

**County of Orange Social Services Agency
Family Self-Sufficiency Division**

Program/Area: CalWORKs

Title: Appraisal / Re-Appraisal

Number: 201

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Approved:

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for completing appraisals/re-appraisals for Welfare-To-Work (WTW) participants and assign appropriate WTW activities that promote the path to self-sufficiency.

POLICY

An appraisal / re-appraisal will be completed for all CalWORKs WTW participants to assess their needs, employment history, educational background, and their level of employable skills using the Online Appraisal/Re-Appraisal Tool (OCAT). Designated staff will use OCAT to record appraisal interview discussions. The appraisal / re-appraisal is necessary to determine the most appropriate WTW activity for the participant, which will enable him/her to become self-sufficient.

OCAT is designed to:

- Provide a consistent appraisal/re-appraisal tool statewide
 - Ensure every participant receives equal, yet targeted work readiness support
 - Streamline the appraisal / re-appraisal process
 - Enable Case Managers (CM) to clearly understand the strengths, barriers, and work readiness of the participant
 - Provide customized recommendations based on specific information collected from OCAT
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WHEN TO CONDUCT THE APPRAISAL / RE-APPRAISAL

OCAT is to be utilized for all Appraisals and Re-Appraisals

The initial OCAT Appraisal will be completed by the WTW CM.

An OCAT Re-Appraisal will be completed by the WTW CM whenever an in-depth needs assessment is appropriate or it is in the participant's best interest to determine the most appropriate WTW activity or to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances which prevent the participant from obtaining employment.

Examples:

- New/Change/Loss of Employment: In most cases an OCAT Re-Appraisal should be done to update employment history, identify potential barriers, and evaluate for supportive services needs.
- Address/Phone number change: In most cases this would not require an OCAT Re-Appraisal.

Current participants who have not been appraised using OCAT may be appraised or re-appraised using OCAT if doing so will assist in identifying previously unidentified barriers or if there is evidence that past WTW activities did not progress the participant toward self-sufficiency.

All participants with a break in aid of at least 6 months will require a new appraisal. At a minimum this appraisal will consist of a review and update to answers to the prior appraisal to determine if any changes need to be made to the Appraisal Summary and Recommendations report (ASR). This review of the questionnaire and update of the ASR meets the threshold for a 'new appraisal / re-appraisal'.

NOTE: If a break in aid is longer than 12 months a new appraisal questionnaire will need to be completed.

OCAT RIGHTS AND PRIVACY

Prior to beginning an OCAT Appraisal / Re-Appraisal, the participant must be provided with a copy of the [WTW 47 Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool Rights and Privacy \(Attachment 6\)](#). [WTW 47 \(Attachment 6\)](#) is intended to ensure that all participants understand the purpose of the OCAT Appraisal / Re-Appraisal and their rights to privacy.

Prior to conducting the OCAT Appraisal / Re-Appraisal, the CM must:

- Review the [WTW 47 \(Attachment 6\)](#) with the participant, discuss the purpose and benefits of conducting the OCAT Appraisal / Re-Appraisal with the participant
- Review the subjects listed on the [WTW 47 \(Attachment 6\)](#), that will be discussed during the appraisal / re-appraisal with the participant
- Review confidentiality, emphasizing that everything discussed during the appraisal / re-appraisal interview is confidential, unless it relates to elder or child abuse.
- Obtain the signature of the participant on the [WTW 47 \(Attachment 6\)](#), provide a copy to the participant, and image the signed [WTW 47 \(Attachment 6\)](#) into OnBase

Note: In the event that a participant does not agree to sign the [WTW 47 \(Attachment 6\)](#), the CM will document in CalWIN Case Comments that the [WTW 47\(Attachment 6\)](#) was explained to the participant and he/she declined to sign the form. The CM will proceed with the interview using OCAT. The WTW CM will provide an unsigned copy of the [WTW 47](#)

[\(Attachment 6\)](#) to the participant.

**LANGUAGE
AVAILABILITY**

The OCAT tool is only available in English. Assistance by a translator may be used to complete the demographic, job history, and education history sections of the tool. Translation may not be appropriate for sensitive sections of the tool, such as mental health or domestic abuse. The CM is to use their discretion to determine whether topics will be explored during the appraisal / re-appraisal interview. When the CM determines that the sensitive sections of OCAT will not be covered, participants should be referred directly to the appropriate evaluations rather than using OCAT for screening. The WTW CM will note in CalWIN Case Comments that the participant's limited English proficiency is the reason for not conducting a complete OCAT Appraisal/Re-Appraisal and will list the sections that were not covered.

PROCEDURE

During the OCAT Appraisal / Re-Appraisal interview, WTW participants must be given an overview of the WTW Program, including all available activities, supportive services and circumstances that would qualify the participant for a WTW exemption.

Participants must be informed of the following:

- Requirement to participate in available WTW activities
- Mandated hours of participation.
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Consequences for failing to participate in their assigned WTW activity(ies)
- Criteria for successful completion of the program.

Participants are asked to provide information about their employment history, education, skills, the need for supportive services, and any other relevant information utilizing the [Self-Appraisal form \(F063-41-03\)](#) ([Attachment 2](#)). The information obtained from the [Self-Appraisal form](#) may be used to help facilitate the OCAT Appraisal / Re-Appraisal interview. All information gathered from the OCAT Appraisal / Re-Appraisal interview will be used to assess and assign appropriate WTW activities and services, as well as, identify any barriers to self-sufficiency.

**WHO COMPLETES THE
APPRAISAL / RE-
APPRAISAL
INTERVIEW**

Single Parent Households: If the single parent is a mandatory WTW participant they must be appraised/re-appraised.

Two Parent Households: Only the parent who will actively participate in WTW activities is required to be appraised / re-appraised. If both parents contribute to the required WTW participation hours, then both parents must be appraised / re-appraised.

WTW Volunteers: All volunteers for the WTW program will be

appraised/re-appraised.

If more than one adult in the AU is required to participate in WTW, the CM should make every effort to conduct separate and private OCAT Appraisal/Re-Appraisal interviews. Should the participants decline to be interviewed separately, the CM may conduct the OCAT Appraisal/Re-Appraisal interview with both participants present, however two separate OCAT Appraisal/Re-Appraisal interviews must be created and entered into OCAT.

When interviewing a participant with a spouse/partner/translator present, the WTW CM must take special care discussing sensitive needs areas that may be inappropriate to discuss if the participant is not alone.

A participant may decline to answer OCAT questions, except demographic information. Participants will be told that more accurate and complete results are generated when as many questions and sections are answered and completed.

NON COMPLIANCE

Non-Compliance will be started for any mandatory WTW participant who refuses to participate in an appraisal/re-appraisal. Refer to [Policy 240 – Good Cause/Compliance/Sanction](#).

CASE MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

The WTW CM will:

Before the Face to Face OCAT Appraisal / Re-Appraisal Interview

Review the WTW case, as appropriate. Refer to [Policy 603 Case Manager Operations Procedure](#).

Contact and schedule the participant for a WTW Orientation and an OCAT Appraisal/Re-Appraisal.

When contacting the participant to schedule the WTW Orientation and OCAT Appraisal/Re-Appraisal interview, inform the participant about the length of the time needed to complete the WTW Orientation and OCAT interview.

Discuss and assess the participants need for reasonable accommodations and supportive services, ensuring that the participant has the resources available to participate in the appraisal/re-appraisal interview. Guidance about resources available for potential barriers may be found in the following CalWORKs policies

- [302 – Child Care Services Stage One](#)
- [302B – Temporary/Short Term Child Care Services for Welfare to Work Appointments](#)
- [310 – Transportation Payments](#)
- [315 – Ancillary Supportive Services](#)

Note: The WTW CM will encourage the participant to utilize Temporary Short Term Child Care Services and inform/remind him/her the length of time needed to complete the OCAT interview and that the subject matter to be discussed may not be appropriate for a child. Should a participant appear for their interview with their child(ren) the WTW CM is to complete the OCAT Appraisal/Re-Appraisal interview and exercise care when discussing sensitive needs areas that may be inappropriate to discuss.

Assign the Appraisal / Re-Appraisal as the activity in CalWIN and complete all applicable Employment Services pages. Refer to the [Appraisal Resource Guide](#).

During OCAT Appraisal / Re-Appraisal Interview

Motivational Interviewing (MI) skills and techniques play an important part in conducting an appraisal /re-appraisal interview. Please refer to the Online [CalWORKs Appraisal Tool Motivation Interviewing Tips](#) (Attachment 1) handout for MI reminders.

Inform the participant of their rights and responsibilities and have them sign the [WTW1 – Welfare-To-Work Plan-Rights and Responsibilities](#). (Attachment 5) Image the signed [WTW1 \(Attachment 5\)](#) into OnBase and provide a copy to the participant.

Discuss, review and have the participant sign [WTW 47\(Attachment 6\) Online](#) CalWORKs Appraisal Rights and Privacy Form. Image the signed [WTW 47\(Attachment 6\)](#) into OnBase and provide a copy to the participant. In the event that a participant does not agree to sign the [WTW 47\(Attachment 6\)](#) the CM will document in CalWIN Case Comments that the [WTW 47\(Attachment 6\)](#) was explained and that he/she refused to sign the form and proceed with the OCAT interview. The WTW CM will provide a copy of the unsigned [WTW 47\(Attachment 6\)](#) to the participant.

Review the WTW Handbook with the participant and provide a

copy to the participant

Determine whether good cause exists for not actively participating in a WTW activity, and obtain appropriate documentation. Refer to CalWORKs [Policy 240 – Good Cause/Compliance/Sanction](#)

The [Self-Appraisal form \(F063-41-03\) \(Attachment 2\)](#) may be used to help facilitate the appraisal/re-appraisal interview. Review the [Self-Appraisal form](#) and assist the participant to complete all questions, if necessary. All information gathered from the appraisal / re-appraisal interview will be used to assess and assign appropriate WTW activities.

Using OCAT, conduct a high level needs assessment and evaluate participant for potential barriers, Refer to Learning Disabilities Screening and Evaluations / Behavioral Health / Domestic Abuse section of this policy.

Upon completion of the OCAT Appraisal/Re-Appraisal interview, review and evaluate the Appraisal Summary and Recommendations Report (ASR) to make appropriate referral(s) for supportive/employment services and address barriers as identified. The ASR is not to be given or shown to the participant and is to be imaged into OnBase.

Job Search Readiness (JSR) is generally the most appropriate first activity for most participants. If the CM and participant determine, in conjunction with the ASR that another activity would better serve the participant, then JSR may not be the first activity assigned. Refer to CalWORKs Policies and Resource Guides:

- [200 – Welfare-To-Work Overview](#)
- [302 – Child Care Services Stage One](#)
- [310 – Transportation Payments](#)
- [315 – Ancillary Supportive Services](#)
- [601 – Intake Employment Eligibility Specialist \(IEES\) Operations Procedure](#)
- [Client Referrals to Service Providers Resource Guide](#)

Refer to the Learning Disabilities Screening and Evaluations / Behavioral Health / Domestic Abuse section of this policy for the referral processes.

Provide information about Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC). Refer to CalWORKs [Policy 201A – Work](#)

[Opportunities Tax Credit.](#)

Complete a new Welfare-To-Work Plan, if the participant will be changing assigned WTW activity(ies). Refer to the [Welfare-To-Work Plan/Adding Activities With/ Without Plan Resource Guide.](#)

Update the activity status and attendance in WTW activities in CalWIN per the [Participation Tracking Resource Guide](#) and [Appraisal Resource Guide.](#)

Enter the actual number of hours spent on appraisal/re-appraisal interview in the appropriate CalWIN Employment Services Participation screens.

Complete CalWIN Case Comments per the [Case Comments Resource Guide.](#)

Reminder: If more than one adult in the AU is required to participate in WTW, the CM should make every effort to conduct separate private OCAT Appraisal / Re-Appraisal interviews. However, should the participants decline to be interviewed separately, the CM may conduct the OCAT Appraisal / Re-Appraisal interview with both participants present, but two separate OCAT Appraisal / Re-Appraisal interviews must be created. Special should be used when discussing sensitive needs areas as these areas may be inappropriate to discuss if the participant is not alone.

REQUIRED OCAT SECTIONS / PREAMBLES / INDICATOR QUESTIONS

Demographics Tab - The following fields are required and must be completed:

- Client Identification Number (CIN)
- Assistance Unit Case Number (Case Number)
- First and Last name
- Date of Birth
- Gender of participant

Note: Failure to complete the required fields noted above will result in the loss of all information entered into OCAT during the appraisal / re-appraisal interview.

Preambles

A Preamble introduces each OCAT section and the CM is allowed to paraphrase all Preambles except the following, which MUST be read VERBATIM to the participant:

- **Education Section B4** - Learning Needs. Refer to Learning Disabilities Screening and Evaluations / Behavioral Health / Domestic Abuse section of policy

- **Child Care and Parenting Sections**
 - J4: Child Care
 - J5: Child Care Status
 - J6: Backup Child Care

Indicator Questions:

Indicator Questions are designed to assist the CM initiate a conversation in a particular area. The CM has the option to read or paraphrase these questions.

Learning Disabilities Screening and Evaluations / Behavioral Health / Domestic Abuse

OCAT is designed to help the CM evaluate a participant's barriers, such as mental health, substance abuse, learning disability, and domestic abuse. CMs are to consider all factors when evaluating the need for learning disabilities, mental health, and domestic abuse services in addition to OCAT recommendations to determine appropriate services.

Learning Disability Screening and Evaluations (OCAT Section B4)

A learning needs section is included in OCAT and is only to be administered to participants whose primary language is English. This section is identical to the current [WTW Learning Needs Screening \(WTW 18\)](#). Offering and conducting a separate screening with the [WTW 18](#) is not required or necessary if the participant is offered and/or completes the screening in OCAT. The [WTW 17 \(Waiver of CaWORKs Learning Disabilities and/or Evaluation\)](#) is not needed because OCAT contains a section to record the participants LDE decision.

Refer to CaWORKs policy [Policy 210A – Learning Disability Screening and Evaluation](#) for instructions on LDE screening for non-English speaking participants

Behavioral Health Services (OCAT Section F) / Substance Abuse (OCAT Section G)

A Behavioral Health section is included in OCAT. This section will help the CM discuss Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse issues and assist with making appropriate referrals. The [Behavioral Health Questionnaire \(F063-41-153\)](#) is not required for participants completing these sections in OCAT.

When evaluating the need for BHS services outside of the appraisal / re-appraisal process, the CM will update OCAT

Section F and create a new ASR. The ASR is NOT to be given or shown to the participant and is to be imaged into OnBase. Refer to [Policy 401 – Behavioral Health Services](#).

Note: In emergent situations the WTW CM should contact the BHS Regional Coordinator directly to arrange immediate services.

Domestic Abuse Services / Human Trafficking (OCAT Section H1 / H2 / H3)

A Domestic Abuse / Human Trafficking section is included in OCAT. This section will facilitate the CM's discussion regarding domestic abuse/human trafficking issues and assist with making appropriate referrals.

Once a participant discloses DASU/BHS issues and requests a referral the WTW CM must use their discretion to determine if further questioning in those areas should continue.

If a participant does not feel comfortable answering sensitive needs questions the CM will document in CalWIN case comments, taking care not to record confidential details (e.g. name of domestic abuse shelter).

The CM will inquire if the participant would like to discuss any of the sensitive needs areas with a different individual (e.g. DASU Social Worker or Behavioral Health Specialist) and make necessary referrals as appropriate.

If the participant declines any referral(s) for services, the WTW CM will inform the participant that they are welcome to discuss any of these areas in the future as well.

When evaluating the need for DASU services outside of the appraisal / re-appraisal process the CM will use and update OCAT Section H1 / H2 / H3 and create a new ASR. The ASR is not to be given or shown to the participant and is to be imaged into OnBase. Refer to [Policy 402 – Domestic Abuse](#).

If the participant is in crisis, the WTW CM should contact the DASU Senior Social Services Supervisor (SSSS) directly to expedite the clearance and case assignment process.

SELF-INITIATED PROGRAM (SIP) PARTICIPANTS

If the CalWORKs applicant is enrolled in an educational plan during the Intake phase and determined to be potentially

eligible to participate in the SIP activity, the Initial Eligibility Employment Specialist (IEES) is to refer the applicant to the CM prior to an Appraisal being conducted. The CM will then complete all responsibilities stated in the CM Responsibility section of this policy. Refer to [Policy 601– Intake Employment Eligibility Specialist \(IEES\) Operations Procedure](#) and [Policy 220 – Self-Initiated Program](#)

FULL-TIME EMPLOYED PARTICIPANTS

If the CalWORKs applicant is employed the required minimum hours of participation during the Intake phase, upon CalWORKs approval, the IEES will identify whether there is WTW mandatory / voluntary participant and refer the participant to the WTW Program within the required time frame via the [F063-41-70 – CalWORKs Communication Document](#). (Attachment 3)

Every effort should be made to schedule the Appraisal appointment, including Home Calls, around the participant's work schedule so that it does not interfere with the participant's work hours.

OCAT TROUBLESHOOTING

Should OCAT users encounter problems with OCAT the following steps will be followed:

- Research the OCAT user Guide
- Discuss with the Supervisor
- Consult with the regional CSL
- Complete Gadwin Trouble Ticket

OCAT systems issues will be communicated to appropriate staff by e-mail

REFERENCES

ACL 15-69
ACL 15-43
ACL 15-09
EAS Manual 42-711.52
[Policy 200 – Welfare-To-Work Overview](#)
[Policy 202 – Work Participation Hours](#)
[Policy 210 – Assessment](#)
[Policy 210A – Learning Disability Screening and Evaluation](#)
[Policy 220 – Self-Initiated Program](#)
[Policy 240 – Good Cause/Compliance/Sanction](#)
[Policy 302 – Child Care Services Stage One](#)
[Policy 310 – Transportation Payments](#)
[Policy 315 – Ancillary Supportive Services](#)
[Policy 401 – Behavioral Health Services](#)
[Policy 402 – Domestic Abuse](#)
[Policy 601– Intake Employment Eligibility Specialist \(IEES\) Operations Procedure](#)
[Policy 603 Case Manager Operations Procedure](#)

ATTACHMENTS

1. [CalWORKs Appraisal Tool Motivation Interviewing Tips](#)

2. [F063-41-03 – Welfare-To-Work Self-Appraisal](#)
 3. [F063-41-70 – CalWORKs Communication Document](#)
 4. [FSS Case Manager Workflow](#)
 5. [WTW1 – Welfare-To-Work Plan-Rights and Responsibilities](#)
 6. [WTW 47 Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool Rights and Privacy](#)
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RESOURCE GUIDES

[Appraisal Resource Guide](#)

[Case Comments Resource Guide](#)

[Client Referrals to Service Providers Resource Guide](#)

[Participation Tracking Resource Guide](#)

[Welfare-To-Work Plan/Adding Activities With/ Without Plan Resource Guide](#)

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