

Sample Caseworker Guide for Completing Barrier Assessment (Intake)

The You Matter Program assists non-custodial parents (NCP) who are experiencing unemployment, underemployment, those that have missed a child support payment or have overwhelming debt. To begin, the NCP completes an Intake Form and an Employability Development Plan (EDP). Below is a snapshot from the Intake Form that the potential client (NCP) completes prior to filling out the Employability Development Plan (EDP) (goals form). Once the goals are completed and signed, you now have an active case and can assign a case number.

Goals on the EDP should address the most pertinent barriers that Employment Services Specialist (ESS) incorporates. ESS might find that the client has better, more efficient resources to work with for certain barriers. Example: Client in Juneau has a need for a driver's license but doesn't have cash to get it. Glory Hall (housing and treatment services) has a program and a case manager that will take them to the DMV to get one. Knowing your community resources will help in these areas. It is a judgement call. If

Please circle any areas below that are potential barriers to employment: (see below)		
Transportation	Child Support (another agency)	Employment
SSI / SSA	Legal Issues	Financial Education
Housing Assistance	Health Issues	Training / Education
Drug / Alcohol Addiction	Homelessness	Miscellaneous
Mental Health	Dental Care Needs	Other barriers Not Listed
Parenting / Family Support	Transitional / Re-entry	_____
Divorce / Child custody Issues	Difficulty Reading / Writing	_____

The list of barriers is meant to help identify where the client sees the need for You Matter assistance. The client checks the barriers keeping him or her from getting and maintaining a job. It is the ESS workers responsibility to assess the client's needs and help find solutions. Some solutions are already solved by other agencies they may be involved with, and the client can be pointed there.

The list below shows possible ways to address barriers for the city of Juneau. It will also provide a framework to explore other communities and their infrastructure for overcoming community specific barriers.

Transportation (Juneau)

- Personal Car – Help with an inexpensive repair to maintain ability to get to work and continue employment (rare). You may need to help them with a bus pass until they can save money for a car repair. Is the client's current job outside of bus routes that makes a car a necessity? Is their current job outside of normal public transit hours. Are taxi's reliable or affordable?

- Bus Fare – Tokens or a monthly pass can be purchased if needed to get to interviews or even get to the office to meet with You Matter. There is a small chance that a client might be eligible for a V.I.P. pass in Juneau.

SSI/SSA

- If they need help applying for SSI, it may be possible to help them with the application.
- Most likely, recommend them to TVR or DVR for assistance in providing documentation.
- Usually, people with a disability have a case worker attempting to get them Medicaid and part of that process is applying for SSI or SSDI.
- If a person has State of Alaska Department of Public Assistance “Interim Assistance”, they have already applied for SSI and are awaiting a decision.

Housing

- It’s not sustainable for You Matter to pay rent for someone that is going to miss a rent or mortgage payment. There are programs that are relief programs. Approach Alaska Housing Finance Corporation at Gruening Park in Juneau. ADHC is a program that should be in all communities.
- In other communities, look out for programs that promotes the reduction of homelessness.
- Transitional housing is an option for homelessness.
- Recently released from incarceration individuals can use reentry programs like T&H’s. Reentry will take individuals that have had recent incarceration and doesn’t have to be upon release. The most difficult item needed is a substance assessment. Those can be done at CBS, JAMHI, Front Street, SEARHC Behavioral Etc. Front Street has a clinician (Piper) at the Glory Hall, so individuals there can get one within a few days if they ask for an assessment.
- Males or females with DV in their past can ask for temporary/transitional housing in a shelter like AWARE. AWARE will take men that have been victims of DV, so check with shelters in each community to identify this need.

Drug and Alcohol (Substances)

- If someone admits to needing help, there are many options. Community behavioral health centers try to make easy access. They could also provide counseling on substance abuse.
- SEARHC Behavior, for example, can provide medication to aid in abstaining in addition to counseling.
- Things to consider are the impacts on work. If a person needs a bed at a treatment center, they will not be working for that time period. If a person needs medication, they may need to attend a meeting or counseling in addition to the medication. Counseling in most settings is an 8am – 5pm thing, which means they must have an employer that will let them be gone once a week, maybe once every 2 weeks.

Mental Health

- Depending on how the person would pay for the service will depend on where they go and options for services. Community behavioral health can be free or a sliding fee. The difficulty may be how fast they can be seen. Mental health services start with an intake assessment. Once that assessment is done, the patient can be scheduled for services. It can be a long process. You may need to call around and find the best option for the You Matter participant. If they do the intake and have a diagnosis that is Severe Mental Illness (SMI), they qualify for case management services. If the SMI

is debilitating, they may have a good case to apply for SSDI and/or SSI. This opens them up for benefits and a potential dependent benefit for their children. The SOA CSSD stops child support enforcement for NCPs with SSI. If someone is contemplating going back to work, DVR or TVR can do a benefits analysis and possible Ticket to Work program to protect the client from losing benefits while they “try” work. The purpose of the Ticket to Work program is to see if a person can maintain employment over time.

Parenting and Family Support

- Parenting classes are available in each community. Check on available options.
- Juneau for example, has access to programs like Fatherhood and Motherhood, Love and Logic, or Circles of Security to help parents with skills to parent better.
- For family support, that might be something like pointing the parent to Tribal Court or referring the parent to Tribal Family Youth Services.

Divorce and Custody Issues

- Refer to Tribal Court for necessary steps and education.
- Find free legal assistance.
- TCSU does not give legal advice.

Child Support Issues

- Answer basic questions, help find phone numbers or forms upon specific request from client for other IV-D agencies.
- Help them balance other agency enforcement outside the control of TCSU. It is possible for the You Matter client to fill out an NCP Only application for TCSU services.
- Questions about child support offer a great opportunity to refer the NCP back to the Child Support specialist within TCSU assigned to their case. It is the start of a good rapport.

Legal Issues

- This barrier refers to legal issues that limit ability to gain employment.
- If the person identifies that they have a criminal record that will limit employment, the Job Center will help them with a Fidelity Bond as insurance to the employer that they will be protected from any future wrongdoing by that person.
- Keep up to date on the ever-changing limits on the formerly incarcerated.

Health Issues

- Help the client find primary care as needed, Front Street, SEARHC, Bartlett, etc.

Homelessness

- The homeless shelter in Juneau is the Glory Hall. There are other transitional options available to explore.
- See also the “Housing” section above.

Dental Care

- This is a tough one for non-SEARHC recipients and will need to be investigated further.

Transitional and Reentry

- This was covered a little in the sections on Housing and Homelessness above.
- Transitional housing could look something like free room for families or a room for reasonable cost. St. Vincent DePaul has had some options for those getting back on their feet waiting for a Section 8 AHFC Housing Voucher or HUD housing.
- Reentry is traditionally reserved for people that have had past incarcerations.
- Reentry housing is low-cost communal living to help prevent recidivism.

Reading/Writing

- It is good to check with adult education programs to help with improving writing skills or even illiteracy.
- SERRC has some writing courses and labs. They also have a GED program.
- DVR might be able to help with education or adaptive learning tools.

Employment

- There are various services to help teach better resume writing skills.
- The You Matter ESS worker is not an expert at resume writing but if someone is willing to apply for a specific job immediately, the ESS worker can redo an existing resume or build a new one from scratch.
- If the client doesn't have a job in mind to apply for, or they want to change the types of work, job searches can be helpful.
- Link the client to the T&H job page which has all T&H jobs plus other tribal and corporation job sites.
- Schedule an appointment with contacts at the SOA Job Center to get the client on the weekly SOA hot jobs list. This involves starting a myAlaska account. If they have a myAlaska account, they can apply for PFD when it is time for PFD applications.
- Tribal citizens may be eligible for E&T and job placement or On the Job Training funds. Non-tribal citizens may be able to get similar services through the SOA Job Center.
- Job Center has a mock interviewer, named Richard that has offered to work with our YouMatter clients. If he can be provided with a job description ahead of time, he is an expert in coming up with questions the employer might ask.
- Ask the client if they have interview clothes. If not, YouMatter can provide some funds.
- Ask the client if they have access to transportation, bus pass, token or taxi. YouMatter might be able to pay.

Financial Education

- T&H Housing offers a range of education to help budget including help with tax returns.
- YouMatter ESS can prepare a budget with the client to assess the ability to pay rent and bills based on the wage that client may receive. They can also evaluate if the job is enough or help with a modification.
- T&H E&T has their budgeting events and training for clients.
- E&T and TCSU can utilize Katrina for financial classes when there are enough students for a class.
- AHFC has classes at times. Check community calendars for the community the client resides in.

- Generation Southeast may have some resources.
- Classes may be available at UAS or Penn Foster.

Training and Education

- SERRC provides community opportunities in Southeast Alaska for training and retraining. They have the MAST program for people wanting to be trained that are over 55. They have opportunities that will funnel all aged clients into UAS programs. The key is to connect clients with SERRC and let them help with learning opportunities.
- T&H E&T may be able to help in cases where the client is eligible for tribal services.
- Penn Foster might be an opportunity for clients to get training, (477 may have a contract with Penn or at least TANF pays for classes for CPs. There is a connection there to explore.
- While incarcerated, NCPs may have an opportunity for trainings. They vary from Center to Center. ESS can work with the education specialist at each center to find opportunities and help get inmate clients involved. Contacts for each center are in the resource folder, obtained from SOA DOC
- There are always college courses too, with traditional sources of funding.
- There are specialty training courses, like the CDL, that can be obtained through Generation Southeast and the Job Center. Keep your eyes open for new things that pop up.