



Date: June 1, 2023

To: Community Living Assistance and Support Services (CLASS)  
Deaf-Blind with Multiple Disabilities (DBMD)  
Home and Community-Based Services (HCS)  
Texas Home Living (TxHmL)  
Local Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authorities  
(LIDDA)

Subject: Information Letter No. 2023-22  
Employment First Uniform Assessment Tool

HHSC is releasing a new Employment First Uniform Assessment Tool for use in the Home and Community-Based Services (HCS), Texas Home Living (TxHmL), Community Living Assistance and Support Services (CLASS), and Deaf-Blind with Multiple Disabilities (DBMD) programs. The purpose of the Employment First Uniform Assessment Tool is to ensure that individuals who want to work receive employment services from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) or through the Medicaid waiver program in which the individual is enrolled. The Employment First Uniform Assessment Tool is required by Senate Bill 50, 87th Legislature, Regular Session, 2021.

Beginning in fall 2023, service coordinators and case managers in the HCS, TxHmL, CLASS, and DBMD waiver programs will be required to use the Employment First Uniform Assessment Tool to assess an individual's desire to work, document information about an individual's employment goals, use those goals to inform the person-directed plan, and ensure individuals receive employment services from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) or through the Medicaid waiver program in which the individual is enrolled.

The Employment First Uniform Assessment Tool must be completed during the applicant's enrollment, annually, and during a service planning team meeting to update or revise the individual's person-directed plan, individual plan of care, or individual program plan if the individual indicates an interest in pursuing employment. During the initial and all annual service planning meetings, the service coordinator or case manager must ask the individual if they want to work and document either "yes" or "no" within the individual's case file. HCS/TxHmL service coordinators should document the response in the Service Coordination Assessment

(Form 8647) and CLASS/DBMD case managers should document the response in the Individual Program Plan (Form 8606) for CLASS and (Form 6501) for DBMD.

HHSC is developing new rules in Texas Administrative Code, Title 26, Part 1 that will require use of the Employment First Uniform Assessment Tool in the HCS, TxHmL, CLASS and DBMD programs. The proposed rules will be posted to the *Texas Register* for public comment on May 26, 2023. The posting will last for 30 days. The rules are expected to be adopted in early fall of 2023, at which point use of the Employment First Uniform Assessment Tool will be mandatory. Until the rules are adopted, HHSC encourages but does not require the use of the Employment First Uniform Assessment Tool. HHSC will release a follow up notice that will detail the official date the rules are effective, and the date use of the Employment First Uniform Assessment Tool will be required.

The Employment First Uniform Assessment Tool and instructions for use of the tool are available on HHSC's website at the following:

CLASS: <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/handbooks/community-living-assistance-support-services-class-provider-manual/forms>

DBMD: <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/handbooks/deaf-blind-multiple-disabilities-dbmd-program-manual/forms>

HCS: <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/handbooks/home-community-based-services-handbook/forms>

TxHmL: <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/handbooks/texas-home-living-txhml-program/forms>

Program providers, service coordinators, and case managers can send questions about this letter to the following mailboxes:

CLASS: [ClassPolicy@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:ClassPolicy@hhs.texas.gov)

DBMD: [DbmdPolicy@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:DbmdPolicy@hhs.texas.gov)

HCS: [HCSPolicy@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:HCSPolicy@hhs.texas.gov)

TxHmL: [TxHmLPolicy@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:TxHmLPolicy@hhs.texas.gov)

Sincerely,

[Signature on File]

Erica Brown Director III Office of Policy Management