



Date: November 7, 2023

To: Community Living Assistance and Support Services (CLASS) Case Management Agencies (CMAs)  
Community Living Assistance and Support Services (CLASS) Direct Services Agencies (DSAs)  
Deaf-Blind with Multiple Disabilities (DBMD) Program Providers  
Home and Community-Based Services (HCS) Program Providers  
Texas Home Living (TxHmL) Program Providers  
Local Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authorities (LIDDA)

Subject: Information Letter No. 2023-41  
Employment First Discovery Tool

HHSC is re-releasing the Employment First Discovery 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 Discovery 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 Discovery Tool is required by Senate Bill 50, 87th Legislature, Regular Session, 2021.

Beginning on November 14, 2023, service coordinators and case managers in the HCS, TxHmL, CLASS, and DBMD waiver programs will be required to use the Employment First Discovery Tool to explore 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 Discovery 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. The tools accompanying instructions will provide further details on the process.

HHSC has newly, adopted rules in Texas Administrative Code, Title 26, Chapter 284, effective November 14, 2023, that will require use of the Employment First Discovery Tool in the CLASS, DBMD, HCS, and TxHmL programs.

An updated version of the Employment First Discovery Tool and instructions will be available on each impacted HHSC's program webpage. HHSC will send out a GovDelivery Notice when it is posted.

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]*

Katherine Layman  
Program Policy  
Medicaid and CHIP Services  
Texas Health and Human Services Commission