

Washington State WorkSource System Policy

Policy Number: 1011, Revision 6

Policy Title: CASAS for Basic Skills Deficiency

Effective Date: November 1, 2019

1. Purpose:

To outline requirements and guidelines when using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) to determine Basic Skills Deficiency (BSD) for program enrollment in WIOA Title I programs. This policy defines the allowable assessments*, reporting requirements, training for test administrators, and accommodation requirements for assessing customers with disabilities.

* This sixth revision aligns this policy with the revised minimum BSD scores published by CASAS after Revision 5 was issued (see Section 3.e.iii of this policy for specific details).

2. Background:

Across all titles, WIOA focuses on serving "individuals with barriers to employment" and seeks to ensure access to quality services for these populations. WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(E) states that priority for individualized career services and training services must be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient.

CASAS is a test to measure basic academic skills, but it does not measure vocational skills nor does it measure advanced technical skills. Other tests are appropriate for such purposes, and this policy does not limit the appropriate use of other such assessments for those purposes.

3. Policy:

Employment Security Department (ESD) has approved the CASAS tests as the only standard tools to determine Basic Skills Deficiency (BSD) used for program enrollment of:

- i. WIOA Out-of-School-Youth (OSY) who have a high school diploma or its equivalent, are low income and Basic Skills Deficient or English Language Learners
- ii. WIOA In-School Youth (ISY) who are Basic Skills Deficient
- iii. WIOA Adult Priority of Service categories 1 and 2 (*priority must be implemented regardless of the amount of funds available to provide services in the local area*):
 1. Covered persons (veterans and eligible spouses) who are low income, recipients of public assistance, or basic skills deficient
 2. Individuals (non-covered persons) who are low-income, recipients of public assistance, or basic skills deficient

Note: Individuals who are English Language Learners meet the criteria for BSD and must be included in the priority populations for the Title I Adult program.

a. Assessments Permitted

- i. The following CASAS assessments may be used in Washington effective July 1, 2019. The National Reporting System (NRS) determines tests suitable for use and the period for which that use is approved.
 1. CASAS Reading Goals (replaces Life and Work Reading forms 81-188)
 2. Life and Work Listening (forms 981-986)
 3. CASAS Math Goals (replaces Life Skills Math forms 31-38)
 4. CASAS Appraisal (form 900)
- ii. These assessments meet the NRS requirements and:
 1. Are appropriate for measuring literacy and language development of adult students/job seekers,
 2. Have standardized administration and scoring procedures,
 3. Have alternate, equivalent forms for pre- and post-testing, and
 4. Have evidence linking them to the NRS Educational Functioning Levels.

b. Administering the CASAS

- i. When using the paper test format, administering the CASAS to determine BSD requires two steps: (1) appraisal test and (2) proper pre-test as indicated by the appraisal.
- ii. When using the e-test format (called Locator), administration of the CASAS to determine BSD is one step. The Locator is a short computer-adaptive test (CAT) that will quickly adapt to a test-taker's responses and present an appropriate level pretest in one sitting. Note: The Locator is not a stand-alone test and cannot be used for placement.

c. Training Requirements for Staff Administering the CASAS

- i. To ensure accurate use of tests, appropriate interpretation of test results, and to maintain the validity, reliability, and integrity of the assessment process, testing is to only be administered by someone who has received state-recognized online *CASAS Implementation* training at www.casas.org.
- ii. CASAS test administrators must also complete the on-line *CASAS Beyond Implementation Training* at least every two years.
- iii. Local providers must retain certificates of completion for all staff persons trained in CASAS assessment for review by state monitors as requested.
- iv. Providers must ensure the integrity of the testing process and security of materials aligns with the [security policy](#) outlined at casas.org.

d. Appraisal Test

- i. The appraisal test must be given first (prior to the pre-test) to determine the appropriate level and form of the pre-test to be used.
- ii. The CASAS appraisal test cannot be used in lieu of the CASAS pre-test to determine BSD.

- iii. Note: If using the Locator (e-test), the appraisal and pre-test are combined into one computer-adaptive test (see section 3(b), administering the CASAS, above).

e. Pre-test

- i. Pre-tests determine BSD and Educational Functioning Level (EFL).
- ii. The proper pre-test form is indicated by the appraisal test results.
- iii. Basic Skills Deficient is denoted by a CASAS score of 238 or below in reading and 235 or below in math.

f. Minimum Documentation Requirements

- i. BSD must be documented in the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) WIOA Eligibility Application:
 - 1. On the “Barriers” tab of the WIOA Eligibility Application, click the “yes” radio button for Basic Literacy Skills Deficiency.
 - 2. On the dropdown list for BSD Verification, choose “Standardized Assessment Test.”
 - 3. Go to the “Notes” tab of the WIOA Eligibility Application and document the date of the test, score(s), name of the person or entity administering the test and any other supporting details.
- ii. Staff must not upload into the case management system or retain in hard files any CASAS document(s) that contain test questions or other sensitive testing information (see casas.org’s [test security policy](#)).

g. Accommodations for Participants with Disabilities or Other Special Needs

- i. Participants with documented disabilities are responsible for requesting accommodations and for submitting documentation of their disability at the time of registration, program entry, or after diagnosis. Local providers are responsible for providing fully accessible services and reasonable accommodations for participants with documented disabilities.
- ii. For participants who do not have disability documentation, or who choose to not disclose their disability, testing aids may be utilized when and where appropriate. These test-taking aids do not affect the administration of the test. Test aids include:
 - 1. Magnifying glasses/lenses/sheet
 - 2. Clear and/or colored overlays
 - 3. Straight-edge
 - 4. Adhesive notes/flags
 - 5. Highlighters
 - 6. Visor
 - 7. Earplugs
- iii. Local providers must ensure that all Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), and English Language Learners (ELL) participants with disabilities have equal access to test accommodations, have equal opportunities to test, and receive equal treatment in testing situations. Each provider must follow the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) processes and procedures set forth at their organization in determining how to best serve participants with documented disabilities. However, participants are *not required* to reveal their disability and may elect to participate in a program without special accommodations.

- iv. The Guidelines for Providing Accommodations Using CASAS Assessment for Learners with Disabilities provides more detailed information on providing accommodations and is available at www.casas.org.

4. Definitions:

Basic Skills Deficient (WIOA Section 3(5)) means, with respect to an individual -

- (a) who is a youth, that the individual has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
- (b) who is a youth or adult, that the individual is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

5. References:

- National Reporting System (NRS) State Assessment Policy Guidance in [34 CFR 462](#) Subpart D, revised June 6, 2011
- [TEGL 22-15](#)
- [TEGL 19-16](#)

6. Supersedes:

WorkSource System Policy 1011, Revision 5 - CASAS for Basic Skills Deficiency
WorkSource Information Notice (WIN) 0094 – Notice of Upcoming Changes to CASAS Testing Materials used to Determine Basic Skills Deficiency
WIN 0045 – Educational Functioning Levels of the Literacy and Numeracy Measure
WorkSource System Policy 1016 One-Stop Assessments

7. Website:

[Workforce Professionals Center](#)

8. Action:

Local Workforce Development Boards and their contractors, as well as Employment Security Regional Directors, must distribute this policy broadly throughout the system to ensure that WorkSource System staff are familiar with its content and requirements.

9. Attachments:

None

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