better serve Welfare-to-Work participants, the Workforce & Benefits Administration (WBA) implemented the Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool (OCAT) for the CalWORKs/WTW Appraisal.

Appraisal is the first point in the WTW program to give direction to the participant in identifying the most beneficial path towards obtaining and maintaining meaningful employment. It is during this activity that the Career Development Specialist I (CDS I) has an opportunity to review and discuss with the participant his/her job skills and job aspirations to determine the best course of action in seeking and identify realistic employment goals. It is critical that the interaction between the CDS I and the participant be positive and encouraging, as this will set the tone for future contacts with staff.

The CDS I will complete the OCAT appraisal. The OCAT appraisal interview will generally occur after the completion of the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) test. If requested by individual or it is identified in OCAT that a participant may have a Learning Disability (LD) as a result of the LD screening or a participant requests a Behavioral Health (BH) evaluation, then the CDS I will refer the participant for the appropriate evaluation(s) at the end of the one-on-one appraisal interview. Use forms 42-46 Screening Summary & Evaluation Referral Form and/or 50-160 Referral for Help with Supportive Services to make appropriate referral(s).

Note: The LD screening in OCAT contains the same content as Form WTW 18 WTW Learning Needs Screening Form and will be used in lieu of the WTW 18 during OCAT appraisal. The WTW 19 WTW

Learning Needs Screening Form (client copy), WTW 17 Waiver of CalWORKs Learning Disabilities and the WTW 20 Permission to Release Learning Disabilities Information are still used as required.

Upon completion of Appraisal, the participant will be assigned to the next appropriate activity depending on his/her unique circumstances and OCAT recommendations.

On occasion (and per [SEIU Section 13-c of MOU](#)), the Employment Counselor (EC) may conduct a One-on-One Orientation and Appraisal. The following are examples when an EC may conduct a One-on-One orientation and Appraisal:

- Case is pulled for WPR review and the client has to complete orientation to move to the next appropriate WTW activity.
- Participant calls and states that they can only come in on a certain day or time due to their work schedule.

Important Note: EC shall confer with their supervisor before conducting a One-on-One Orientation.

NOTE: At this time, the OCAT is not required for the following individuals:

- Limited English Proficient (LEP)
- SSI
- Undocumented
- Timed Out

The CW 2.0 approach enhances the current service delivery by incorporating strategies and tools that help families set and achieve reachable goals while considering participant's strengths and any barriers they may face. These approaches and tools will aid staff in increasing client engagement, applying more intentional service selection, addressing **whole** family needs and shifting to more "client-led" and goal-oriented case management.

II. Components of the Appraisal:

Individuals who are not excluded or exempt from WTW participation must complete the Appraisal when the following occurs:

- At initial CalWORKs approval;
- Added to an ongoing CalWORKs case;
- Exemption status ends;
- Age 16 through 18 years and not complying with school attendance requirement; and/or
- Exempt individual request to be a voluntary participant.

Appraisal Interview:

CDS I shall do the following:

1. Conduct the appraisal interview with the OCAT for WTW participants. In a two-parent household, each parent shall be interviewed separately.
 - The CASAS test assesses the participant's ability in the areas of reading and mathematics. The CDS I will use this information to determine a participant's aptitude and job readiness.

Example:

- Participant scores at a 3rd grade reading level or below, refer participant to assessment (ASM) activity.
 - Participant scores above a 3rd grade reading level, participant is job ready if no other barriers exist.
- It is important to summarize information during the initial OCAT interview with the client to assist in streamlining information amongst the case managing staff. While conducting the OCAT interview, the CDS I reviews the CalWORKs (CW) 2.0 CalMap (which is provided to the client and completed during Orientation) with the participant.
2. Acknowledge the participant's strengths and accomplishments. Continually encourage the participant to engage in the WTW program.
 3. Evaluate any WTW exemption requests, using Form **CW 2186 A** (CalWORKs Exemption Request Form). If the participant indicates that they have a medical exemption and does not have proof, provide a Form CW 61 (Authorization to Release Medical Information Form) with a 15-day need letter.
 4. Discuss, during OCAT, possible barriers to employment with the participant.
 - If the barrier to employment is food, shelter, etc., the participant will be referred to a Social Worker, while working with the participant to remain active in the program.
 - If the barrier to employment is child care, the participant will be EC for a referral to a referred to a child care provider, while working with the participant to remain active in the program.
 - If the barrier to employment is the inability to speak English and Job Club/Job Search (JCL/JS) is determined not to be beneficial, the participant will be referred to Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL).
 - If the barrier to employment is related to a mental or emotional condition or to substance abuse, the participant, with his/her agreement will be referred for a Behavioral Health (BH) screening which will determine if a participant needs further evaluation by a service provider.

- If the CDS determines the barrier to employment is related to a learning disability, either indicated by participant or as a result of the LD screening, the participant must be referred for an evaluation with a learning disabilities specialist to determine appropriate accommodations and services.
 - If the barrier to employment is related to domestic violence, the participant will be referred to a Social Worker. If the Social Worker's evaluation indicates that this individual is unable to obtain and/or keep a job and recommends treatment for the participant, the participant can be given Good Cause or an Exemption.
 - If the participant is a noncitizen who is a victim of human trafficking, domestic violence, or other serious crimes and does not have authorization to work from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, the participant will be referred to Family Violence Law Center or VESL as appropriate.
 - If the CDS I determines and the participant agrees that JCL/JS is not the next appropriate activity, the participant will be referred directly to ASM.
5. Discuss employment opportunities and training opportunities with the competence and skill level of the participant based on CASAS test results.
 6. Explain to the participant that there are certain reasons an individual may not be required to participate in the WTW program. These reasons constitute Good Cause for failure or refusal to participate. Inform the participant to contact their EC to determine if Good Cause exists.
 7. Remind participants attending school or training program that verification of enrollment is required at the time of the appraisal interview.
 8. If the participant indicates he/she is currently attending school or training program and fails to bring verification of enrollment to his/her appraisal interview, the CDS I will assist participant in obtaining verification by:
 - Viewing the Internet;
 - Contacting the school using the School Contact List; or,
 - Providing Form 42-4 (Verification of Education or Training Program) with a 10-day need letter.
 9. Evaluate if Self-Initiated Program (SIP) is approvable or not (follow SIP guidelines), when a participant is already enrolled in such program at the time of appraisal.
 - Explain clearly and thoroughly to participants the options for SIP and Post Assessment Education/Vocational Training activities and the benefits for each.
 - Have participant complete Form 42-91 Self-Initiated Program/Vocational Training Informing Notice #42-91. Participant will select whether he/she wants to participate in a SIP or a Post-Assessment Vocational Training Program.
 - Issue a copy of Form #42-91 to participant and retain original to be imaged into WebFiles.

- If SIP is approved, and participant is meeting the required number of hours, a WTW2 Plan is required.
- If SIP is approved, but individual is not meeting the required number of hours, the participant must be referred to assessment for concurrent activities.
- If SIP is not approved and the individual is making satisfactory progress, the participant will be referred to ASM. The EC of record must be notified to create a pending plan in CalWIN. (See How To 278-Develop or Amend a Welfare-To-Work Plan).

Employed Participants Meeting Required Participation Hours:

Participants who are employed in unsubsidized employment with sufficient hours to meet the minimum hours of participation shall, following appraisal, have a WTW2 Plan created by the service provider or by the EC of record when appropriate.

III. Process:

During Orientation and Appraisal, the steps listed below shall be followed:

CDS I shall:

- Review the CASAS test results — Information can be located in CalWIN: Maintain Employment Services Information window, Tabs or WebFiles.
- Conduct a one-on-one OCAT Appraisal interview with participant.
 - If Domestic Violence (DV) is disclosed, contact a Social Worker Supervisor to assign a Social Worker to continue with DV questions in OCAT.
- Review the Orientation packet with participant.
- Make sure all required forms are complete.
- Assist participant in identifying barriers to employment.
- Identify and refer needs for supportive services.
- Generate the Appraisal Summary and Recommendations (ASR) from OCAT
 - Have participant sign the ASR; and,
 - Provide a signed copy to the participant.
- Record OCAT Appraisal in the following CalWIN tabs.
 - Employment,
 - Education,
 - Competencies,
 - Skills tab, Occupation Index,

- Barriers tab, Court Date/Legal Issues, and
- Information Checklist.
- Schedule participant into the first activity as appropriate.
- Refer participant to EC to set up pending Plan in CalWIN for non-approved SIPs.
- Review and send Client Correspondence in CalWIN.
- Enter Case Comments in CalWIN.
- Submit documents in designated box to be imaged into WebFiles. ASRs shall be imaged under "OCAT Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool" in WebFiles.
- Send courtesy email to the appropriate case managing staff and send the CalMap for priority imaging along with Appraisal Summary Report (ASR).

Important Note: If the appraisal is not completed using the OCAT, the participant must receive the following additional documents:

- Self-Appraisal (42-1);
- Employability: Social or Health Issues Self-Appraisal (42-92);
- Employment Placement Information (42-117);
- Learning Disability Screening Waiver (WTW17);

Note: The occasional One-on-One orientation and appraisal, conducted by Employment Counselors, shall include conducting the applicable steps listed above to complete the appraisal.

References:

EAS Manual 42-711.52-.549; 42-711.56; 42-711.57; 42-712.1

[How To 407: How to Use OCAT](#)

[CalWORKs Handbook 42-7.7 – Domestic Violence/Abuse Policies & Procedures for Waivers & Exemptions](#)

[CalWORKs Handbook 42-7.5 – Family Stabilization Program for CalWORKs Clients](#)

[Employment Services Handbook: 42-6.3 – Monolingual & Limited English Proficient Participants Program](#)

[Welfare-to-Work Handbook 42-7.0 – Welfare-to-Work Overview](#)

[Welfare-to-Work Handbook 42-7.6 – Supportive Services in the Welfare to Work Program](#)

[Welfare-to-Work Handbook 42-7.2 – Exemptions and Good Cause/Deferral Reasons in the WTW Program](#)

[Welfare to Work Handbook :. 42-7.51 Learning Disabilities](#)

[Employment Programs Newsletter: 07-11 - Self-Initiated Program/Post-Assessment Education/Vocational Training Update](#)

[SEIU Section 13-c of MOU](#)