



# LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix User Manual

A Modified Version of the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix

**Copyright © 2013, 2015, 2017 by Youth and Family Alliance dba LifeWorks**

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, introduced into, or stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise) for any commercial or non-commercial purposes without prior written permission.

For permission requests, please contact:  
Youth and Family Alliance dba LifeWorks  
3700 S. 1st St., Austin, TX 78704  
[www.lifeworksaustin.org](http://www.lifeworksaustin.org)

Although efforts have been made to verify the accuracy of all cited sources, the author is not responsible or liable for any broken links or any missing or incorrect information found in the cited materials. References to any tools, websites, agencies, or workgroups do not suggest or constitute an endorsement by the author or LifeWorks, nor do the views and opinions contained in any of the cited materials reflect the opinions of the author or LifeWorks.

# Table of Contents

<b>Overview of LifeWorks .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1. Introduction to the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background on the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix.....	1
1.1.1 Rationale for Modifying the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix.....	2
1.2 Benefits of Using the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix .....	3
1.3 Collection Requirements for the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix .....	4
1.4 Introducing the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix to Clients.....	5
<b>2. The LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix Data Elements.....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Housing .....	7
2.2 Employment .....	11
2.3 Income .....	15
2.4 Food.....	18
2.5 Healthcare Coverage .....	22
2.6 Education.....	26
2.7 Adult Education.....	29
2.8 Language/Literacy .....	32
2.9 Mobility .....	36
2.10 Disabilities & Physical Health .....	40
2.11 Mental Health.....	44
2.12 Substance Abuse .....	48
2.13 Legal.....	53
2.14 Safety.....	57
2.15 Credit.....	61
2.16 Life Skills .....	65
2.17 Community Involvement.....	69
2.18 Network Support .....	73
2.19 Family Relations: Family of Origin .....	77

2.20 Family Relations: Caregiver(s) .....	82
2.21 Intimate Relationship(s) .....	88
2.22 Parent-Child Relations .....	92
2.23 Childcare .....	98
2.24 Education of Client’s Child(ren) .....	102
2.25 The “Does Not Know” and “Declined to Answer” Response Options .....	105
2.26 Identifying Goals .....	105
2.27 Confidence in Assessment .....	105
<b>3. Using the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix as an Outcome Measure .....</b>	<b>107</b>
3.1 Key Recommendations .....	107
<b>Appendix A: Score Guide for the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix (Referring to Clients in the Third Person) .....</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Appendix B: Score Guide for the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix (Referring to Clients in the First Person) .....</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>Appendix C: Modifications to the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix .....</b>	<b>153</b>
C.1 Housing .....	153
C.2 Employment .....	153
C.3 Income .....	154
C.4 Food .....	155
C.5 Healthcare Coverage .....	155
C.6 Education .....	156
C.7 Adult Education .....	156
C.8 Language/Literacy .....	157
C.9 Mobility .....	158
C.10 Disabilities & Physical Health .....	159
C.11 Mental Health .....	160
C.12 Substance Abuse .....	160
C.13 Legal .....	161

C.14 Safety .....	162
C.15 Credit .....	162
C.16 Life Skills .....	163
C.17 Community Involvement.....	164
C.18 Network Support.....	165
C.19 Family Relations: Family of Origin.....	166
C.20 Family Relations: Caregiver(s).....	167
C.21 Intimate Relationship(s) .....	168
C.22 Parent-Child Relations.....	169
C.23 Childcare.....	170
C.24 Education of Client's Child(ren) .....	170
<b>Copy of the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix.....</b>	<b>172</b>

# Overview of LifeWorks

## LifeWorks Mission

LifeWorks is a fierce advocate for youth and families seeking their path to self-sufficiency. We are committed to innovative problem solving, shared accountability and a relentless focus on achieving real, sustainable and measurable results for the clients we serve.

## Our Purpose

Every year, LifeWorks provides a pathway to self-sufficiency for more than 4,000 Central Texas youth and families, many of whom are facing life's most difficult challenges, including homelessness, trauma, and abuse. Our services revolve around four core beliefs:

**Everyone deserves a home.** LifeWorks offers a comprehensive continuum of housing and support options for vulnerable youth and young adults, including Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Living, Rapid Re-Housing and Permanent Supportive Housing. One of our primary goals is to be leaders in the local and national movement to end youth homelessness by 2020.

**Everyone deserves to work.** Our youth often struggle to find their place in the workforce, so we are committed to lowering the barriers experienced by youth who have grown up in foster care or spent time on the streets through evidence-based workforce programming, educational support, life skills classes and social/emotional development.

**Everyone deserves a chance to heal.** LifeWorks counseling and psychiatric services offer a caring place for youth and families to address conflict and trauma so that they can move forward with their lives. LifeWorks counseling programs are some of the largest sources of office- and community-based mental health services for children, youth and families in Central Texas.

**We never have all the answers.** LifeWorks is an applied learning organization. All transition-aged youth participate in on-going evaluation throughout their LifeWorks journey that measures their progress across 24 domains of self-sufficiency. These data are used to inform service delivery, continually improve programs, and guide the selection of new service models, as well

as build upon existing research and advocate for resources and solutions that will have greatest impact.

For more information about LifeWorks or to download additional resources, please visit <http://www.lifeworksaustin.org>.

For questions about the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix or its use, please contact:

Elizabeth Schoenfeld, Ph.D.  
Director of Research & Evaluation  
[liz.schoenfeld@lifeworksaustin.org](mailto:liz.schoenfeld@lifeworksaustin.org)  
512.735.2130

For requests for technical assistance, please contact:

Wendy Varnell, LCSW  
Chief Strategy Officer  
[wendy.varnell@lifeworksaustin.org](mailto:wendy.varnell@lifeworksaustin.org)  
512.735.2144

Generous support for the development of the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix was provided by Michael & Susan Dell Foundation and St. David's Foundation.

# 1. Introduction to the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix

This handbook provides information on the appropriate use of the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix (LW-SSM), a modified version of the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix (ASSM). The LW-SSM was originally developed for use with individuals accessing services at LifeWorks, but it has since been adopted by multiple agencies across the United States. Among other things, this handbook includes (1) a detailed explanation of each domain and response category, (2) the protocol for scoring the LW-SSM, and (3) a complete description of the modifications that have been made to the ASSM.

## 1.1 Background on the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix

The federal government has expressed an interest in promoting the self-sufficiency of individuals and families for the past several decades.<sup>1</sup> Although there is no shared definition of “self-sufficiency” at the federal level, it has typically been discussed as the opposite of dependence—particularly dependence on public assistance.<sup>2</sup> However, there has been growing recognition that the construct encompasses more than simply *economic* self-sufficiency,<sup>3</sup> and thus researchers and program implementers alike have developed tools to measure self-sufficiency in a more holistic manner. One such effort resulted in the development of the ASSM.

The ASSM was the product of the Arizona Homeless Evaluation Project, a collaborative effort between the State of Arizona and the Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust.<sup>4</sup> The goal was to develop a reliable and valid measure that evaluated individuals’ level of independence and quality of life across a variety of domains, allowing staff to develop a more holistic view of their clients. The ASSM has since been used, either in its original form or with meaningful modifications, by a number of local organizations and state agencies, most notably the State of

---

<sup>1</sup> Committee on Ways and Means, U.S. House of Representatives. (2004). *Background material and data on the programs within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Publishing Office.

<sup>2</sup> Sandfort, J. R., & Hill, M. S. (1996, October). *Self-sufficiency: An underdefined goal for public policy*. Paper presented at the annual conference for Association for Public Policy and Management, Pittsburg, PA.

<sup>3</sup> Hawkins, R. L. (2005). From self-sufficiency to personal and family sustainability: A new paradigm for social policy. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, 32, 77–92.

<sup>4</sup> Culhane, D. P., Parker, W. D., Poppe, B., Gross, K. S., & Sykes, E. (2008). Accountability, cost-effectiveness and program performance: Progress since 1998. Retrieved from [http://repository.upenn.edu/spp\\_papers/114](http://repository.upenn.edu/spp_papers/114)



Michigan.<sup>5</sup> Similar measures have been developed across the country, including the Boulder County Self-Sufficiency Matrix,<sup>6</sup> the Snohomish County Self-Sufficiency Matrix,<sup>7</sup> the Dutch Self-Sufficiency Matrix,<sup>8,9</sup> and the Self-Sufficiency and Well-Being Matrix.<sup>10</sup>

The original version of the ASSM allowed for individuals' self-sufficiency to be assessed across 17 domains on a 5-point scale ranging from "In Crisis" to "Empowered."<sup>11</sup> The ASSM was later expanded to later expanded to 18 domains.<sup>12</sup> These 18 domains are as follows:

- |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Income               | 10. Life Skills           |
| 2. Employment           | 11. Mental Health         |
| 3. Housing              | 12. Substance Abuse       |
| 4. Food                 | 13. Family Relations      |
| 5. Childcare            | 14. Mobility              |
| 6. Children's Education | 15. Community Involvement |
| 7. Adult Education      | 16. Safety                |
| 8. Legal                | 17. Parenting Skills      |
| 9. Health Care          | 18. Credit History        |

### 1.1.1 Rationale for Modifying the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix

Because the ASSM was originally developed for use with homeless adults, it could not be easily applied to other populations (e.g., transition-age youth, school-age youth, older adults). As a result, programs that have used the ASSM to assess clients' self-sufficiency have historically modified the measure in some way (generally by adding or eliminating certain domains) in order to better align with their program goals.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> W. D. Parker, personal communication, May 27, 2014

<sup>6</sup> Boulder County Self-Sufficiency Matrix. Retrieved August 25, 2017, from [http://outcomes.ascend.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity\\_forms/1-71975598de9338f71e49a1d13937b9e0/2016/04/Sample-Self-Sufficiency-Matrix\\_DVP.pdf](http://outcomes.ascend.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/1-71975598de9338f71e49a1d13937b9e0/2016/04/Sample-Self-Sufficiency-Matrix_DVP.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Snohomish County Self-Sufficiency Taskforce. (2004). Self-Sufficiency Matrix: An assessment and measurement tool created through a collaborative partnership of the human services community in Snohomish County.

<sup>8</sup> Lauriks, S., Buster, M., de Witt, M., van de Weerd, S., Theunissen, V., Schönenberger, M., & Fassaert, T. (2013). *Self-Sufficiency Matrix 2013 manual*. GGD Amsterdam: Amsterdam, Netherlands.

<sup>9</sup> Lauriks, S., de Wit, M. A., Buster, M. C., Fassaert, T. J., van Wifferen, R., & Klazinga, N. S. (2014). The use of the Dutch Self-Sufficiency Matrix (SSM-D) to inform allocation decisions to public mental health care for homeless people. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 50, 870–878.

<sup>10</sup> United Way of Pierce County. (2016). *Self-Sufficiency and Well-Being Matrix: Adapted from the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix and the Boulder County Self-Sufficiency Matrix*. Tacoma, WA: Author.

<sup>11</sup> Culhane, D. P., Parker, W. D., Poppe, B., Gross, K. S., & Sykes, E. (2008). Accountability, cost-effectiveness and program performance: Progress since 1998. Retrieved from [http://repository.upenn.edu/spp\\_papers/114](http://repository.upenn.edu/spp_papers/114)

<sup>12</sup> Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues. (2010). Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues Self-Sufficiency Matrix Assessment Standards.

<sup>13</sup> W. D. Parker, personal communication, May 27, 2014

In developing the LW-SSM, our goal was to expand the applicability of the ASSM to a broader population and service types. The final version of the LW-SSM (developed after an extensive pilot period) consists of 24 domains (for additional information regarding the development of the LW-SSM, please contact the author). All of the modifications that have been made regarding the domains and their associated response options can be found in Appendix C.

## 1.2 Benefits of Using the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix

The Snohomish County Self-Sufficiency Taskforce outlined five purposes for using a standardized measure of self-sufficiency:

1. As a **case management tool**, by helping case managers identify their clients' areas of strength, target clients' areas of vulnerability, and document client progress (or their ability to maintain their level of self-sufficiency) over time.
2. As a **client assessment tool**, by allowing clients to recognize their areas of strength and document their progress as they become more self-sufficient across the various domains.
3. As a **management tool**, by identifying the programs that are most effective at promoting clients' self-sufficiency, both across domains and within specific domains, and using this information to inform resource and funding allocations.
4. As a **measurement tool**, by allowing programs to clearly document client progress for both internal and external purposes.
5. As a **communication tool**, to communicate to funders, policymakers, and the general public the degree to which social service programs promote the self-sufficiency of their clients.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to the purposes outlined above, LifeWorks has found the LW-SSM: (1) enables service providers to treat the "whole person," thereby promoting a client-centered focus; and (2) fosters agency alignment, allowing for programs to share a common language regarding clients' needs and establishing a uniform referral process.

---

<sup>14</sup> Snohomish County Self-Sufficiency Taskforce. (2004). Self-Sufficiency Matrix: An assessment and measurement tool created through a collaborative partnership of the human services community in Snohomish County.

### 1.3 Collection Requirements for the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix

The LW-SSM should be completed at program intake,<sup>15</sup> at quarterly intervals, and at program exit. Thus, clients who complete or exit a program within three months of enrollment will only have two assessments: their intake assessment and their exit assessment. However, a final LW-SSM assessment should be completed for *any* client who stops receiving services within three months of enrollment.<sup>16</sup> The tool can also be used for follow-up purposes (i.e., during any check-ins with clients that occur following program exit).

When completing the LW-SSM, it is important for users to select the score that reflects the client's *current* situation for each domain. In other words, the domain should not be scored based on the client's recent past or pending changes in their life circumstances—for instance, when completing the LW-SSM for an individual who is experiencing homelessness but is slated to move into a rapid rehousing unit within the next few days, the score should reflect the client's housing situation the day *the assessment is completed* (i.e., unhoused) and not their *expected* housing situation (i.e., residing in a rapid rehousing unit).

To promote the reliability of the LW-SSM, users are encouraged to ask clients the series of yes/no questions associated with each domain to determine clients' scores (the score protocol can be found in the blue text in each domain section, as well as in Appendices A and B). Please note that these guidelines were based on the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Scoring Sheet developed by the Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues, and the original wording and scoring logic was preserved to the fullest extent possible (but has been modified). Given the nuances of the tool, clients should not complete the tool independently or self-select their own score. Additionally, users should receive training in the tool prior to implementation in order to ensure consistency in scoring.

In the event that the LW-SSM is used by multiple programs at a single agency, a “baseline” assessment should be completed for each unique program enrollment, in order to capture the client's status at program entry. In a similar vein, every program should complete a

---

<sup>15</sup> The baseline LW-SSM should be completed within one week of program entry, as recommended by the Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues, 2010.

<sup>16</sup> In the event that the client exits services unexpectedly, a closing LW-SSM should be completed that is reflective of the client's status at the last encounter (be sure to record the “date completed” as the date of the last encounter with the client). Under these circumstances, users should only adjust the score of the domains where they have observed changes (or are aware of changes) in the client's life. For all other domains, users should retain the client's prior score.

“closing” LW-SSM for their client upon program exit, even if the client is still enrolled in other services at the same agency.

## **1.4 Introducing the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix to Clients**

When introducing the LW-SSM to clients, it is important to provide some context for why the assessment is being completed, especially as the assessment may touch on aspects of clients’ lives that are not directly “relevant to” or affected by the services they are receiving. Thus, users may want to:

- Highlight their (or their agency’s) commitment to self-sufficiency
- Stress their commitment to cultivating a holistic understanding of their clients’ lives
- Explain that the assessment helps to identify other possible ways in which clients may benefit from services, thereby informing additional referrals
- State upfront that the assessment will be completed at regular intervals in order to ensure that any new needs do not go unaddressed.

In addition, users will want to mention that clients may decline to answer any question without impacting their access to services.

## 2. The LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix Data Elements

This section describes the 24 unique domains captured by the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix (LW-SSM), including the range of response options associated with each domain. Of these 24 domains, six must be completed for all clients (whether or not the remaining 18 domains are completed is determined by client circumstance, as outlined below; *please note that the majority of clients will meet these criteria, and thus most of the domains will be completed for the majority of clients*). The six domains that are required to be completed for all clients are (1) income, (2) food, (3) healthcare coverage, (4) disabilities and physical health, (5) safety, and (6) network support.<sup>17</sup> By clearly defining each domain and response category, data can be collected in a consistent, uniform manner across programs, thereby promoting the reliability of the tool. As a result, programs can be meaningfully compared to one another in terms of their ability to foster clients' self-sufficiency within and across domains.

The 24 domains found within the SSM are as follows:<sup>18</sup>

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Housing*   | 12. Substance Abuse                    |
| 2. Employment   | 13. Legal                              |
| 3. Income*  | 14. Safety                             |
| 4. Food*  | 15. Credit                             |
| 5. Healthcare Coverage*   | 16. Life Skills                        |
| 6. Education  | 17. Community Involvement              |
| 7. Adult Education: High School Diploma/GED/ Additional Schooling | 18. Network Support                    |
| 8. Language/Literacy  | 19. Family Relations: Family of Origin |
| 9. Mobility   | 20. Family Relations: Caregiver(s)     |
| 10. Disabilities & Physical Health                                | 21. Intimate Relationship(s)           |
| 11. Mental Health   | 22. Parent-Child Relations             |
|   | 23. Childcare                          |
|   | 24. Education of Clients' Child(ren)   |

*\*domains scored at the household level*

<sup>17</sup> Please note that Santa Clara County also required six domains to be completed for all clients—specifically, income, employment, housing, legal, mental health, and substance abuse (Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues, 2010). However, Santa Clara County was using the version of the ASSM that was adopted by HUD, which was not intended to be used with clients who are minors. Because the LW-SSM is intended to be used with a wider range of client populations (and because of the eligibility criteria specified for each domain), the “required” domains for the LW-SSM differ somewhat from those that have been required by other communities using other versions of the ASSM.

<sup>18</sup> The domains marked with asterisks should be scored at the household level (additional details are provided, as necessary, for each of these domains later in this section of the handbook), and the domains that are not marked with asterisks should be scored at the individual level.

## 2.1 Housing

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
<b>Housing</b>	Homeless or threatened with eviction.	In transitional, temporary, or substandard housing <u>OR</u> current rent/mortgage payment is unaffordable (over 30% of income).	In stable housing that is only marginally adequate.	Household is in adequate, subsidized housing.	Household is in adequate, unsubsidized housing.

*Definition:* This domain is intended to assess the client’s *current* housing status. For instance, if the client was evicted a month ago but is temporarily staying with a family member, the rating should reflect the client’s temporary housing arrangement and not their recent eviction.

*Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for all clients except for those who are currently incarcerated.
- Select “N/A” for:
  - Clients who are currently incarcerated
- Select “DK/DA” for clients who do not know or declined to discuss their housing situation

*Special Issues:* Because this domain should also be completed for individuals who are not responsible for meeting their own housing needs (e.g., children), accurately assessing this domain may require a conversation with clients’ caregivers or other informed parties.

*Response Options:*

### (1) In Crisis – Homeless or threatened with eviction.

- **Homeless** is defined as a person living outside, in a place not intended for human habitation, in a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter.
- **Threatened with eviction** refers to those who are at risk of losing their home, due to either financial or relational reasons.
- Clients who reside in a residential treatment center or at a hotel/motel paid for using emergency shelter funds should also be scored as “In Crisis.”

**(2) Vulnerable – In transitional, temporary, or substandard housing: current rent/mortgage payment is unaffordable (over 30% of income).**

- **Transitional housing** refers to a housing initiative that offers long-term temporary housing for up to 24 months and typically includes a range of supportive services (e.g., supportive housing).<sup>19</sup>
- **Temporary housing** is defined as any temporary living arrangement that an individual or his/her case manager or counselor may have arranged with family, friends, caregiver(s), etc. Note that those who have arranged to stay somewhere for an indefinite amount of time would be characterized as having “stable” housing.
- **Substandard housing** is defined as housing that endangers the safety, well-being, or property of the occupants, or a property that does not meet local building or housing codes.
- Clients who currently reside in a boarding home, group home, foster family home, host home, a supervised independent living program, a medical/psychiatric hospital, a residential project/halfway house, or a hotel/motel (not paid for using emergency shelter funds) should also be classified as “Vulnerable.”

**(3) Safe – In stable housing that is only marginally adequate.**

- **Stable housing** is defined as housing in which the client is able and likely to continue residing (please note that transitional living arrangements are not considered to be stable),
- Housing is considered to be **affordable** if the household spends no more than 30% of its gross income on housing-related expenses.<sup>20</sup> Please note that, here, “affordable housing” is not referring to a specific type of housing program.
- When assessing whether the client’s housing situation is **adequate**, one should consider the legal security of tenure (i.e., the legal rights and responsibilities, if any, that individuals have with respect to their property); the availability of services, materials, facilities, and infrastructure; its accessibility and location; and its cultural adequacy.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> HUD Exchange. (n.d.). Continuum of Care (CoC) program eligibility requirements. Retrieved August 21, 2017, from <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/coc-program-eligibility-requirements/>

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development. (n.d.). Affordable housing. Retrieved August 21, 2017, from [https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/affordablehousing/](https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/affordablehousing/)

<sup>21</sup> UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, as cited in the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Scoring Sheet, developed by the Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues, 2010.

**Building Capacity – Household is in adequate, subsidized housing.**

- ***Subsidized housing*** refers to government-supported housing for individuals with low to moderate income and can include direct housing subsidies, public housing, affordable housing, rent supplements, non-profit housing, and some forms of cooperative housing.
- ***Adequate*** – see definition above
- Clients who reside in permanent supportive housing or rapid rehousing should be scored as “Building Capacity,” provided they do not meet any criteria that would warrant a lower score (e.g., housing is only marginally adequate).

**(4) Empowered – Household is in adequate, unsubsidized housing.**

- ***Unsubsidized housing*** is defined as private housing wherein the client does not receive government or public assistance.
- ***Adequate*** – see definition above

**Housing Domain Score Guide**

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client’s file, intake information, the user’s observation, or the user’s knowledge of the client’s situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client resides in an emergency shelter, then the client does not need to be directly asked about their residence).

**1. Is the client currently in jail, prison, or a juvenile detention facility?**

Yes = N/A

No = Next question

**2. Is the client currently housed?**

Yes = Next Question

No = “In Crisis”

**3. Is the client at immediate risk of losing their housing?**

Yes = “In Crisis”

No = Next Question

**4. Does the client currently reside in a house or an apartment?**

Yes = Go to Question #7

No = Next Question



**5. Where does the client currently reside?**

Residential treatment center = “In Crisis”  
 Emergency shelter = “In Crisis”  
 Safe haven = “In Crisis”  
 Place not meant for habitation = “In Crisis”  
 Transitional living program = “Vulnerable”  
 Group home = “Vulnerable”  
 Dorm/Co-op = Go to Question #9

Boarding home = “Vulnerable”  
 Residential project/halfway house = “Vulnerable”  
 Supervised independent living program = “Vulnerable”  
 Supportive housing = “Vulnerable”  
 Medical or psychiatric hospital = “Vulnerable”  
 Hotel/motel = Next Question

**6. Is the client paying for the hotel/motel using their own money (or a friend’s or family member’s money), or do they receive assistance from a social service program?**

Paid for by a social service agency = “In Crisis”  
 Not paid for by a social service agency = “Vulnerable”

**7. Did the client obtain their housing through a social service program, Child Protective Services, or some other organization?**

Yes = Next Question  
 No = Go to Question #9

**8. In what type of housing does the client currently reside?**

Group home = “Vulnerable”  
 Transitional living program = “Vulnerable”  
 Residential project/halfway house = “Vulnerable”  
 Boarding home = “Vulnerable”  
 Supportive housing = “Vulnerable”  
 Host home = “Vulnerable”  
 Supervised independent living program = “Vulnerable”

Foster family home = “Vulnerable”  
 Friend/Family home = Next Question  
 Rapid rehousing = Next Question  
 Permanent supportive housing = Next Question  
 Dorm/Co-op = Next Question  
 Unsubsidized apartment/house = Next Question

**9. Can the client continue living in their current residence for as long as they like?**

Yes = Next Question  
 No = “Vulnerable”

**10. Does the client—or whoever is responsible for paying for the client’s housing—spend more than 30% of their income on housing-related expenses?**

Yes = “Vulnerable”  
 No = Next Question

**11. Does the client have any safety concerns or accessibility concerns with respect to the physical structure of their housing?**

Yes = “Vulnerable”  
 No = Next Question

**12. Does the client consider their housing to be adequate and meeting their needs?**

Yes = Next Question  
 No = “Safe”

**13. Is the housing subsidized (i.e., some type of rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, affordable housing, low-income housing, a subsidized co-op, or some other type of government-supported housing)?**

Yes = “Building Capacity”  
 No = “Empowered”

## 2.2 Employment

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
Employment	No job.	Temporary, part-time, or seasonal job; inadequate pay and no benefits.	Employed full-time; inadequate pay; few or no benefits.	Employed full-time with adequate pay and benefits.	Maintains permanent full-time employment with adequate pay and benefits.

*Definition:* This domain is intended to assess the client's *current* employment situation.

For instance, if a client had a bout of unemployment but recently obtained part-time employment, the rating should reflect the client's part-time employment status and not their recent period of unemployment.

*Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for:
  - All clients who are 18 years of age or older
  - Clients between the ages of 14 and 17 that are currently employed
- Select "N/A" for:
  - Clients who are 13 years of age or younger
  - Clients between 14 and 17 years of age who are not employed
- Select "DK/DA" for clients who do not know or declined to discuss their employment situation

*Special Issues:*

- Clients who are eligible to be scored on this domain but who are full-time students should still be scored on this domain (i.e., they should not be scored as "N/A"), despite their student status.
- Clients who are receiving SSI or SSDI and who are unable to work should also be scored on this domain (i.e., not scored as "N/A").
- Clients who are employed at multiple jobs (including part-time jobs) but are working for at least 32 hours a week total be considered as working full-time.

*Response Options:***(1) In Crisis – No job.****(2) Vulnerable – Temporary, part-time, or seasonal job; inadequate pay and no benefits.**

- ***Temporary employment*** refers to a job situation in which the employee is expected to leave the position within a defined period of time.
- ***Part-time employment*** is defined as a job (or combination of jobs) in which the employee works fewer than 32 hours per week.
- ***Seasonal jobs*** refer to those that are performed in an industry designated as seasonal during the time period (e.g., lifeguarding during the summer).
- ***Inadequate pay*** refers to pay that is insufficient for meeting basic needs without public assistance. *Basic needs* include, but are not limited to, housing, food, childcare, transportation, and healthcare. Specifically, if the client earns less than what their community defines as their “living wage,” then their income should be considered inadequate.
- ***Benefits*** include, but are not necessarily limited to, healthcare, sick time, paid vacations, holidays, or contributions to a retirement plan.

**(3) Safe – Employed full-time; inadequate pay; few or no benefits.**

- ***Full-time employment*** refers to a job in which the employee works for more than 32 hours per week. For our purposes, “full-time employment” also refers to those who are employed at multiple jobs (including part-time jobs) but are working for over 32 hours a week altogether.
- ***Inadequate pay*** – see definition above
- ***Benefits*** – see definition above

**(4) Building Capacity – Employed full-time with adequate pay and benefits.**

- ***Full-time employment*** – see definition above
- ***Adequate pay*** is defined as pay that allows an individual to meet their basic needs without the need for public assistance. Provided clients earn, at minimum, what their community defines as their “living wage,” then their income should be considered adequate.
- ***Benefits*** – see definition above

**(5) Empowered – Maintains permanent full-time employment with adequate pay and benefits.**

- ***Permanent employment*** describes those who have held their job position for a minimum of three months and who expect to maintain their jobs in the future (i.e., who are not employed in a temporary position).
- ***Full-time employment*** – see definition above
- ***Adequate pay*** – see definition above
- ***Benefits*** – see definition above

**The Employment Domain Score Guide  
can be found on the next page.**

## Employment Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client's age, the client does not need to be directly asked about their age).

**1. How old is the client?**

13 years old or younger = N/A

14–17 years old = Go to Question #2

18 years old or older = Go to Question #3

**2. Does the client have a job?**

Yes = Go to Question #4

No = N/A

**3. Does the client have a job?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "In Crisis"

**4. Does the client work full-time (32+ hours a week)?**

**Note:** If the client works at least 32 hours a week across multiple jobs, they should be considered to be working full-time.

Yes = Next Question

No = "Vulnerable"

**5. Does the job pay a living wage?**

**Note:** For clients who work at least 32 hours a week across multiple jobs, all of their jobs must pay a living wage to go on to the next question.

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

**6. Does the job offer health insurance options, paid time off, and some type of retirement plan?**

**Note:** For clients who work at least 32 hours a week across multiple jobs, all of their jobs must offer the benefits described above to go on to the next question.

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

**7. Has the client been employed at their current workplace for at least three months?**

**Note:** For clients who work at least 32 hours a week across multiple jobs, they must have been employed at all of their current workplaces for at least three months to go on to the next question.

Yes = Next Question

No = "Building Capacity"

**8. Can the client remain at their current job for as long as they like?**

**Note:** For clients who work at least 32 hours a week across multiple jobs, they must be able to remain at all of their jobs for as long as they like in order to be scored as "Empowered."

Yes = "Empowered"

No = "Vulnerable"

## 2.3 Income

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
Income	No income.	Inadequate income OR spontaneous/inappropriate spending.	Can meet basic needs with subsidy.	Can meet basic needs without assistance.	Income is sufficient and well-managed; has discretionary income and is able to save.

### Definition:

- This domain should reflect the income of the *entire* household.<sup>22,23</sup>
- **Household members** include the client and any spouse, domestic partner, relative, dependent, or guardian that shares an address with the client and with whom the client is at least somewhat financially interdependent (e.g., they both contribute to the cost of rent, bills, or food). Note that household members do not include roommates.
- This domain aims to assess the *current* level of income of the client’s household. For instance, if a client has recently applied for TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) but has yet to receive her benefits, the rating should reflect the client’s current ability to meet her basic needs and not her future receipt of TANF benefits.

### Subjects:

- This domain should be completed for all clients.
- Do not select “N/A” for any clients.
- Select “DK/DA” for clients who do not know or declined to provide information about their households’ incomes

### Special Issues:

- Because this domain should also be completed for individuals who are not responsible for earning a living wage (e.g., children), accurately assessing this domain may require a conversation with clients’ caregivers or other informed parties.

<sup>22</sup> Arizona Self-Sufficiency Scoring Sheet, developed by the Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues, 2010.

<sup>23</sup> Please note that, in the original version of the ASSM, income was not intended to be scored at the household level (W. D. Parker, personal communication, May 27, 2014).

- Emancipated, runaway, or homeless youth should be treated as their own household, as should any foster youth who are currently residing in a group home, residential treatment facility, emergency shelter, other group living facility, or a supervised independent living program.

*Response Options:*

**(1) In Crisis – No income.**

- **No income** means that the client’s household receives no income, either in the form of wages or cash benefits.

**(2) Vulnerable – Inadequate income OR spontaneous/inappropriate spending.**

- Households that earn an **inadequate income** earn 200% or less than the federal poverty guidelines (considering both cash benefits and earned income in tandem). The federal poverty guidelines can be found at the following website: <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>
- **Spontaneous spending** is defined as the tendency to purchase items impulsively, especially unnecessary items.
- **Inappropriate spending** is defined as overspending in general, resulting in an inability of households to meet their basic needs.

**(3) Safe – Can meet basic needs with subsidy.**

- **Basic needs** include, but are not limited to, housing, food, childcare, transportation, and healthcare.
- **Subsidy** refers to various forms of public assistance or outside income sources, including, but not limited to, TANF, Medicaid, or Section 8.
- Foster youth who were placed in a group home, residential treatment facility, emergency shelter, other group living facility should be scored as “Safe.”

**(4) Building Capacity – Can meet basic needs without assistance.**

- **Basic needs** – see definition above
- **Without assistance** means not currently receiving public assistance or outside income sources, including, but not limited to, TANF, Medicaid, or Section 8.

**(5) Empowered – Income is sufficient and well-managed; has discretionary income and is able to save.**

- Income is considered **sufficient** if clients' households earn more than 200% of the federal poverty guidelines<sup>24</sup> and do not receive any cash or non-cash benefits.
- **Discretionary income** is defined as income that remains after the clients' taxes and basic needs (e.g., food, clothing, and housing) have been paid and can be spent, saved, invested, or otherwise used.<sup>25</sup>

## Income Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client is in foster care, the client does not need to be directly asked about their foster care status).

- 1. Is the client currently in foster care?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = Go to Question #3
- 2. Is the client's residential placement some type of a group home, residential treatment facility, emergency shelter, or other group living facility?**  
Yes = "Safe"  
No = Next Question
- 3. What is the client's household income and family size?**  
No income = "In Crisis"  
Income < 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines = "Vulnerable"  
Income ≥ 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines = Next Question
- 4. Do the household's spending habits prevent the client from meeting their basic needs?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"  
No = Next Question
- 5. Does the household need or receive assistance (such as TANF, SNAP, Medicaid, or housing vouchers) to meet its basic needs?**  
Yes = "Safe"  
No = Next Question
- 6. Does the household have money left over after meeting its basic needs and the ability to save?**  
Yes = "Empowered"  
No = "Building Capacity"

<sup>24</sup> see U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. (n.d.). Poverty Guidelines. Retrieved August 21, 2017, from <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>

<sup>25</sup> Discretionary income. Retrieved August 21, 2017, from <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/d/discretionaryincome.asp>



## 2.4 Food

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
Food	No food or means to prepare it. Relies significantly on other sources of free or low-cost food.	Household is on SNAP or relies on some other type of assistance.	Can meet basic food needs but requires occasional assistance.	Can meet basic food needs without assistance.	Can choose to purchase any food the household desires.

### Definition:

- This domain assesses the *current ability* of a household to satisfy its members' food needs. For instance, if a client has recently applied for SNAP (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, formerly known as food stamps) but has yet to receive her benefits, the rating should reflect the client's current ability to meet her food needs and not her future receipt of SNAP benefits.
- **Household members** include the client and any spouse, domestic partner, relative, dependent, or guardian that shares an address with the client and with whom the client is at least somewhat financially interdependent (e.g., they both contribute to the cost of rent, bills, or food). Note that household members do not include roommates.
- If the client is a child and is not responsible for meeting their own food needs, the rating of this domain should reflect the current status of the household.

### Subjects:

- This domain should be completed for all clients.
- Do not select "N/A" for any clients.
- Select "DK/DA" for clients who do not know or declined to discuss information about their food security.

### Special Issues:

- Because this domain should also be completed for individuals who are not responsible for meeting their own food needs (e.g., children), accurately assessing this domain may require a conversation with clients' caregivers or other informed parties.

- Depending on the clients' placement, youth in foster care may be scored as either "Vulnerable" or "Safe." Specifically, clients in the care of Child Protective Services (CPS) should be scored as "Vulnerable," provided they rely on some kind of shelter, residential treatment facility, group home, or transitional living program to meet their food needs. Clients in the care of CPS who reside in (and whose food needs are met through) a foster family home should be scored as "Safe." The difference in score is a function of clients' access to food; because foster youth residing in shelters, residential treatment facilities, group homes, or transitional living facilities do not have unrestricted access to food or a kitchen, they receive a lower score relative to foster youth who reside in a foster family home.

*Response Options:*

**(1) In Crisis – No food or means to prepare it. Relies significantly on other sources of free or low-cost food.**

- ***Free or low-cost food*** could be in the form of meals received from shelters, food banks, or soup kitchens, or in the form of charitable food boxes.
- Clients who rely on some kind of shelter, residential treatment facility, group home, or transitional living program to meet their food needs unless the client is in the care of CPS

**(2) Vulnerable – Household is on SNAP or relies on some other type of assistance.**

- ***SNAP*** is the acronym for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as food stamps). Please note the household must be *receiving* SNAP and not simply eligible for the program.
- ***Assistance*** can refer to any types of assistance that are specifically food-related, including financial support from family or friends, WIC (Women, Infants, and Children), food banks, school meals, Meals on Wheels, charitable food boxes, or other similar services. Here, assistance does not include SSI or TANF.
- Clients in the care of CPS who rely on some kind of shelter, residential treatment facility, group home, or transitional living program to meet their food needs.

**(3) Safe – Can meet basic food needs but requires occasional assistance.**

- Individuals who are able to meet their *basic food needs* and are not suffering from food insecurity—that is, they know where their next meal is coming from, when it is coming, and they do not need to skip meals because of financial constraints.
- Clients who require *occasional assistance* are not currently receiving SNAP or relying on some other type of food assistance program, but have received assistance of some kind within the last 6 months.
- Clients in the care of CPS whose reside in (and whose food needs are met through) a foster family home.

**(4) Building Capacity – Can meet basic food needs without assistance.**

- *Basic food needs* – see definition above
- *Without assistance* means not having received SNAP or relying on some other type of food assistance program within the last 6 months.

**(5) Empowered – Can choose to purchase any food the household desires**

**The Food Domain Score Guide  
can be found on the next page.**

## Food Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client is in foster care, the client does not need to be directly asked about their foster care status).

1. **Is the client in foster care?**  
Yes = Go to Question #5  
No = Next Question
2. **In the last six months, has the client ever gone without eating because they didn't have enough money for food?**  
Yes = "In Crisis"  
No = Next Question
3. **In the last six months, has the client's household received SNAP (i.e., food stamps) or relied heavily on some other type of assistance to meet its basic food needs (WIC, food bank, charitable food boxes, family help, etc.)?**  
Yes = Go to Question #7  
No = Next Question
4. **Can the client's household afford any food it wants?**  
Yes = "Empowered"  
No = "Building Capacity"
5. **Does the client reside with a foster family?**  
Yes = "Safe"  
No = Next Question
6. **Does the client meet most of their food needs through their housing placement, such as an emergency shelter, group home, transitional living program, or residential treatment facility?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"  
No = Next Question
7. **Does the client meet most of their food needs through some type of shelter program, food banks, or soup kitchens?**  
Yes = "In Crisis"  
No = Next Question
8. **Does the household have food and the means or ability to prepare it?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = "In Crisis"
9. **Does the household receive SNAP (i.e., food stamps) or rely heavily on some other type of assistance to meet its basic food needs (WIC, food bank, charitable food boxes, family help, etc.)?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"  
No = Next Question
10. **Does the household ever have to skip meals because of financial reasons, or is the household ever unsure of when it will be able to find their next meal?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"  
No = "Safe"

## 2.5 Healthcare Coverage

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
<b>Healthcare Coverage</b>	At least one household member has immediate need for medical care or attention and has no medical coverage.	No immediate need, but at least one household member has no medical coverage and great difficulty accessing medical care when needed.	At least one household member has no immediate need and no medical coverage, but is able to access medical care when needed.	All household members have some type of medical coverage, but it may strain budget or is less than adequate.	All household members are covered by affordable, adequate health insurance.

### *Definition:*

- This domain assesses the healthcare coverage of clients' households and the ability of household members to access medical care.<sup>26</sup>
- **Household members** include the client and any spouse, domestic partner, relative, dependent, or guardian that shares an address with the client and with whom the client is at least somewhat financially interdependent (e.g., they both contribute to the cost of rent, bills, or food). Note that household members do not include roommates.

### *Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for all clients.
- Do not select "N/A" for any clients.
- Select "DK/DA" for clients who do not know or declined to disclose whether or not they or their households have any type of medical coverage.

### *Special Issues:*

- The client's self-sufficiency should be based on the household member with the *most* need. The client and the members of their household may differ with respect to their self-sufficiency in this domain (e.g., the client's children are healthy and have adequate coverage, but the client has no medical coverage and pressing health concerns). In this example, the client is the household member with the most need, and the self-sufficiency rating should reflect that need.

<sup>26</sup> Arizona Self-Sufficiency Scoring Sheet, developed by the Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues, 2010.

- Because this domain should also be completed for individuals who are on their parents' or caregivers' healthcare plan, accurately assessing this domain may require a conversation with clients' caregivers or other informed parties.

*Response Options:*

**(2) In Crisis – At least one household member has immediate need for medical care or attention and has no medical coverage.**

→ ***Immediate need*** implies that a household member is suffering from a serious health condition (whether it be an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition). According to the FMLA, a ***serious health condition*** means that an individual is incapacitated due to:

- (1) a condition requiring inpatient care (including recovery time);
- (2) a condition resulting the client being absent from school, work, and other day-to-day activities for at least three days;
- (2) a condition requiring two or more treatments by a healthcare provider;
- (3) a chronic condition requiring periodic visits for treatment, continue over a prolonged period of time, and may occasionally incapacitate the client;
- (4) an incurable condition requiring medical supervision; or
- (5) pregnancy or prenatal care.<sup>27,28</sup>

→ ***No medical coverage*** means there is a member of the client's household who has no health insurance—i.e., healthcare provided through social insurance programs (e.g., Medicare without an additional insurance supplement), social welfare programs (e.g., Medicaid), or private health insurance (e.g., employer-provided health insurance or through their state's Exchange/Marketplace).

<sup>27</sup> United States Department of Labor. (n.d.). The Family and Medical Leave Act. Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/1421.htm#2f>

<sup>28</sup> Society for Human Resource Management. (2016, February 16). FMLA: Serious health condition: How do I know if an employee's medical absence qualifies for FMLA leave? What is considered a serious health condition? Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/hr-qa/pages/howemployeemedicalabsencequalifiesforfmlaleave.aspx>

**(3) Vulnerable – No immediate need, but at least one household member has no medical coverage and great difficulty accessing medical care when needed.**

- *No immediate need* implies that household members are not suffering from a serious health condition (illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition).
- *No medical coverage* – see definition above
- *Difficulty accessing medical care* means that medical professionals, supplies, and services are difficult to obtain, and that a household member is not able to cover the costs of their healthcare (even with a payment plan).

**(3) Safe – At least one household member has no immediate need and no medical coverage, but is able to access medical care when needed.**

- *No immediate need* – see definition above
- *No medical coverage* – see definition above
- *Access to medical care* means that medical professionals, supplies, and services are available to all household members, and that all household members are able to cover the costs of their healthcare (even if it requires a payment plan).

**(4) Building Capacity – All household members have some type of medical coverage, but it may strain budget or is less than adequate.**

- *Medical coverage* refers to health insurance—i.e., healthcare provided through social insurance programs (e.g., Medicare without an additional insurance supplement), social welfare programs (e.g., Medicaid), or private health insurance (e.g., employer-provided health insurance or through their state’s Exchange/Marketplace).
- Medical coverage that *strains the household’s budget* means that the household either
  - (a) has health insurance and spends more than 10% of its income on out-of-pocket medical expenses, or
  - (b) pays deductibles of 10%+ of the family income.<sup>29</sup>
- Whether the household’s medical coverage is *less than adequate* should be subjectively determined by the client

---

<sup>29</sup> Healthcare.gov. (n.d.). Affordable coverage. Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <https://www.healthcare.gov/glossary/affordable-coverage/>

**(5) Empowered – All household members are covered by affordable, adequate health insurance.**

- ***Affordable health insurance*** – see definition above
- If one household member does not have affordable health insurance, the household can receive no higher than a score of “Building Capacity” on this domain.
- Whether the household’s medical coverage is ***adequate*** should be subjectively determined by the client

## Healthcare Coverage Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client is uninsured, then the user does not need to ask if anyone in the household lacks medical coverage).

- 1. Is anyone in the household uninsured (that is, without any health insurance)?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = Go to Question #4
- 2. Does anyone in the household have a serious medical need (including pregnancy)?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”  
No = Next Question
- 3. Is it difficult for the uninsured household members to access medical care when needed?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”  
No = “Safe”
- 4. Does anyone in the household have some type of publicly funded health coverage (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid) with no supplemental private insurance?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”  
No = Next Question
- 5. Does the household spend more than 10% of its income on healthcare premiums, deductibles, or medical expenses?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”  
No = Next Question
- 6. Does the client think that all household members’ health insurance policies provide adequate coverage?**  
Yes = “Empowered”  
No = “Building Capacity”



## 2.6 Education

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
Education	Client is not enrolled in school.	Client is enrolled in school but is not attending or only occasionally attending classes or whose educational needs are not being met.	Client is enrolled in school and attending classes most of the time or who is struggling in at least 3, but not all, classes.	Client is enrolled in school and attending classes on a regular basis but is struggling in one or two classes.	Client is enrolled in school, attending classes on a regular basis, and performing well in school.

*Definition:* This domain assesses clients’ level of school engagement. This domain refers to basic education (kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, and high school) and should not reflect any post-secondary education or vocational training which clients may be pursuing.

*Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for:
  - All clients between the ages of 6 and 18 (as outlined by the Texas Education Code) who have not yet graduated from high school or obtained their GED
- Select “N/A” for:
  - Clients who are below the age of 6
  - Clients who are over 18 years of age, regardless of whether or not they are formally enrolled in a basic education program (public/private/charter school, formal homeschooling classes or alternative education program)
  - Clients who have graduated from high school or obtained their GED
- Select “DK/DA” for clients who don’t know or declined to discuss their education status

*Special Issues:* The caliber of the school should not factor into the scoring of this domain—only attendance and clients’ academic performance should be considered.

*Response Options:*

- (1) In Crisis – Client is not enrolled in school.**
- (2) Vulnerable – Client is enrolled in school but is not attending or only occasionally attending classes or whose education needs are not being met.**
  - Clients who attend classes 50% of the time or less are considered to be only *occasionally attending classes*.
  - Clients' *education needs are not being met* if they are not receiving the necessary special education classes or appropriate accommodations.
  - Clients who are earning Ds or Fs in all of their classes should also be scored as "Vulnerable."
- (3) Safe - Client is enrolled in school and attending classes most of the time or who is struggling in at least 3, but not all, classes.**
  - Clients who attend classes between 50%–90% of the time are considered to be *attending classes most of the time*.
  - Clients who are *struggling* (i.e., earning Ds or Fs) in at least three, but not all, of their classes.
- (4) Building Capacity – Client is enrolled in school and attending classes on a regular basis but is struggling in one or two classes.**
  - Clients who attend more than 90% of the time are considered to be *attending classes on a regular basis*.
  - Clients who are *struggling* (i.e., earning Ds or Fs) in one or two of their classes.
- (5) Empowered - Client is enrolled in school, attending classes on a regular basis, and performing well in school.**
  - Clients who attend more than 90% of the time are considered to be *attending classes on a regular basis*.
  - Clients who are *performing well in school* are not earning Ds or Fs in any classes.

## Education Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client's age, the client does not need to be directly asked about their age).

1. **How old is the client?**  
 Under 6 years old = N/A                      6–18 years old = Next Question                      19 years old or older = N/A
2. **Does the client have a high school diploma or GED?**  
 Yes = N/A    No = Next Question
3. **Is the client currently enrolled in school?**  
 Yes = Next Question    No = "In Crisis"
4. **Does the client have any special education needs or other accommodations that are not being met?**  
 Yes = "Vulnerable"    No = Next Question
5. **What percent of their classes does the client attend?**  
 < 50% = "Vulnerable"                      50–90% = "Safe"                      +90% = Next Question
6. **Is the client earning Ds or Fs in any classes?**  
 Yes = Next Question    No = "Empowered"
7. **Is the client earning Ds or Fs in all of their classes?**  
 Yes = "Vulnerable"    No = Next Question
8. **In how many classes is the client earning Ds or Fs?**  
 1–2 = "Building Capacity"    3+ = "Safe"

## 2.7 Adult Education

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
<b>Adult Education</b>	No HS diploma/GED and is not enrolled in high school or a GED program.	No HS diploma/GED, but the client is enrolled in high school or a GED program.	Client has HS diploma/GED but is not seeking additional education/training to benefit employment.	Client has HS diploma/GED and is seeking additional education/training to benefit employment.	Client has completed additional education/training beyond HS diploma/GED (and is in a position where he/she is employable).

*Definition:* This domain is used to assess *adult clients'* educational attainment and self-sufficiency.

*Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for:
  - Clients who are 14 years of age or older
  - All clients who have obtained their high school diploma or GED
- Select “N/A” for:
  - Clients who are under the age of 14
- Select “DK/DA” for clients who don’t know or declined to discuss their education or vocational training status.

*Special Issues:*

- Although the vast majority of youth between the ages of 14–18 are formally enrolled in school (public/private/charter school or a formal homeschooling program), this domain should be completed for all clients age 14 or older to account for the fact that some youth in this age range may graduate early and to make it easier to track the educational status of transition-age youth (see Section 3.1 for additional information).
- Clients who were educated outside of the United States should be assessed based on how that education is generally recognized in the United States.

*Response Options:*

- (1) **In Crisis – No HS diploma/GED and is not enrolled in high school or a GED program.**
- (2) **Vulnerable – No HS diploma/GED, but the client is enrolled in high school or a GED program.**
- (3) **Safe – Client has HS diploma/GED but is not seeking additional education/training to benefit employment.**
  - *Not seeking additional training* – that is, the client is not enrolled in a college, university, community college, graduate program, associate’s program, specialized training program (e.g., culinary school, cosmetology school), or apprenticeship.
- (4) **Building Capacity - Client has HS diploma/GED and is seeking additional education/training to benefit employment.**
  - *Seeking additional training* means the client is currently enrolled in a college, university, community college, graduate program, associate’s program, or specialized training program (e.g., culinary school, cosmetology school). It could also include apprenticeships.
- (5) **Empowered - Client has completed additional education/training beyond HS diploma/GED (and is in a position where he/she is employable).**
  - *Completed additional education/training beyond HS diploma/GED* means that the client has earned a degree or certification beyond their high school diploma/GED. Receiving a few college credits or halfway finishing a vocational training program does not count (nor do TABC or food handler’s certifications).
  - *Employable* means that the client has the necessary education/training to secure reliable employment (i.e., has “completed additional education/training beyond HS diploma/GED”), but does not necessarily mean that the client has the emotional skills or maturity to maintain reliable employment.

## Adult Education Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client's age, then the client does not need to be directly asked about their age).

- 1. How old is the client?**  
13 years old or younger = N/A  
14 years old or older = Next Question
- 2. Does the client have a high school diploma or GED?**  
Yes = Go to Question #4  
No = Next Question
- 3. Is the client enrolled in high school, a GED program, or an alternative education program?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”  
No = “In Crisis”
- 4. Has the client completed additional training or education beyond receiving a high school diploma or GED (and received a degree or vocational certification)?**  
Yes = “Empowered”  
No = Next Question
- 5. Is the client currently getting additional training or education to help their job opportunities or to earn more money?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”  
No = “Safe”

## 2.8 Language/Literacy

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
<b>Language/ Literacy</b>	Literacy or language problems are serious, unaddressed barriers to employment or accomplishing basic day-to-day tasks.	Client has serious language or literacy issues but is enrolled in a literacy or language program.	Client has a sufficient command of English to where language or literacy is not a barrier to employment or accomplishing basic day-to-day tasks.	Client has sufficient command of English but is seeking additional education to resolve remaining language or literacy problems.	Client has no language or literacy problems.

*Definition:* This domain assesses clients' language and literacy skills.

*Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for:
  - Clients who are 14 years old or older.
- Select "N/A" for:
  - Clients who are less than 14 years old.
- Select "DK/DA" for clients who don't know or declined to discuss their language or literacy skills.

*Special Issues:*

- Please note that if there is a significant discrepancy between clients' language skills and literacy skills, clients' scores should be based on their area of weakness and not their area of strength. For instance, if a client has no language issues but could improve their literacy skills, then the client's score should be based on their current level of literacy.
- For those who are not currently employed or seeking employment, clients' score should be based on the degree to which their language/literacy skills promote or undermine their ability to accomplish basic day-to-day tasks.

*Response Options:*

**(1) In Crisis – Literacy or language problems are serious, unaddressed barriers to employment or accomplishing basic day-to-day tasks.**

- Language or literacy is a *serious barrier* if the client has difficulty accomplishing basic day-to-day tasks or securing/maintaining employment.
- Language or literacy is an *unaddressed barrier* if the client is not currently enrolled in a literacy or language program.
- *Basic day-to-day tasks* include, among other things, getting around town, completing job applications, making purchasing decisions, and engaging in casual conversation.

**(2) Vulnerable - Client has serious language or literacy issues but is enrolled in a literacy or language program.**

- *Serious barrier* – see definition above

**(3) Safe - Client has a sufficient command of English to where language or literacy is not a barrier to employment or accomplishing basic day-to-day tasks.**

- Having a *sufficient command of English* means that the client's language or literacy issues are not a barrier to employment or his/her ability to accomplish basic day-to-day tasks.
- *Basic day-to-day tasks* include, among other things, getting around town, completing job applications, making purchasing decisions, and engaging in casual conversation.

**(4) Building Capacity - Client has sufficient command of English but is seeking additional education to resolve remaining language or literacy problems.**

- *Sufficient command of English* – see definition above
- *Seeking additional education* means that the client is currently enrolled in a language or literacy class or program. This score should not be selected for clients who are interested in enrolling in such a program, but who have yet to actually enroll.

**(5) Empowered - Client has no language or literacy problems.**



## Language/Literacy Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client's age, then the client does not need to be directly asked about their age).

**1. How old is the client?**

13 years old or younger = N/A

14 years old or older = Next Question

**2. Do the client's English language skills ever interfere with their ability to manage daily living skills or employment-related tasks?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #14

**3. Does the client's ability to read or write ever interfere with their ability to manage daily living or employment tasks?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #11

**4. Are the client's English language skills or their reading and writing problems a *serious* barrier to obtaining employment or their ability to manage daily living or employment tasks?**

Only their English language skills = Next Question

Only their reading and writing skills = Go to Question #6

Both their English language skills and their reading and writing skills = Go to Question #7

Neither their English language skills and their reading and writing skills = Go to Question #9

**5. Is the client enrolled in an English language program?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = "In Crisis"

**6. Is the client enrolled in any education or training program to improve their reading and writing skills?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = "In Crisis"

**7. Is the client enrolled in an English language program?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "In Crisis"

**8. Is the client enrolled in any education or training program to improve their reading and writing skills?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = "In Crisis"

**9. Is the client enrolled in an English language program?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

**10. Is the client enrolled in any education or training program to improve their reading and writing skills?**

Yes = "Building Capacity"

No = "Safe"

**11. Are the client's English language skills a *serious* barrier to obtaining employment or their ability to manage daily living or employment tasks?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #13

**12. Is the client enrolled in an English language program?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = "In Crisis"

**13. Is the client enrolled in an English language program?**

Yes = "Building Capacity"

No = "Safe"

**14. Does the client's ability to read or write ever interfere with their ability to manage daily living or employment tasks?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Empowered"

**15. Are the client's reading or writing skills a *serious* barrier to obtaining employment or their ability to manage daily living or employment tasks?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #17

**16. Is the client enrolled in any education or training program to improve their English language skills?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = "In Crisis"

**17. Is the client enrolled in any education or training program to improve their English language skills?**

Yes = "Building Capacity"

No = "Safe"

## 2.9 Mobility

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
Mobility	No access to transportation (public or private).	Transportation is available but unreliable, unpredictable, or unaffordable.	Transportation is available and reliable, but inconvenient.	Transportation is readily available and convenient but not preferred; if client owns a car, lacks either a driver's license or insurance.	Transportation is readily available, affordable, and satisfactory; if client owns a car, has driver's license and a car that is adequately insured.

*Definition:* The purpose of this domain is to assess clients' access to transportation.

*Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for all clients who are at least 16 years of age.
- Select "N/A" for:
  - Clients who are under the age of 16.
- Select "DK/DA" for clients who don't know or declined to discuss about their access to transportation

*Special Issues:* Consistent with the ASSM guidelines,<sup>30</sup> the use of a bus pass that the client did not pay for personally should not impact the scoring of the client (i.e., they could potentially be scored as "Empowered").

*Response Options:*

**(1) In Crisis - No access to transportation (public or private).**

→ **No access** means that no transportation exists in or will come to the area in which the client lives,<sup>31</sup> and the client has no access to any transportation whatsoever.

<sup>30</sup> Arizona Self-Sufficiency Scoring Sheet, developed by the Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues, 2010.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

**(2) Vulnerable - Transportation is available but unreliable, unpredictable, or unaffordable.**

- When clients can access transportation of some form, transportation is considered *available*.
- Transportation that is *unreliable* or *unpredictable* is not consistently available or useable; if the client owns a car/motorbike, they may not have consistent access to it (e.g., if they share it with another family member) or it may have trouble starting or running.
- Transportation is *unaffordable* if using or owning the vehicle causes an undue financial burden, as subjectively experienced by the client.

**(3) Safe - Transportation is available and reliable, but inconvenient.**

- *Available* – see definition above
- For transportation to be considered *reliable*, it should be consistently available and usable (i.e., in operable condition).
- Transportation that is *inconvenient* does not perfectly suit the client's needs or requires accommodation on the part of the client (e.g., the client may have reliable access to a shared car, but it causes problems for other household members; a specific bus route may require the client to wait for long periods of time; a bicycle may make grocery shopping difficult).

**(4) Building Capacity - Transportation is readily available and convenient but not preferred; if client owns a car, lacks either a driver's license or insurance.**

- *Available* – see definition above
- Transportation that is *convenient* suits the client's needs and does not require accommodation on the part of the client.
- If transportation is *not preferred*, it means that the client would prefer to use a different form of transportation that they currently cannot access/afford.
- For clients to have a *driver's license*, it must be current (i.e., not expired or suspended).
- For clients to have *insurance*, it must be valid, current, and provide adequate coverage (i.e., the state's minimum standard).

**(5) Empowered - Transportation is readily available, affordable, and satisfactory; if client owns a car, has driver's license and a car that is adequately insured.**

→ *Available* – see definition above

→ *Affordable* – see definition above

→ Transportation should be considered *satisfactory* if it is the client's preferred form of transportation.

→ *Driver's license* – see definition above

→ *Insurance* – see definition above

**The Mobility Domain Score Guide  
can be found on the next page.**

## Mobility Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client's age, then the client does not need to be directly asked about their age).

1. **How old is the client?**  
15 years old or younger = N/A  
16 years old or older = Next Question
2. **Does the client own a car?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = Go to Question #8
3. **Does the client's car work?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = Go to Question #8
4. **Is the car consistently available and usable?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = Go to Question #8
5. **Is the car convenient and meeting the client's needs?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = Go to Question #8
6. **Does the client have a valid driver's license?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = "Building Capacity"
7. **Does the client have valid and adequate car insurance?**  
Yes = Go to Question #11  
No = "Building Capacity"
8. **Does the client have access to some type of transportation, public or private, other than their own car?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = "In Crisis"
9. **Is the transportation consistently available and usable?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = "Vulnerable"
10. **Is the transportation convenient and meeting the client's needs?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = "Safe"
11. **Can the client afford their current means of transportation?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = "Vulnerable"
12. **Would the client prefer to use a form of transportation that they currently cannot access or afford?**  
Yes = "Building Capacity"  
No = "Empowered"

## 2.10 Disabilities & Physical Health

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
<b>Disabilities &amp; Physical Health</b>	Acute or chronic symptoms are currently affecting housing, employment, social interactions, etc.	Sometimes or periodically has acute or chronic symptoms affecting housing, employment, social interactions, etc.	Rarely has acute or chronic symptoms affecting housing, employment, social interactions, etc.	Asymptomatic; condition is controlled by services or medication.	No identified disability or health concerns.

### *Definition:*

- This domain assesses clients' physical, developmental, and learning disabilities, as well as their physical health (the degree to which clients' physical well-being makes them mechanically fit carry out their day-to-day activities).
- This domain should still be completed for clients whose physical, developmental, or learning disabilities or physical health issues have not been formally diagnosed.
- Clients' mental health issues and substance abuse issues should not affect the scoring of this domain, unless they have resulted in some type of physical health problem (e.g., the client's alcohol abuse has caused cirrhosis of the liver).

### *Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for all clients.
- Do not select "N/A" for any clients.
- Select "DK/DA" for clients who don't know or declined to discuss their disabilities or physical health

*Special Issues:* Please note that, even if a client is receiving treatment for their condition, they can still be scored as 1–3, if their condition is still problematic, the treatment/medication is ineffective, or the client is not using the medication as prescribed. Also note that pregnancy may affect clients' scores on this domain if, for instance, the pregnancy affects clients' housing or employment situations.

*Response Options:*

**(1) In Crisis - Acute or chronic symptoms are currently affecting housing, employment, social interactions, etc.**

- *Acute symptoms* refer to symptoms that appeared suddenly or are expected to be of short duration.
- *Chronic symptoms* are persistent and are generally associated with conditions of longer or indefinite duration.
- For symptoms to be ***currently affecting*** clients' housing arrangements, employment situation, or social interactions, they need to have had such an influence in the last month. Specifically, their disabilities or physical health should have interfered with clients' lives in a manner that jeopardizes their general well-being (e.g., could lead to eviction, termination of employment, or interpersonal conflict).

**(2) Vulnerable - Sometimes or periodically has acute or chronic symptoms affecting housing, employment, social interactions, etc.**

- Clients report that their disabilities or physical health have interfered with their housing arrangements, employment situation, or social interactions within the last six months (*sometimes or periodically*).
- *Acute symptoms* – see definition above
- *Chronic symptoms* – see definition above

**(3) Safe - Rarely has acute or chronic symptoms affecting housing, employment, social interactions, etc.**

- Clients report that it has been more than six months but less than one year (*rarely*) since their disabilities or physical health have interfered with their housing arrangements, employment situation, or social interactions.
- *Acute symptoms* – see definition above
- *Chronic symptoms* – see definition above



**(4) Building Capacity - Asymptomatic; condition is controlled by services or medication.**

- Clients report that it has been more than one year (*asymptomatic*) since their disabilities or physical health have interfered with their housing arrangements, employment situation, or social interactions.
- Or their condition is effectively managed by treatment or medication (that they are taking as prescribed).

**(5) Empowered - No identified disability or health concerns.**

## Disabilities & Physical Health Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client has a diagnosed disability, the client does not need to be directly asked whether they have any identified disabilities).

- 1. Does the client have any identified physical, developmental, or learning disabilities?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = Go to Question #9
- 2. Does the client have any physical health issues or concerns (including pregnancy)?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = Go to Question #6
- 3. Are the client's disabilities and current health issues appropriately managed by services or medication?**  
Yes = "Building Capacity"  
No = Next Question
- 4. Have the client's disabilities or current health issues ever interfered with their housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = "Building Capacity"
- 5. When was the last time the client's disabilities or current health issues interfered with their housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**  
Within the last month = "In Crisis"  
< 6 mos = "Vulnerable"  
6–12 mos = "Safe"  
+1 yr = "Building Capacity"
- 6. Are the client's disabilities appropriately managed by services or medication?**  
Yes = "Building Capacity"  
No = Next Question
- 7. Have the client's disabilities ever interfered with their housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = "Building Capacity"

**8. When was the last time the client's disabilities interfered with their housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**

Within the last month = "In Crisis"  
< 6 mos = "Vulnerable"

6–12 mos = "Safe"  
+1 yr = "Building Capacity"

**9. Does the client have any physical health issues or concerns?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Empowered"

**10. Are the client's physical health issues appropriately managed by services or medication?**

Yes = "Building Capacity"

No = Next Question

**11. Have the client's physical health issues ever interfered with their housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Building Capacity"

**12. When was the last time the client's physical health issues interfered with their housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**

Within the last month = "In Crisis"  
< 6 mos = "Vulnerable"

6–12 mos = "Safe"  
+1 yr = "Building Capacity"

## 2.11 Mental Health

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
<b>Mental Health</b>	Danger to self or others; recurring suicidal ideation; experiencing severe difficulties in day-to-day life due to psychological issues.	Recurrent mental health symptoms that may affect behavior but not a danger to self/others; persistent issues with functioning due to mental health symptoms.	Mild symptoms may be present but are transient; only moderate difficulty in functioning due to mental health issues.	Minimal symptoms that are expectable responses to life stressors; only slight impairment in functioning.	Symptoms are absent or rare; good or superior functioning in wide range of activities; no more than everyday problems and concerns.

### *Definition:*

- This domain assesses clients' current mental health, even if the cause of their mental health issues did not occur recently. For instance, if the client has a history of abuse within their family of origin (but is currently not experiencing abuse) and still has presenting issues from their prior experiences, then these unresolved issues should be reflected in the client's current mental health score.
- Clients' diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health disabilities should be captured using this domain and should not be captured under the "Disabilities & Physical Health" domain (unless the client's mental health disability resulted in some type of physical health problem).
- Clients' substance use issues should not be considered when determining their score for this domain.

### *Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for all clients who are four years of age or older.
- Select "N/A" for:
  - Clients who are under four years of age.
- Select "DK/DA" for clients who don't know or declined to discuss their mental health status

*Response Options:***(1) In Crisis - Danger to self or others; recurring suicidal ideation; experiencing severe difficulties in day-to-day life due to psychological issues.**

- Clients who are a *danger to [them]selves or others* have recently threatened or attempted suicide, homicide, or some serious bodily injury to either themselves or someone else. For a threat or attempt to be considered “recent,” it should have occurred within the month prior to the completion of the assessment.
- Clients who have *recurring suicidal ideation* have repeated thoughts about or preoccupation with committing suicide, or they may be planning to commit suicide (i.e., they have the intent, a plan, and the means of committing suicide).
- Clients may also meet this criterion if they are unable to meet their own or their dependents’ basic needs as the result of some underlying mental issue (i.e., they are *experiencing severe difficulties in day-to-day life due to psychological issues*).
- *Psychological issues* or *mental health symptoms* may be any number of presenting issues, including (but by no means limited to) anxiety, depression, anger issues, obsessive thoughts, compulsive behaviors, hallucinations, difficulty concentrating, intense fear, or any number of physiological symptoms (e.g., difficulty sleeping, changes in appetite).

**(2) Vulnerable - Recurrent mental health symptoms that may affect behavior but not a danger to self/others; persistent issues with functioning due to mental health symptoms.**

- Mental health symptoms are classified as *recurrent* if clients experience issues on a daily or near-daily basis (4 or more times per week).
- *Mental health symptoms* – see definition above
- *Danger to self or others* – see definition above
- Clients who have *issues, difficulty, or impairment in functioning* are completing their day-to-day activities less effectively than they would prefer (based on the client’s subjective experience) as a result of their presenting psychological issue(s).

**(3) Safe - Mild symptoms may be present but are transient; only moderate difficulty in functioning due to mental health issues.**

- *Mental health symptoms* – see definition above
- Clients experience symptoms 2–3 times per week (and these *transient symptoms* are not extreme or unusually disruptive)
- *Difficulty in functioning* – see definition above

**(4) Building Capacity - Minimal symptoms that are expectable responses to life stressors; only slight impairment in functioning.**

- *Minimal* symptoms manifest once a week (or more frequently but as a natural response to life stressors)
- *Mental health symptoms* – see definition above
- *Life stressors, or everyday problems* and concerns, include mild interpersonal conflict, work/school stressors, and financial concerns, among other things. This definition does not include extreme stressors, such as the death of a close friend or family member, a divorce or separation, or other traumatic events.
- *Impairment in functioning* – see definition above

**(5) Empowered – Symptoms are absent or rare; good or superior functioning in wide range of activities; no more than everyday problems and concerns.**

- *Mental health symptoms* – see definition above
- For symptoms to be *absent or rare*, the client should report never experiencing any mental health issues or experiencing mild symptoms less than once per week
- *Functioning* – see definition above
- *Everyday problems and concerns* – see definition above

## Mental Health Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client's age, then the client does not need to be directly asked about their age).

1. **How old is the client?**  
3 years old or younger = N/A  
4 years old or older = Next Question
2. **Does the client have any mental health symptoms (such as anxiety, depression, or difficulty concentrating) beyond expected reactions to normal life stressors?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = “Empowered”
3. **Has the client thought about hurting him-/herself or others within the last month?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”  
No = Next Question
4. **Do the client’s mental health symptoms prevent them from completing day-to-day tasks as well as they would like?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = Go to Question #9
5. **Does the client think that their symptoms seriously interfere with their day-to-day activities?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”  
No = Next Question
6. **Do the client’s mental health symptoms interfere with their day-to-day activities a little bit or a moderate amount?**  
A little bit = Go to Question #8  
A moderate amount = Next Question
7. **How frequently do the client’s mental health symptoms occur?**  
4+ times/week = “Vulnerable”  
2–3 times/week = “Safe”  
Once per week = “Safe”  
Less than once per week = “Safe”
8. **How frequently do the client’s mental health symptoms occur?**  
4+ times/week = “Vulnerable”  
2–3 times/week = “Safe”  
Once per week = “Building Capacity”  
Less than once per week = “Building Capacity”
9. **How frequently do the client’s mental health symptoms occur?**  
4+ times/week = “Vulnerable”  
2–3 times/week = “Safe”  
Once per week = “Building Capacity”  
Less than once per week = “Empowered”

## 2.12 Substance Use

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
Substance Use	Meets criteria for severe abuse/dependence; (i.e., 6+ criteria); problems so severe that institutionalized living or hospitalization may be necessary.	Meets criteria for dependence (i.e., 4–5 criteria).	Client has used within the last 6 mo; meets 2–3 criteria for dependence	Client has used during the last 6 mo; meets 0–1 criteria for dependence.	No drug use/alcohol abuse in the last six months.

*Definition:* This domain assesses clients’ recent history of substance use or dependence.

*Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for all clients who are ten years of age or older.
- Select “N/A” for:
  - Clients who are under the age of ten
- Select “DK/DA” for clients who don’t know or declined to discuss whether they are dealing with any substance use issues

*Response Options:*

**(1) In Crisis - Meets criteria for severe abuse/dependence; problems so severe that institutionalized living or hospitalization may be necessary.**

→ As outlined by the *DSM-5*, to meet the criteria for *severe abuse/dependence*, clients must meet six or more of the following conditions:

- taking the substance in larger amounts and for longer than you meant to;
- wanting to cut down or stop using the substance but not managing to;
- spending a lot of time getting, using, or recovering from use of the substance;
- cravings and urges to use the substance;
- not managing to do what you should do at work, home, or school because of substance use;
- continuing to use, even when it causes problems in relationships;
- giving up important social, occupational, or recreational activities because of substance use;
- using substances again and again, even when it puts you in danger;

- continuing to use, even when you know you have a physical or psychological problem that could have been caused or made worse by the substance;
- needing more of the substance to get the effect you want (tolerance);
- development of withdrawal symptoms, which can be relieved by taking more of the substance.<sup>32</sup>

→ ***Institutionalized living or hospitalization*** includes, among other things, in-patient treatment facilities, outpatient treatment facilities, and other intensive rehabilitation programs. Substance Abuse

→ To be classified as “In Crisis,” the client can either meet the criteria for severe dependence or could benefit from hospitalization/in-patient treatment.

**(2) Vulnerable - Meets criteria for dependence (i.e., 4–5 criteria)**

→ As outlined by the *DSM-5* to meet the criteria for ***dependence***, clients must meet four or five of the criteria outlined above.

**(3) Safe - Client has used within the last 6 mo; meets 2–3 criteria for dependence.**

→ Clients who do not meet the criteria for dependence (i.e., meeting 4 or 5 of the conditions listed above) but meet 2–3 criteria for dependence.

**(4) Building Capacity - Client has used during the last 6 mo; meets 0–1 criteria for dependence.**

→ To be classified as “Building Capacity,” clients must meet no more than 1 of the criteria for dependence.

→ Please note that the highest score that clients can receive if they have used any illegal or prescription drugs (that they were not prescribed) within the last six months is “Building Capacity.”

**(5) Empowered - No drug use/alcohol abuse in the last six months.**

---

<sup>32</sup> American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders: DSM-5*. Washington, D.C: American Psychiatric Association.



## Substance Use Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client's age, then the client does not need to be directly asked about their age).

- 1. How old is the client?**  
9 years old or younger = N/A  
10 years old or older = Next Question
- 2. Does the client drink alcohol?**  
Yes = Go to Question #6  
No = Next Question
- 3. Has the client ever used any recreational or prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = “Empowered”
- 4. When was the last time the client used any recreational or prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them?**  
Within the last 6 months = Next Question  
More than 6 months ago = “Empowered”
- 5. In the past three months, has anyone suggested that the client should be hospitalized or receive in-patient treatment for their drug use?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”  
No = Go to Question #9
- 6. Has the client ever used any recreational or prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = Go to Question #8
- 7. When was the last time the client used any recreational or prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them?**  
Within the last 6 months = Next Question  
More than 6 months ago = Go to Question #9
- 8. In the past three months, has anyone suggested that the client should be hospitalized or receive in-patient treatment for their alcohol/drug use?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”  
No = Next Question

**9. In the past three months, how many of the following has the client experienced?**

- a. Does the client have any issues or concerns with how much or how often they drink/use?**

Yes = Next Question

No = 0, Go to Question #9b

**Does the client drink/use more or for longer than they mean to?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Has the client unsuccessfully tried to cut down or stop drinking/using?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Has the client had to drink/use more in order to get the effect they want or found that drinking/using the same amount has less of an effect?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

- b. Has the client's alcohol/drug use interfered with how they spend their time, caused problems at work or in their relationships, or resulted in any legal or safety issues?**

Yes = Next Question

No = 0, Go to Question #9c

**Does the client spend a lot of time getting, using alcohol/drugs, or recovering from their use?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Has the client's alcohol/drug use prevented them from meeting their responsibilities at work, home, or school?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Does the client's alcohol/drug use cause problems in their relationships?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Has the client's alcohol/drug use ever put them in danger or legal trouble?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Has the client's alcohol/drug use caused them to give up important social, recreational, or work-related activities?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

- c. **Does the client have physical or psychological symptoms related to their alcohol/drug use (including cravings or withdrawal symptoms)?**

Yes = Next Question

No = 0

**Does the client experience cravings or urges to drink/use?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Does the client have a physical or psychological problem that could be made worse by alcohol/drugs or that was caused by their use?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Has the client experienced any withdrawal symptoms or used in order to avoid withdrawal symptoms?**

Yes = 1

No = 0

**Sum the answers above to determine the client's score:**

If "yes" to 6+ criteria = "In Crisis"

If "yes" to 4–5 criteria = "Vulnerable"

If "yes" to 2–3 criteria = "Safe"

If "yes" to 0–1 criteria = "Building Capacity"

## 2.13 Legal

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
Legal	Current outstanding tickets or warrants <u>OR</u> currently incarcerated.	Current charges/trial pending <u>OR</u> non-compliance with probation/parole.	Fully compliant with probation/parole terms with no charges pending.	Has successfully completed probation/parole within the last 12 mo; no new charges filed <u>OR</u> no active criminal justice involvement in more than 12 mo but prior arrests pose problem to current self-sufficiency.	No criminal history <u>OR</u> no active criminal justice involvement in more than 12 mo (and prior arrests do not pose a problem to current self-sufficiency).

*Definition:* This domain assesses any past or present legal issues that may interfere with clients' self-sufficiency, including citizenship issues.

*Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for all clients who are at least ten years of age or older (as 10-year-olds are the youngest individuals handled by the juvenile justice system in Texas).
- Select "N/A" for:
  - Clients who are less than ten years old
- Select "DK/DA" for clients who don't know or declined to discuss whether they are dealing with any legal issues

*Response Options:*

**(1) In Crisis - Current outstanding tickets or warrants OR currently incarcerated.**

- If a client has **current outstanding tickets**, it means they failed to appear in court and has yet to pay the fine associated with a traffic violation
- Clients who currently have a **warrant** issued for their arrest should also be scored as "In Crisis."
- If a client is currently **incarcerated**, they may be in a jail, prison, juvenile detention facility, or an immigration detention center.

**(2) Vulnerable - Current charges/trial pending OR non-compliance with probation/parole.**

- Clients who have **current charges pending** or a **trial pending** means that the client was recently arrested but has not yet been sentenced (and may not have been to court yet).

- Clients are ***non-compliant with probation/parole*** if they have failed to comply with the terms of their probation/parole (e.g., they have left the state without permission, they have not been attending their meetings with their probation officer).
- Clients who are currently in the midst of a trial or court proceedings should also be scored as “Vulnerable.”
- Note that clients who have recently been issued a ticket but whose court date has not yet arrived should not be scored as “Vulnerable.” Basic traffic tickets should not influence clients’ score on the “Legal” domain, unless the client’s traffic fines are overdue (i.e., their court date has passed and they have not yet paid their ticket).

**(3) Safe - Fully compliant with probation/parole terms with no charges pending.**

- Clients are ***fully compliant with probation/parole*** if they have met all of the terms of their probation/parole to date.
- To have ***no charges pending*** or ***no new charges filed***, the client must not be awaiting a trial or sentencing for prior offenses (note that basic traffic violations are not considered prior offenses).

**(4) Building Capacity - Has successfully completed probation/parole within the last 12 mo; no new charges filed OR no active criminal justice involvement in more than 12 mo, but prior arrests pose problem to current self-sufficiency.**

- ***No new charges filed*** – see definition above
- ***Active criminal justice involvement*** includes being arrested, charged with a misdemeanor or felony, sentenced, placed on probation/parole, or incarcerated. Clients who were late paying traffic fines (but who have since paid them) should not be considered as having been actively involved in the criminal justice system.
- For those whose ***prior arrests pose a problem to current self-sufficiency***, it means their legal history (e.g., felony convictions, sex offender status, multiple arrests) is interfering with their ability to secure employment, obtain adequate housing, or otherwise be self-sufficient (please note that these legal issues could include immigration issues).

**(5) Empowered - No criminal history OR no active criminal justice involvement in more than 12 months (and prior arrests do not pose a problem to current self-sufficiency).**

- Clients who have no charges on their record are considered to have *no criminal history*. Note that clients who had their charges expunged are considered to have a criminal history, as their sealed prior record may come into consideration in the event the client is charged with a crime in the future.
- *Active criminal justice involvement* – see definition above
- For those whose *prior arrests do not pose a problem to current self-sufficiency*, it means their legal history (e.g., felony convictions, sex offender status, multiple arrests) does not interfere with their ability to secure employment, obtain adequate housing, or otherwise be self-sufficient (please note that these legal issues could include immigration issues).

**The Legal Domain Score Guide  
can be found on the next page.**

## Legal Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client's age, then the client does not need to be directly asked about their age).

- 1. How old is the client?**  
9 years old or younger = N/A  
10 years old or older = Next Question
- 2. Has the client ever had serious legal problems (such as being arrested, or being charged with or convicted of a misdemeanor or felony, or citizenship or documentation issues)?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = “Empowered”
- 3. Is the client currently in jail, prison, or a juvenile detention facility?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”  
No = Next Question
- 4. Does the client have any warrants for their arrest or any unpaid tickets?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”  
No = Next Question
- 5. Does the client have any current charges or a pending trial?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”  
No = Next Question
- 6. Is the client currently on probation or parole?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = Go to Question #8
- 7. Is the client meeting the terms of their probation or parole?**  
Yes = “Safe”  
No = “Vulnerable”
- 8. Has the client had any new charges filed or been actively involved with the criminal justice system within the last 12 months?**  
Yes = “Safe”  
No = Next Question
- 9. Did the client successfully complete probation or parole within the last 12 months?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”  
No = Next Question
- 10. Is the client’s history of legal issues currently negatively impacting their employment or housing opportunities?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”  
No = “Empowered”

## 2.14 Safety

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
Safety	Environment is not safe; immediate level of lethality is extremely high; possible CPS or police involvement.	Safety is threatened, but temporary protection is available; level of lethality is high.	Current level of safety is minimally adequate; ongoing safety planning is essential.	Environment is safe, but future safety is uncertain; safety planning is important.	Environment is apparently safe and stable.

### Definition:

- The goal of this domain is to assess the degree to which individuals’ environments—specifically, their homes, schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods—are safe.
- If the client is experiencing active conflict with or is receiving threats from a *prior* partner, then any safety issues should be captured in this domain (if appropriate) and not the “Intimate Relationships” domain.
- Any current or potential abuse at the hands of a family member, caregiver, or current partner should also impact the scoring of this domain.

### Subjects:

- This domain should be completed for all clients.
- Do not select “N/A” for any clients.
- Select “DK/DA” for clients who don’t know or choose to avoid discussing their feelings of safety.

### Response Options:

**(1) In Crisis - Environment is not safe; immediate level of lethality is extremely high; possible CPS or police involvement.**

→ If the *environment is not safe*, it means the client has recently (within the last week) witnessed or been the victim of some kind of dangerous behavior.

→ **Lethality** refers to the risk of death, which may be heightened by any of the following:

- separation violence,
- stalking,
- the availability or past use of weapons,
- or the presence of individuals who:



- directly threaten to kill themselves or others,
- dream or fantasize about killing themselves or others,
- have a history of strangulation,
- have a history of arson,
- behave in a controlling manner,
- are heavily dependent,
- are acutely depressed,
- have become increasingly aggressive, or
- abuse drugs or alcohol.<sup>33</sup>

**(2) Vulnerable - Safety is threatened, but temporary protection is available; level of lethality is high.**

- If a client's *safety is threatened*, it may be for any number of reasons, including (but not limited to) the presence or threat of physical, sexual, or emotional violence (either by a familiar person or a stranger), intimidation, or security threats (e.g., burglary).
- *Temporary protection* may involve obtaining a protective order, or staying at the home of a friend, family member, neighbor, or at a shelter, among other things.
- *Lethality* – see definition above.
- If the client has not directly witnessed or been the victim of some kind of dangerous behavior but is currently receiving direct threats to their safety, then the client should be scored as “Vulnerable.”

**(3) Safe - Current level of safety is minimally adequate; ongoing safety planning is essential.**

- If *safety is minimally adequate*, then clients are in a position where they feel as though their safety may be threatened but the level of lethality is not high.
- *Safety planning* entails developing a personal plan of safety strategies to prevent victimization (e.g., being aware of one's surroundings, avoiding conflict) and to respond effectively in the event that one's safety is jeopardized (e.g., calling for help, staying with a friend).

---

<sup>33</sup> National Center for Victims of Crime. (2005). Lethality Risk Assessment. Retrieved from <https://www.marincourt.org/PDF/LethalityRisk.pdf>

**(4) Building Capacity - Environment is safe, but future safety is uncertain; safety planning is important.**

- Whether their *environment is safe* (i.e., home, work/school, neighborhood) should be subjectively determined by the client.
- If *future safety is uncertain*, clients have a genuine risk of encountering an unsafe situation (e.g., possible encounter with an abusive (ex-)partner, caregiver, family member, or acquaintance).
- *Safety planning* – see definition above

**(5) Empowered - Environment is apparently safe and stable.**

- *Environment is safe* – see definition above
- If the environment is *stable*, it means there is little risk of the client encountering an unsafe situation in the near future (e.g., possible encounter with an abusive (ex-)partner, caregiver, family member, or acquaintance).

**The Safety Domain Score Guide  
can be found on the next page.**

## Safety Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client has been the victim of a crime within the past week, the client does not need to be directly asked whether they were the victim of any dangerous behavior in the past week).

- Has the client witnessed or been the victim of any dangerous behavior in the past week?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”                      No = Next Question
- Does the client feel safe at home, at school or work, and in their neighborhood?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #4
- Does the client feel there is a genuine risk of encountering an unsafe situation or unsafe person in their life?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = “Empowered”
- Does the client currently have anyone in their life that is suicidal, physically or sexually aggressive, controlling, or otherwise makes the client feel unsafe?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = “Safe”
- Does the client currently have a protective order against this individual?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = Next Question
- Does the client have somewhere else they can stay or go if they feel threatened or unsafe?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “In Crisis”

## 2.15 Credit

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
Credit	History of bankruptcies, foreclosures, evictions, or repossessions.	Outstanding judgments, garnishments, or debts in collection.	Has an unmanageable debt ratio <u>and</u> poor credit, <u>OR</u> has no credit history.	Has an unmanageable debt ratio <u>or</u> poor credit.	Has a manageable debt ratio <u>and</u> good credit.

*Definition:* The purpose of this domain is to assess clients' credit situations to determine if they have manageable debt ratios or pressing credit issues that may interfere with their ability to become self-sufficient in other domains.

*Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for:
  - All clients who are 18 years of age or older
  - Clients who are less than 18 years of age who have:
    - one or more credit cards issued in their name,
    - had a lease, mortgage, car, or student loan in their name, or
    - filed taxes with the IRS
- Select "N/A" for:
  - Clients who are less than 18 years of age who have never:
    - had any credit cards issued in their name,
    - had a lease, mortgage, car, or student loan in their name, or
    - filed taxes with the IRS
- Select "DK/DA" for clients who don't know or declined to discuss their credit situation.

*Response Options:*

### (1) In Crisis - History of bankruptcies, foreclosures, evictions, or repossessions.

- Clients who have filed for bankruptcy or experienced a foreclosure, eviction, or repossession at any point in the past 7 years.
- **Bankruptcy** refers to the legal status applied to a person (or business or other entity) who cannot pay their outstanding debts that are owed to creditors.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Bankruptcy. Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bankruptcy>

- Those who have experienced a **foreclosure** have stopped making payments on a loan and, as a result, were forced by their lender to sell the asset (i.e., their home, condominium, or the like) that served as collateral for the loan.<sup>35</sup>
- Individuals who experienced an **eviction** have been removed from their residence by their landlord or the owner of the rental property.<sup>36</sup>
- Those who experienced a **repossession** have failed to make timely payments on a specific asset (e.g., a car), resulting in the creditor taking possession of said asset (with the intention of selling the asset to satisfy at least part of the remaining balance on the loan).<sup>37</sup>
- Individuals who have defaulted on a loan within the past seven years should also be scored as “In Crisis.”

## (2) Vulnerable - Outstanding judgments, garnishments, or debts in collection.

- **Judgments** refer to the court-approved right of creditors to use additional collection methods to receive payment on an outstanding debt.<sup>38</sup>
- **Garnishments** are a specific form of judgments that allow for a third party, that otherwise would owe money to the debtor, to directly pay the lender until the debt is paid off or an alternative payment plan is agreed upon.<sup>39</sup> Although some states allow creditors to garnish wages, clients may also have their wages garnished if they are struggling to pay (1) child support, (2) taxes, (3) court fines, or (4) federal student loans.<sup>40,41</sup>

## (3) Safe - Has an unmanageable debt ratio and poor credit, OR has no credit history.

- Clients have an **unmanageable debt ratio** if their housing costs and other monthly debts—e.g., credit card payments, student loan payments, and car payments, among other things—exceed 40% of their monthly income.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Foreclosure. Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foreclosure>

<sup>36</sup> Eviction. Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eviction>

<sup>37</sup> All about repossession of assets. (2015, March 31). Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <https://www.finder.com.au/all-about-repossession-of-assets>

<sup>38</sup> Detweiler, Gerri. (2017, April 20). Creditor gets a judgment against you—now what? Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <http://blog.credit.com/2017/04/creditor-gets-a-judgment-against-you-now-what-51696/>

<sup>39</sup> Garnishment. Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/g/garnishment.asp>

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Bulkat, B. (n.d.). Texas wage garnishment law. Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <http://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/texas-wage-garnishment-law.html>

<sup>42</sup> see Folder, J. (n.d.). What’s considered to be a good debt-to-income (DTI) ratio? Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <http://www.investopedia.com/ask/answers/081214/whats-considered-be-good-debttoincome-dti-ratio.asp>

- **Poor credit** is defined as a credit score that is below 600.<sup>43</sup>
- Clients have **no credit history** if they have never had any credit cards issued in their name or had a lease, mortgage, car, or student loan in their name.
- Clients must not have any debts currently in collection, and have not experienced any bankruptcies, foreclosures, evictions, or repossessions in the past 7 years.

**(4) Building Capacity - Has an unmanageable debt ratio or poor credit (but not both).**

- **Unmanageable debt ratio** – see definition above
- **Poor credit** – see definition above
- Clients must not have any debts currently in collection, and have not experienced any bankruptcies, foreclosures, evictions, or repossessions in the past 7 years.

**(5) Empowered - Has a manageable debt ratio and good credit.**

- **Manageable debt ratio** - clients whose housing costs and other monthly debts—e.g., credit card payments, student loan payments, and car payments, among other things—are less than 40% of their monthly income.<sup>44</sup>
- **Good credit** is defined as a credit score that is above 600.<sup>45</sup>

**The Credit Domain Score Guide  
can be found on the next page.**

<sup>43</sup> see Lerner, M. (2015, May 22). Mortgage possible with credit problems. Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <http://www.bankrate.com/finance/credit/low-credit-score-borrowers-get-mortgage.aspx>

<sup>44</sup> see Folger, J. (n.d.). What's considered to be a good debt-to-income (DTI) ratio? Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <http://www.investopedia.com/ask/answers/081214/whats-considered-be-good-debttoincome-dti-ratio.asp>

<sup>45</sup> see Lerner, M. (2015, May 22). Mortgage possible with credit problems. Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <http://www.bankrate.com/finance/credit/low-credit-score-borrowers-get-mortgage.aspx>

## Credit Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client's age, then the client does not need to be directly asked about their age).

1. **How old is the client?**  
 17 years old or younger = Next Question                      18 years old or older = Go to Question #3
2. **Has the client ever filed taxes with the IRS or had a credit card, student loan, lease, mortgage, or some other loan issued in their name?**  
 Yes = Go to Question #4                      No = N/A
3. **Has the client ever had a credit card, student loan, lease, mortgage, or some other loan issued in their name?**  
 Yes = Next Question                      No = "Safe"
4. **Has the client ever been evicted, defaulted on a loan, or experienced any bankruptcies, foreclosures, or repossessions?**  
 Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #6
5. **When did this occur?**  
 Within the last 7 years = "In Crisis"                      More than 7 years ago = Next Question
6. **Is the client currently receiving calls from creditors or having their wages garnished?**  
 Yes = "Vulnerable"                      No = Next Question
7. **Does the client spend 40% or more of their income on housing costs, credit card debt, student loans, or car payments?**  
 Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #9
8. **Does the client have a poor credit score (a score less than 600)?**  
 Yes = "Safe"                      No = "Building Capacity"
9. **Does the client have a poor credit score (a score less than 600)?**  
 Yes = "Building Capacity"                      No = "Empowered"

## 2.16 Life Skills

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
Life Skills	Unable to complete any of the following life skills without assistance: looking up information online, scheduling appts, prioritizing tasks, arriving on time, and completing tasks on time.	Able to complete one or two of these life skills without assistance.	Able to complete three of these life skills without assistance.	Able to complete four of these life skills without assistance.	Able to complete all five of these life skills without assistance.

### Definition:

- This domain is intended to assess five primary life skills: (1) clients’ ability to look up information online; (2) clients’ ability to schedule appointments; (3) clients’ ability to prioritize tasks; (4) clients’ ability to arrive to appointments, work, school, etc., on time; and (5) clients’ ability to complete tasks on time.<sup>46</sup>
- This domain may capture some of the *reasons* why the client is struggling in other areas; for instance, if the client has problems arriving places on time (a life skills issue), it could also impact their performance in school (assessed in the “Education” domain). However, just because the client is performing poorly in school does not mean that they lack life skills (e.g., the client could diligently study every night yet still not show up to class on time).

### Subjects:

- This domain should be completed for:
  - All clients who are 16 years of age or older
- Select “N/A” for:
  - Clients who are less than 16 years of age
- Select “DK/DA” for clients who don’t know or declined to discuss their ability to complete these basic life skills

*Special Issues:* If the client has a diagnosed disability (e.g., autism), then the scoring of clients’ life skills should take into account a professional’s assessment of the client’s level of functioning, given their diagnosed disability.

<sup>46</sup> The list of these five primary life skills was compiled by surveying case managers about the life skills with which (1) clients struggled the most, and (2) they spent the most time assisting clients.



*Response Options:*

Clients' **life skills** should not include skills or abilities which are captured in other domains of the LW-SSM (e.g., clients' employment or language/literacy skills). Rather, this domain is intended to capture clients' ability to perform **activities of daily living**, which include the following activities:

- **Looking up information online.** Clients are able to look up information online, provided they know how to access the internet and perform a basic internet search using the appropriate keywords (e.g., to look up phone numbers, addresses, directions, answers to basic questions).
- **Scheduling appointments.** Clients are able to schedule appointments if they are able to determine the appropriate organization, business, or individual that they need to contact in order to schedule the appointment; organize the information they need for scheduling purposes (e.g., insurance card, availability); explain their reason for seeking the appointment while scheduling; and make a note of the date and time of the scheduled appointment.<sup>47</sup>
- **Prioritizing tasks.** Clients are able to prioritize tasks if they are able to keep track of the tasks they need to complete; differentiate between essential and non-essential tasks; determine the order in which they should be completed, based on importance, time sensitivity, and other critical factors; and have a general sense of the time required to complete each task.
- **Arriving on time.** Clients are able to arrive on time if they are able to determine approximately how long it will take to arrive at their destination; take the necessary steps to depart at the appropriate time to reach their destination on time (e.g., set an alarm); and alert any key individuals when they are running late.
- **Completing tasks on time.** Clients are able to complete tasks on time if they are able to determine approximately how long it will take to complete an assigned task; take the necessary steps to complete the task on time; and, as necessary, inform the appropriate individuals in advance if the task will not be completed on time.

---

<sup>47</sup> Judd-Litera, K. (n.d.). Scheduling an appointment: Moving from pediatric to adult health care. In N. P. Dosa (Ed.), *Healthy Transitions continuing education curriculum*. Syracuse, NY: Author.

*Response Options:*

**(1) In Crisis - Unable to complete any of the following life skills without assistance: looking up information online, scheduling appointments, prioritizing tasks, arriving on time, and completing tasks on time.**

→ Clients who are unable to complete any of the life skills listed above without assistance

**(2) Vulnerable – Able to complete one or two of these life skills without assistance.**

→ Clients who are able to complete only one or two of the life skills described above without assistance

**(3) Safe – Able to complete three of these life skills without assistance.**

→ Clients who are able to complete three of the five life skills listed above without assistance

**(4) Building Capacity – Able to complete four of these life skills without assistance.**

→ Clients who are able to complete four of the five life skills listed above without assistance

**(5) Empowered - Able to complete all five of these life skills without assistance.**

→ Clients who are able to complete all five of the life skills listed above without assistance

**The Life Skills Domain Score Guide  
can be found on the next page.**

## Life Skills Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client's age, then the client does not need to be directly asked about their age).

**1. How old is the client?**

15 years old or younger = N/A

16 years old or older = Next Question

**2. How many of the following does the client have trouble with?**

**(a) Does the client ever have trouble figuring out how to find information online?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**(b) Does the client ever have a hard time scheduling appointments?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**(c) Does the client ever have a hard time figuring out which tasks are more important than others or the order in which tasks should be completed?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**(d) Does the client ever have trouble arriving places on time?**

Yes = Next Question

No = 0, Go to Question #2e

**Does the client let the appropriate people know that they will be running late?**

Yes = 0, Next Question

No = 1, Next Question

**(e) Does the client ever have trouble completing tasks on time?**

Yes = Next Question

No = 0

**Does the client let the appropriate people know that they are behind schedule?**

Yes = 0

No = 1

**Sum the answers above to determine the client's score:**

If "yes" to all 5 criteria = "In Crisis"

If "yes" to 1 criterion = "Building Capacity"

If "yes" to 3–4 criteria = "Vulnerable"

If "yes" to 0 criteria = "Empowered"

If "yes" to 2 criteria = "Safe"

## 2.17 Community Involvement

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
<b>Community Involvement</b>	Not applicable due to crisis situation; in “survival” mode.	Socially isolated, lacks social skills, or unmotivated/ does not desire to become involved.	Has adequate social skills and motivation/ desire but lacks the opportunity or knowledge of ways to become involved.	Some community involvement (advisory group, support group, church, volunteering, etc.), but has barriers (transportation, childcare issues, etc.).	Actively involved in community.

### Definition:

- The purpose of this domain is to assess the degree to which the client is active within the community.
- When scoring this domain, one should not consider the client’s involvement in social service programs designed to meet the client’s basic needs or their participation in counseling/behavioral health services. This domain is intended to assess clients’ involvement in the community *outside* of their participation in such programs.

### Subjects:

- This domain should be completed for:
  - All clients who are 6 years of age or older
- Select “N/A” for:
  - Clients who are under the age of 6
- Select “DK/DA” for clients who don’t know or declined to discuss their level of community involvement

### Response Options:

Individuals can be ***involved in the community*** in any number of ways; they can participate in school programs, religious activities, support groups (e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous), volunteer activities, sports leagues, or political activities, among other things.

***Community involvement*** should reflect the client’s participation in activities that are at least somewhat organized in nature. Spending unstructured time with friends outside of an organized activity should not count as community involvement (these types of involvements are captured under “Network Support”).

**(1) In Crisis - Not applicable due to crisis situation; in “survival” mode.**

- *Crisis situations* can refer to any personal or familial issue that requires immediate attention or service and interferes with the individual’s ability to engage in normal day-to-day activities. Note that whether or not a client is in crisis is subjectively determined by the client (e.g., a chronically homeless individual may not view their homelessness as a “crisis” situation, whereas someone who was unexpected evicted may consider themselves to be in crisis).

**(2) Vulnerable - Socially isolated, lacks social skills, or unmotivated/does not desire to become involved.**

- Clients who are *socially isolated* either (voluntarily or involuntarily) have a lack of contact with or are withdrawn from society.
- Clients who *lack social skills* behave awkwardly or inappropriately in social situations, have difficulty participating in casual conversations, or have a pronounced difficulty reading social cues, among other things; importantly, clients’ social skills should not be confused with shyness or introversion, and they should be assessed in light of their age and developmental abilities (e.g., a child should not be expected to have the same social skills as an adult, nor should an autistic adult be expected to have the same social skills as someone who is not autistic). Whether a client lacks social skills should be determined by the user (i.e., clients should not be asked whether they lack social skills).
- A client who expresses a lack of interest in joining a group or participating in some kind of organized, pro-social activity should be considered *unmotivated/does not desire to become involved* in the community.

**(3) Safe - Has adequate social skills and motivation/desire but lacks the opportunity or knowledge of ways to become involved.**

- Clients who have *adequate social skills* do not behave awkwardly or inappropriately in social situations, do not have difficulty participating in casual conversations, and do not have a pronounced difficulty reading social cues. Importantly, clients’ social skills should be assessed in light of their age and developmental abilities (e.g., a child should not be expected to have the same social skills as an adult, nor should an autistic adult be expected to have the same social skills as someone who is not autistic). Whether a client has adequate social skills should be

determined by the user (i.e., clients should not be asked whether they have adequate social skills).

- A client who expresses an interest in joining a group or participating in some kind of organized, pro-social activity should be considered *motivated/desires to become involved* in the community.
- Clients who *lack the opportunity* to become involved in the community have barriers that are preventing any community involvement (e.g., transportation or childcare issues).
- Clients who *lack the knowledge* to become involved are uninvolved in the community because they are currently unaware of what groups or activities are available to them, or they are unaware of how to become involved.

**(4) Building Capacity - Some community involvement (advisory group, support group, church, volunteering, etc.), but has barriers (transportation, childcare issues, etc.).**

- “Building Capacity” should be selected for clients who have some degree of involvement in the community (i.e., they are participating in at least one community-based group or activity) but their participation is limited due to some type of barrier (e.g., a lack of transportation or childcare).

**(5) Empowered - Actively involved in community.**

- Clients who are *actively involved in the community* are regularly and actively participating in at least one community-based group or activity and do not have barriers that limit their level of involvement.

**The Community Involvement Domain Score Guide  
can be found on the next page.**

## Community Involvement Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client's age, then the client does not need to be directly asked about their age).

1. **How old is the client?**  
5 years old or younger = N/A  
6 years old or older = Next Question
2. **Is the client involved in any activities in the community, such as a religious group, a support group, a volunteer organization, political activities, or organized sports?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = Go to Question #4
3. **Does the client have barriers that limit their involvement in the community (e.g., transportation or childcare issues)?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”  
No = “Empowered”
4. **Is the client dealing with an immediate crisis that interferes with their ability to engage in normal day-to-day activities?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”  
No = Next Question
5. ***USER OBSERVATION ONLY – DO NOT ASK CLIENT: Does the client lack social skills, to the point that they have difficulty engaging in casual conversation or behave seriously inappropriately in social situations?***  
Yes = “Vulnerable”  
No = Next Question
6. **Does the client feel disconnected or socially isolated?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”  
No = Next Question
7. **Does the client want to become involved in the community in some way?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = “Vulnerable”
8. **Does the client know how to find ways to become involved in the community?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = “Safe”
9. **Does the client have barriers that are preventing them from becoming involved in the community, such as a lack of transportation or childcare?**  
Yes = “Safe”  
No = Next Question
10. **Is the client aware of opportunities to become involved in the community but hasn’t been motivated to follow through?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”  
No = “Safe”

## 2.18 Network Support

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
<b>Network Support</b>	Extended family or friends are uninvolved, uninterested, or unmotivated to provide support.	Extended family/friends lack the ability or resources to help (either financially, emotionally, or materially) or provide negative support.	Client receives some positive support (financial/emotional/material) from extended family or friends.	Strong support from extended family or friends.	Has healthy and expanding support network.

*Definition:* This domain assesses the level of emotional, financial, or material support that the client receives from their social network (apart from their immediate family/caregivers). The client’s social network should include their extended family (defined below), friends, coworkers, mentors, and advocates (not including counselors or the staff of any social service programs designed to meet the client’s basic needs).

*Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for all clients.
- Do not select “N/A” for any clients.
- Select “DK/DA” for clients who don’t know or declined to discuss the quality of their network relations.

*Response Options:*

**(1) In Crisis - Extended family or friends are uninvolved, uninterested, or unmotivated to provide support.**

- **Extended family** refers to non-nuclear family members (with respect to either clients’ biological nuclear families or clients’ primary caregivers). If the client was raised by someone other than a member of the client’s biological nuclear family (or a stepparent), then this individual should be treated as the client’s “caregiver” and any other family members (apart from the client’s biological nuclear family or stepparents) or persons related to the client’s caregiver should be considered part of their “extended family.”
- **Friends** include companions/confidants (not including intimate partners), coworkers, mentors, or other associates.



→ **Support** refers to emotional, financial, and material support.

- Individuals who provide emotional support show empathy or concern for the client's well-being, which may manifest as acceptance, encouragement, understanding, or comfort, particularly during times of stress.<sup>48,49</sup>
- Financial support refers to any cash or monetary assistance provided to the client.
- Material support refers to other types of concrete support offered to the client, such as a place to stay, food, clothing, and the like.

→ Clients who have no extended family and no friends (as defined above) should be scored as "In Crisis."

→ Clients who lack a social network and who are uninterested in developing one should also be scored as "In Crisis."

**(2) Vulnerable - Extended family/friends lack the ability or resources to help (either financially, emotionally, or materially) or provide negative support.**

→ **Extended family** – see definition above

→ **Friends** – see definition above

→ Extended family members or friends may **lack the ability to support** the client because they either:

- do not have enough discretionary financial resources to offer monetary support,
- their own personal or emotional issues interfere with their ability to provide support,
- or they are geographically distant and are unable to offer the degree of emotional or tangible support that the client needs.

→ Those who provide **negative support** tend to be demanding, critical, or a bad influence.

**(3) Safe - Client receives some positive support (financial/ emotional/material) from extended family or friends.**

→ Extended family or friends who provide "healthy" or **positive support** behave in a caring, responsive manner toward the client.

---

<sup>48</sup> Define emotional support. Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <http://www.mental-illness-resources.com/define-emotional-support.html>

<sup>49</sup> Nugent, P. (April 7, 2013). "Emotional Support," in *PsychologyDictionary.org*, Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <https://psychologydictionary.org/emotional-support/>

- ***Extended family*** – see definition above
- ***Friends*** – see definition above
- Clients who receive occasional or inconsistent positive support should be scored as “Safe.”
- Clients who hope to receive financial/material and emotional support from their extended network, but only receives one type of support should also be scored as “Safe.”

**(4) Building Capacity - Strong support from extended family or friends.**

- ***Strong support*** is defined as the ability to consistently receive emotional, financial, or material support from their extended family or friends (when called upon or as necessary).
- ***Extended family*** – see definition above
- ***Friends*** – see definition above
- Clients should be scored as “Building Capacity” if they meet the above criteria but whose network of support is *not* actively expanding (i.e., the client is not regularly meeting new people or building new relationships, nor is the client making a concerted effort to strengthen existing relationships with their extended family or friends).

**(5) Empowered - Has healthy and expanding support network.**

- Clients with a ***healthy support network*** receive strong support (as defined above) from their extended family and friends (as defined above).
- Clients have an ***expanding support network*** if they are regularly meeting new people, building new relationships, or strengthening existing relationships.

**The Network Support Domain Score Guide  
can be found on the next page.**

## **Network Support Domain Score Guide**

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client has a strong, supportive relationship with their parents, then the client does not need to be directly asked if they receive any type of support).

*For the following questions, the client should consider all members of their extended family who did not serve in a caregiving role (e.g., aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents), friends, coworkers, or other members of their social circles (with the exception of counselors or staff of social service programs designed to meet clients' basic needs).*

**1. Does the client receive any type of support (emotional, financial, or material) from their extended family, friends, or other members of their social circle?**

Yes = Go to Question #3

No = Next Question

**2. Do the client's extended family or friends want to provide support?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = "In Crisis"

**3. Do the client's extended family or friends have a negative effect on the client (e.g., they are demanding, critical, or a bad influence)?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**4. When or if necessary, would the client be able to rely on someone among their extended family/friends to provide:**

**a. Emotional support (e.g., acceptance, encouragement, or empathy)?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**b. Financial support?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**c. Material support, such as a place to stay, food, or clothing?**

Yes = 1

No = 0

**Sum the answers above to determine the client's score:**

If "yes" to all 3 criteria = Next Question

If "yes" to 1–2 criteria = "Safe"

If "yes" to 0 criteria = Go to Question #2

**5. Is the client's support network growing?**

Yes = "Empowered"

No = "Building Capacity"

## 2.19 Family Relations: Family of Origin

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
<b>Family Relations: Family of Origin</b>	Abuse (DV, child) is present, there is child neglect, or all relations have been severed.	Family members do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse, neglect, or relations being severed.	Family members acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.	Family members support each other's efforts.	Family is stable and communication is consistently open.

*Definition:* The purpose of this domain is to assess the quality of the client's relationship with their **family of origin** (i.e., the client's biological nuclear family, which can include stepparents and stepsiblings; notably, this does not include adoptive parents, adoptive siblings, foster parents, foster siblings, or fictive kin, as these relationships are assessed in the "Family Relations: Caregiver(s)" domain). Thus, the client's biological nuclear family includes their biological mother, biological father, biological siblings, stepparents, and stepsiblings.

### *Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for:
  - All clients who are currently in contact with (i.e., have a relationship with) *any* members of their family of origin
  - Clients who have severed relations but are interested in contacting or establishing a relationship with *any* members of their family of origin
- Select "N/A" for:
  - Clients who currently have severed relations with their *entire* family of origin and who are uninterested in reconciling or establishing a relationship with their family
  - Clients whose members of their family of origin have all passed away
- Select "DK/DA" for clients who don't know or declined to discuss the quality of their relationship with their family of origin.

### *Special Issues:*

- If the client has severed relations with one or more members of their family of origin and expresses no desire to reestablish a relationship with those individuals, then those individuals' scores should be considered "N/A."

- If the client’s family of origin includes more than one eligible person, then the client should be instructed to think about their family of origin *as a whole* when determining the client’s score.
- In the rare case that the client was raised by a member of their biological nuclear family that was not a biological parent or a stepparent (i.e., a sibling), then the quality of the client’s relations should be captured using this domain, rather than the “Family Relations: Caregiver(s)” domain (Section 2.20).

*Response Options:*

**(1) In Crisis - Abuse (DV, child) is present, there is child neglect, or all relations have been severed.**

→ **Abuse** refers to physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, or financial maltreatment that results in significant harm (either actual or threatened) with respect to an individual’s development or psychological/physical functioning.

It could also refer to:

- the failure to attempt to prevent such an action by another individual,
- the use of a controlled substance in a manner that physically, mentally, or emotionally harms another person,
- causing, allowing, or encouraging a child or dependent to use a controlled substance,
- or causing, allowing, encouraging, or participating in unwanted or illegal sexual conduct.<sup>50</sup>

The client may be the recipient of abuse, the abuser, or abuse may be taking place between other members of the family for abuse to be considered “present.”

→ **Neglect** refers to placing an individual in, or failing to remove an individual from, a situation that requires judgment or action beyond the individual’s maturity level or physical/mental abilities that results in significant harm (either actual or threatened), without arranging for the appropriate accommodations for the individual.

This can include:

- the failure to pursue, obtain, or comply with medical care,
- or the failure to meet a youth’s or dependent’s food, clothing, or housing needs (excluding failure due to a lack of financial resources, unless supportive services have been offered and refused).<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup> Texas Family Code, Title 5, Subtitle E, Subchapter A, Section §261.001 (2011).

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

If the client is a minor or dependent, the client may be the one who is being neglected, or another child or dependent in the family may be the one who is being neglected.

- **Severed relations** means that the client, either voluntarily or involuntarily, has cut ties to their family members and is no longer in contact with them.
  - For the client's severed relations to result in a score of "In Crisis," the client's relationships must no longer be intact, but the client must want those relationships to be reestablished. If the client does not desire to reestablish the relationship, then that relationship should be considered "N/A" and should not influence the scoring of this domain (provided the client has other members of their family of origin).
- If a client has more than one person in their family of origin and abuse or neglect is present in their relationship with *any* of these family members, the client should be assigned a score of "In Crisis."

**(2) Vulnerable - Family members do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse, neglect, or relations being severed.**

- If the family members ***do not relate well***, it means that their interactions are characterized by hostility, criticism, avoidance, or conflict.
- **Abuse** - see definition above
- **Neglect** - see definition above
- **Severed relations** – see definition above

**(3) Safe - Family members acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.**

- If family members ***seek to change negative behaviors***, they are working to reduce the degree to which their interactions are characterized by hostility, criticism, avoidance, or conflict.
- When considering their relationships with members of their family of origin as a whole, clients and their family members (a) do not engage in abuse or neglect, and (b) seek to change negative behaviors, but do not yet consider their relationship with their family of origin to be generally ***supportive*** (i.e., characterized by a tendency to behave in a caring, responsive manner toward one another).

**(4) Building Capacity - Family members support each other's efforts.**

- When considering their relationships with members of their family of origin as a whole, clients and their family members (a) do not engage in abuse or neglect, (b) seek to change negative behaviors, and (c) are generally supportive of one another.
- Clients and their family members may also have consistently open communication or have generally stable relationships (but not both) and be scored as “Building Capacity.”

**(5) Empowered - Family is stable and communication is consistently open.**

- When considering their relationships with members of their family of origin as a whole, clients and their family members (a) do not engage in abuse or neglect, (b) seek to change negative behaviors, (c) are generally supportive of one another, (d) have consistently open communication, and (e) have generally stable relationships.

**The Family of Origin Domain Score Guide  
can be found on the next page.**

## **Family of Origin Domain Score Guide**

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client is being abused by a member of their family or origin, the client does not need to be directly asked whether abuse is taking place).

- 1. Is the client in contact with any members of their family of origin (that is, their biological parents, biological siblings, stepparents, or stepsiblings)?**

Yes = Go to Question #3

No = Next Question

- 2. Does the client want to be in contact with any members of their family of origin?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = N/A

*For the following questions, the client should consider all members of their family of origin with whom they are currently in contact or with whom they would like to be in contact.*

- 3. Is any abuse or neglect currently taking place between the client and members of their family of origin?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

- 4. Does the client consider their relationship with their family of origin to be generally characterized by conflict, hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

- 5. Do the client and all relevant family members make an effort to reduce the amount of hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity that exists in their relationship?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Vulnerable"

- 6. Are the client and all relevant family members generally supportive of one another?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

- 7. Is communication between the client and all relevant family members consistently open?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Building Capacity"

- 8. Does the client consider their relationship with these members of their family of origin to be stable?**

Yes = "Empowered"

No = "Building Capacity"



## 2.20 Family Relations: Caregiver(s)

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
<b>Family Relations: Caregiver(s)</b>	Abuse (DV, child) is present, there is child neglect, or all relations have been severed.	Caregiver(s) and client do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse, neglect, or relations being severed.	Caregiver(s) and client acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.	Caregiver(s) and client support each other's efforts.	Relationships are stable and communication is consistently open.

*Definition:* The purpose of this domain is to assess the quality of the client's relationship with their caregiver(s)—that is, anyone who served as the client's caregiver that was not a member of the client's biological nuclear family or a stepparent (and thus may include—but is not limited to—adoptive parents, foster parents, or members of clients' extended families that played a caregiving role, including grandparents).

*Subjects:*

- This domain should only be completed for:
  - Clients who were raised for at least part of their lives by someone other than their biological parents, stepparents, or another member of their biological nuclear family (e.g., a sibling).  
Specifically:
    - Clients who are currently in contact with (i.e., have a relationship with) *any* caregivers (not including their biological parents or stepparents)
    - Clients who have severed relations but are interested in contacting or establishing a relationship with *any* of their caregivers (not including their biological parents or stepparents)
- Select "N/A" for:
  - Clients who were only raised by their biological parents, stepparents, or another member of their biological nuclear family
  - Clients who were exclusively raised in an institutional setting or at a group home, residential treatment center, or in a shelter

- Clients who currently have severed relations with *all* of their caregivers (not including their biological parents or stepparents) and who are uninterested in reconciling or establishing a relationship with their caregivers
- Clients whose caregiver(s) have passed away
- Select “DK/DA” for clients who don’t know or declined to discuss the quality of their relationship with their caregiver(s)

*Special Issues:*

- If the client has severed relations with one or more caregivers or caregivers’ family members and expresses no desire to reestablish a relationship with those individuals, then those individuals’ scores should be considered “N/A.”
- If the client has more than one eligible caregivers, then the client should be instructed to think about the *overall* quality of their relationships with their caregivers when determining the client’s score.
- Please note that staff at group homes, residential treatment centers, and shelters should not be considered caregivers.
- Finally, caregivers are considered to be anyone who meets the criteria outlined above that *the client identifies as a legal guardian who played a major caregiving role in their lives* (i.e., the designation “caregiver” is not determined by duration of caregiving).

*Response Options:*

**(1) In Crisis - Abuse (DV, child) is present, there is child neglect, or all relations have been severed.**

→ **Abuse** refers to physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, or financial maltreatment that results in significant harm (either actual or threatened) with respect to an individual’s development or psychological/physical functioning.

It could also refer to:

- the failure to attempt to prevent such an action by another individual,
- the use of a controlled substance in a manner that physically, mentally, or emotionally harms another person,
- causing, allowing, or encouraging a child or dependent to use a controlled substance,

- or causing, allowing, encouraging, or participating in unwanted or illegal sexual conduct.<sup>52</sup>

The client may be the recipient of abuse, the abuser, or abuse may be taking place between other members of the family for abuse to be considered “present.”

→ ***Neglect*** refers to placing an individual in, or failing to remove an individual from, a situation that requires judgment or action beyond the individual’s maturity level or physical/mental abilities that results in significant harm (either actual or threatened), without arranging for the appropriate accommodations for the individual.

This can include:

- the failure to pursue, obtain, or comply with medical care,
- or the failure to meet a youth’s or dependent’s food, clothing, or housing needs (excluding failure due to a lack of financial resources, unless supportive services have been offered and refused).<sup>53</sup>

If the client is a minor or dependent, the client may be the one who is being neglected, or another child or dependent in the family may be the one who is being neglected.

→ ***Severed relations*** means that the client, either voluntarily or involuntarily, has cut ties to their caregivers or caregivers’ family members and is no longer in contact with them.

- For the client’s ***severed relations*** to result in a score of “In Crisis,” the client’s relationships with their caregiver(s) and members of their caregiver’s family must no longer be intact, but the client must want those relationships to be reestablished. If the client does not desire to reestablish the relationship, then the client’s score for their relationship with that individual should be “N/A.”

→ Clients with abuse or neglect present in their relationship with their caregiver(s) and their caregiver’s family. If a client has more than one caregiver (or the client has a relationship with other members of their caregiver’s family) and abuse or neglect is present in their relationship with *any* of these individuals, the client should be assigned a score of “In Crisis.”

---

<sup>52</sup> Texas Family Code, Title 5, Subtitle E, Subchapter A, Section §261.001 (2011).

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

**(2) Vulnerable – Caregiver(s) and client do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse, neglect, or relations being severed.**

- If the client and their caregiver(s) *do not relate well*, it means that their interactions are characterized by hostility, criticism, avoidance, or conflict.
- *Abuse* - see definition above
- *Neglect* - see definition above
- *Severed relations* – see definition above

**(3) Safe - Caregiver(s) and client acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.**

- If the client and their caregiver(s) *seek to change negative behaviors*, they are working to reduce the degree to which their interactions are characterized by hostility, criticism, avoidance, or conflict.
- When considering their relationships with their caregiver(s), clients and their caregiver(s) (a) do not engage in abuse or neglect, and (b) seek to change negative behaviors, but do not yet consider their relationship with their caregiver(s) to be generally *supportive* (i.e., characterized by a tendency to behave in a caring, responsive manner toward one another).

**(4) Building Capacity - Caregiver(s) and client support each other's efforts.**

- When considering their relationships with their caregiver(s), clients and their caregiver(s) (a) do not engage in abuse or neglect, (b) seek to change negative behaviors, and (c) are generally supportive of one another.
- Clients and their caregiver(s) may also have consistently open communication or have generally stable relationships (but not both) and be scored as “Building Capacity.”

**(5) Empowered - Relationships are stable and communication is consistently open.**

- When considering their relationships with their caregiver(s), clients and their caregiver(s) (a) do not engage in abuse or neglect, (b) seek to change negative behaviors, (c) are generally supportive of one another, (d) have consistently open communication, and (e) have generally stable relationships.

## Caregivers Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client did not have any other caregivers, the client does not have to be asked whether they were raised by anyone other than a member of their biological nuclear family or a stepparent).

- 1. Was the client raised by anyone other than a member of their biological nuclear family or a stepparent?**  
Yes = Next Question                                      No = N/A
  - 2. Did the client ever have a foster parent, adoptive parent, grandparent, or other family member ever serve as their caregiver?**  
Yes = Go to Question #4                                      No = Next Question
  - 3. Were the client's only other caregivers staff members at a group home, shelter, residential treatment center, juvenile detention center, a hospital, or some other facility?**  
Yes = N/A                                      No = Next Question
  - 4. Is the client in contact with any of these other caregivers (or their caregivers' family members)?**  
Yes = Go to Question #6                                      No = Next Question
  - 5. Does the client want to be in contact with any of these other caregivers (or their caregivers' family members)?**  
Yes = "In Crisis"                                      No = N/A
- For the following questions, the client should consider all non-staff caregivers (and their caregivers' family members) with whom they are currently in contact or with whom they would like to be in contact.*
- 6. Is any abuse or neglect currently taking place between the client and their caregivers (or their caregivers' family members)?**  
Yes = "In Crisis"                                      No = Next Question
  - 7. Does the client consider their relationship with their caregivers (and their caregivers' families) to be generally characterized by conflict, hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"                                      No = Next Question
  - 8. Do the client and their caregivers (and their caregivers' family members) make an effort to reduce the amount of hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity that exists in their relationship?**  
Yes = Next Question                                      No = "Vulnerable"
  - 9. Are the client and their caregivers (and their caregivers' family members) generally supportive of one another?**  
Yes = Next Question                                      No = "Safe"

**10. Is communication between the client and their caregivers (and their caregivers' family members) consistently open?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Building Capacity"

**11. Does the client consider their relationship with their caregivers (and their caregivers' family members) to be stable?**

Yes = "Empowered"

No = "Building Capacity"

## 2.21 Intimate Relationship(s)

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
<b>Intimate Relationships</b>	Abuse is present, or all relations have been severed.	Partners do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse or relations being severed.	Partners acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.	Partners support each other's efforts.	Relationship is stable and communication is consistently open.

*Definition:* The purpose of this domain is to assess the quality of the client's relationship with their intimate partner(s).

*Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for:
  - Clients who self-identify as being currently or legally involved in a romantic relationship, regardless of duration
- Select "N/A" for:
  - Clients who do not consider themselves to be currently or legally involved in a romantic relationship
- Select "DK/DA" for clients who don't know or declined to discuss the quality of their relationship with their intimate partner(s).

*Special Issues:*

- The scoring logic accounts for the fact that the client may have more than one romantic partner.
- If the client is legally married but no longer in contact with the partner (regardless of whether or not the client wants to have a relationship with this individual), the client's relationship with this partner should be scored as "In Crisis" (and not "N/A").
- Please note that if the client is experiencing active conflict with a *prior* partner to whom they are not legally married, then this should not impact the rating of the "Intimate Relationships" domain but should be reflected in either the "Mental Health," "Safety," or "Network Support" domains, if applicable.

*Response Options:***(1) In Crisis – Abuse is present, or all relations have been severed.**

→ **Abuse** refers to physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, or financial maltreatment that results in significant harm (either actual or threatened) with respect to an individual’s development or psychological/physical functioning.

It could also refer to:

- the failure to attempt to prevent such an action by another individual,
- the use of a controlled substance in a manner that physically, mentally, or emotionally harms another person,
- or causing, allowing, encouraging, or participating in unwanted or illegal sexual conduct.<sup>54</sup>

The client may be the recipient of abuse or the abuser for abuse to be considered “present.”

→ **Severed relations** means that the client, either voluntarily or involuntarily, has cut ties to their romantic partner and is no longer in contact with him/her. For this domain, “severed relations” should only apply if the client is legally married to the partner (see “Special Issues” above).

→ If a client has more than one partner and abuse is present in their relationship with *any* of their partners, the client should be assigned a score of “In Crisis.”

**(2) Vulnerable - Partners do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse or relations being severed.**

→ If the client and his/her partner(s) **do not relate well**, it means that their interactions are characterized by hostility, criticism, avoidance, or conflict.

→ **Abuse** - see definition above

→ **Severed relations** – see definition above

**(3) Safe - Partners acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.**

→ If the client and their partner(s) **seek to change negative behaviors**, they are working to reduce the degree to which their interactions are characterized by hostility, criticism, avoidance, or conflict.

→ When considering their relationships with their partner(s), clients and their partner(s) (a) do not engage in abuse, and (b) seek to change negative behaviors, but do not yet consider their relationship

---

<sup>54</sup> Texas Family Code, Title 5, Subtitle E, Subchapter A, Section §261.001 (2011).



with their partner(s) to be generally **supportive** (i.e., characterized by a tendency to behave in a caring, responsive manner toward one another).

**(4) Building Capacity - Partners support each other's efforts.**

- When considering their relationships with their partner(s), clients and their partner(s) (a) do not engage in abuse, (b) seek to change negative behaviors, and (c) are generally supportive of one another.
- Clients and their partner(s) may also have consistently open communication or have generally stable relationships (but not both) and be scored as "Building Capacity."

**(5) Empowered - Relationship is stable and communication is consistently open.**

- When considering their relationships with their partner(s), clients and their partner(s) (a) do not engage in abuse, (b) seek to change negative behaviors, (c) are generally supportive of one another, (d) have consistently open communication, and (e) have generally stable relationships.

### **Intimate Relationships Domain Score Guide**

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client is not married, the client does not need to be asked about their marital status).

**1. Is the client legally married?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #5

**2. Is the client separated from their spouse?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #4

**3. Is the client in contact with their spouse?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "In Crisis"

**4. Is the client's relationship with their spouse characterized by abuse?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Go to Question #7

**5. Does the client have an intimate partner?**

Yes = Next Question

No = N/A

**6. Is the client's relationship with their partner characterized by abuse?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

**7. Does the client have any other intimate partners?**

Yes = Go to Question #13

No = Next Question

**8. Does the client consider their relationship with their partner to be generally characterized by conflict, hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**9. Do the client and their partner make an effort to reduce the amount of hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity that exists in their relationship?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Vulnerable"

**10. Are the client and their partner generally supportive of one another?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

**11. Is communication between the client and their partner consistently open?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Building Capacity"

**12. Does the client consider their relationship with their partner to be stable?**

Yes = "Empowered"

No = "Building Capacity"

*For the following questions, the client should take into account their relationships with all of their current intimate partners with whom they are in contact.*

**13. Does the client consider their relationship with their partners to be generally characterized by conflict, hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**14. Do the client and their partners make an effort to reduce the amount of hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity that exists in their relationship?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Vulnerable"

**15. Are the client and their partners generally supportive of one another?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

**16. Is communication between the client and their partners consistently open?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Building Capacity"

**17. Does the client consider their relationship with their partners to be stable?**

Yes = "Empowered"

No = "Building Capacity"

## 2.22 Parent-Child Relations

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
<b>Parent-Child Relations</b>	There are safety concerns regarding parenting skills; abuse or neglect is present, or all relations have been severed.	Parenting skills are minimal; client does not relate well with child(ren); potential for abuse or neglect.	Parenting skills are apparent but not adequate; client acknowledges and seeks to change negative behaviors; is learning to communicate and support.	Parenting skills are adequate; client supports their child(ren)'s efforts.	Parenting skills are well-developed; parent-child relations are stable and communication is consistently open.

*Definition:* The purpose of this domain is to assess the quality of the client's relationship with their child(ren). Please note that this domain should not be completed for clients who are minors unless they are parents themselves; the quality of their relationships with *their* parents or guardians should be assessed using the "Family Relations: Family of Origin" or "Family Relations: Caregiver(s)" domains.

### *Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for:
  - Clients who have children (either biological or adopted)
  - Clients who serve(d) as the primary caregiver for a child
  - Clients who have severed relations with their child(ren) and are interested in reconnecting or reestablishing a relationship with their child(ren)
- Select "N/A" for:
  - Clients who do not have children (either biological or adopted)
  - Clients who have not served as the primary caregiver for a child
  - Clients who have severed relations with their child(ren) and are uninterested in reconnecting or reestablishing a relationship with their child(ren)
- Select "DK/DA" for clients who don't know or decline to discuss the quality of their relationship with their child(ren)

### *Special Issues:*

- Please note that if clients have positive relations with some of their children but strained relations with others, then clients' scores should reflect the average relationship quality across all children.

- If clients have severed relations with their child(ren) and expresses no desire to reestablish a relationship with their child(ren), then clients' scores should be considered "N/A."
- This domain should be completed for the client even if their child is not a minor or does not share a residence with the client.
- If there is a history of abuse (but there is not currently any abuse) and the client still has presenting issues, then the history of abuse should not influence the rating of this domain but will be reflected in the rating of the "Mental Health" domain.

*Response Options:*

**(1) In Crisis - There are safety concerns regarding parenting skills; abuse or neglect is present, or all relations have been severed.**

- **Safety concerns** may be the result of perceived negligence on the part of the client (or their adult child, if the adult child is serving as the client's caretaker), aggression on the part of the client or the client's child directed toward other people or toward animals, substance abuse issues on the part of the client or the child, or other troublesome issues.
- **Abuse** refers to physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, or financial maltreatment that results in significant harm (either actual or threatened) with respect to an individual's development or psychological/physical functioning.

It could also refer to:

- the failure to attempt to prevent such an action by another individual,
- the use of a controlled substance in a manner that physically, mentally, or emotionally harms another person,
- causing, allowing, or encouraging a child or dependent to use a controlled substance,
- or causing, allowing, encouraging, or participating in unwanted or illegal sexual conduct.<sup>55</sup>

The client may be the abuser or the recipient of abuse for abuse to be considered "present."

- **Neglect** refers to placing an individual in, or failing to remove an individual from, a situation that requires judgment or action beyond the individual's maturity level or physical/mental abilities that results in significant harm (either actual or threatened), without arranging for the appropriate accommodations for the individual.

---

<sup>55</sup> Texas Family Code, Title 5, Subtitle E, Subchapter A, Section §261.001 (2011).

This can include:

- the failure to pursue, obtain, or comply with medical care,
- or the failure to meet a youth's or dependent's food, clothing, or housing needs (excluding failure due to a lack of financial resources, unless supportive services have been offered and refused).<sup>56</sup>

→ ***Severed relations*** means that the client, either voluntarily or involuntarily, has cut ties to their child(ren) and is no longer in contact with them.

- For the client's ***severed relations*** to result in a score of "In Crisis," the client's relationships with their child(ren) must no longer be intact, but the client must want those relationships to be reestablished. If the client does not desire to reestablish the relationship, then the client's score for their relationship with that individual should be "N/A."

→ Clients with abuse or neglect present in their relationship with their child(ren). If a client has more than one child and abuse or neglect is present in their relationship with *any* of their children, the client should be assigned a score of "In Crisis."

**(2) Vulnerable - Parenting skills are minimal; client does not relate well with child(ren); potential for abuse or neglect.**

→ ***Parenting skills*** refer to not only the clients' ability to meet their child(ren)'s basic needs and keep their child(ren) safe, but also the ability to communicate honestly and openly with their child(ren), explain things clearly to their child(ren), be consistently responsive, be a positive role model, maintain their child(ren)'s structure/routine, monitor their child(ren), establish reasonable boundaries and rules, discipline effectively and appropriately, and show interest in the child(ren)'s educational and developmental needs, among other skills.

→ If the client ***does not relate well*** with their child(ren), it means that their interactions are characterized by hostility, criticism, avoidance, or conflict.

→ ***Abuse*** – See definition above.

→ ***Neglect*** – See definition above.

---

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

**(3) Safe - Parenting skills are apparent but not adequate; client acknowledges and seeks to change negative behaviors; is learning to communicate and support.**

- *Parenting skills* – see definition above
- For parenting skills to be *apparent but not adequate*, it means the client makes some effort to apply age-appropriate parenting skills but does not consistently apply them.
- If the client *seeks to change negative behaviors*, they are working to reduce the degree to which their interactions with their child(ren) are characterized by hostility, criticism, avoidance, or conflict.
- When considering their relationships with their child(ren), there is no abuse or neglect, and clients (a) occasionally use age-appropriate parenting techniques, and (b) seek to change negative behaviors, but do not yet consider themselves to be generally *supportive* of their child(ren)—that is, the client does not typically behave in a caring, responsive manner toward their child(ren).

**(4) Building Capacity – Parenting skills are adequate; client supports their child(ren)’s efforts.**

- *Parenting skills* – see definition above
- For parenting skills to be *adequate*, it means the client consistently applies age-appropriate parenting techniques, but the client only has a limited range of parenting skills, or their skills could be strengthened or improved (i.e., they are not *well-developed*).
- When considering their relationships with their child(ren), there is no abuse or neglect, and clients (a) consistently use age-appropriate parenting techniques, (b) seek to change negative behaviors, and (c) are generally supportive of their child(ren).
- Clients and their child(ren) may also have consistently open communication or have generally stable relationships (but not both) and be scored as “Building Capacity.”
- Note that clients’ scores are not contingent on their child(ren)’s behavior—i.e., clients with difficult or rebellious children can still be scored as “Building Capacity.”

**(5) Empowered - Parenting skills are well-developed; parent-child relations are stable and communication is consistently open.**

- *Parenting skills* – see definition above
- If clients’ parenting skills are *well-developed*, it means they have a range of parenting skills at their disposal, and their skills are not in obvious need of being strengthened or improved.
- When considering their relationships with their child(ren), there is no abuse or neglect, and clients (a) consistently use age-appropriate parenting techniques, (b) have well-developed parenting skills, (c)

seek to change negative behaviors, (d) are generally supportive of their child(ren), (e) have consistently open communication, and (f) have generally stable relationships.

### **Parent-Child Relations Domain Score Guide**

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client is in foster care, then the client does not need to be directly asked about their foster care status).

**1. Does the client have any children, or has the client ever served as a primary caregiver for any children?**

Yes = Next Question

No = N/A

**2. Is the client in contact with (any of) their child(ren)?**

Yes = Go to Question #4

No = Next Question

**3. Does the client want to be in contact with (any of) their child(ren)?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = N/A

**4. Is the client's relationship with (any of) their child(ren) characterized by abuse or neglect?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

**5. Are there serious safety concerns in the client's relationship with (any of) their child(ren)?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

*For the following questions, the client should take into account their relationships with all of their children with whom they are in contact or with whom they would like to be in contact.*

**6. Does the client make an effort to reduce the amount of hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity that exists in their relationship with their child(ren)?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Vulnerable"

**7. Does the client make some effort to apply age-appropriate parenting techniques?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Vulnerable"

**8. Does the client consistently use age-appropriate parenting techniques?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

**9. Does the client generally support their child(ren)'s efforts?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

**10. Is communication between the client and their child(ren) consistently open?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Building Capacity"

**11. Do the client's parenting skills need to be strengthened, improved, or diversified?**

Yes = "Building Capacity"

No = Next Question

**12. Is the client's relationship with their child(ren) stable?**

Yes = "Empowered"

No = "Building Capacity"



## 2.23 Childcare

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
<b>Childcare</b>	Needs childcare but none is available or accessible (including family members or friends).	Childcare is unreliable or unaffordable; inadequate supervision is a problem for childcare that is available (including family members or friends).	Affordable, subsidized childcare is available but limited (if family members or friends: availability or interest is limited).	Reliable, affordable childcare is available (could be family members or friends); no need for subsidies.	Able to select quality childcare of choice (could be from among family members or friends).

### Definition:

- This domain assesses individuals' current ability to meet their childcare needs.
- *This domain is only relevant to clients who have children who meet the criteria outlined below*; if the client is a child and does not have children of their own, then this domain should not be completed.
- When scoring this domain, one should consider any or all of the following that apply to the client's child(ren): day care, preschool/pre-kindergarten/Head Start, afterschool care, or babysitters/nannies (including family members).

### Subjects:

- This domain should be completed for:
  - All clients who are the caregivers of children who are 11 years of age or younger<sup>57</sup>
  - Clients who are the caregivers of special-needs children who are 18 years of age or younger
- Select "N/A" for:
  - Clients who do not serve as the caregiver of any children
  - Clients who serve(d) as the caregiver for children who are over the age of 11 and who do not have special needs
- Select "DK/DA" for clients who don't know or declined to discuss their childcare arrangements.

### Special Issues:

- If neighbors are providing care, the rating system should be treated the same as for families and friends.

<sup>57</sup> Arizona Self-Sufficiency Scoring Sheet, developed by the Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues, 2010.

*Response Options:***(1) In Crisis – Needs childcare but none is available or accessible (including family members or friends).**

- Childcare is *unavailable* if the childcare provider is not available when needed (e.g., nights or weekends), if all potential childcare providers/centers are filled to capacity, or if the child is not eligible or does not qualify.
- Childcare is *not accessible* if clients are unable to get to the childcare provider in a reasonable amount of time (or vice versa).

**(2) Vulnerable – Childcare is unreliable or unaffordable; inadequate supervision is a problem for childcare that is available (including family members or friends).**

- Childcare is *unreliable* if the childcare provider is either inconsistently available, regularly cancels, or fails to show up
- Childcare is *unaffordable* if:
  - The cost places an undue burden on the client's budget, either because the cost of childcare is too high or the need for childcare interferes with one or both parents' employment.
  - Clients are spending more than 10% of their monthly household income on childcare.<sup>58</sup>
  - One or both parents reports that they had to change or reduce the number of hours they would prefer to be at work (and, as a result, are struggling financially), because paying for childcare would be prohibitively expensive.
- Children who receive *inadequate supervision* are in the care of a childcare provider that is regularly distracted from monitoring the child's behavior (e.g., the childcare provider is engaged in other tasks or responsible for caring for too many children).

**(3) Safe - Affordable, subsidized childcare is available but limited (if family members or friends: availability or interest is limited).**

- Clients who spend 10% or less of their monthly household income on childcare are considered to have an *affordable* childcare arrangement.

---

<sup>58</sup> see Economic Policy Institute. (2016, April). The cost of childcare. Retrieved August 23, 2017, from <http://www.epi.org/child-care-costs-in-the-united-states/>

- Clients are receiving *subsidized childcare* or *subsidies* if they receive financial assistance in paying for childcare, some form of childcare vouchers, childcare on a sliding fee scale, or free care through a public prekindergarten program or some other organization. However, employer-supported childcare should not be considered subsidized.
- Care is *limited* if clients are only able to secure childcare 75% or less of the times (or for the amount of time) that they need it.

**(4) Building Capacity - Reliable, affordable childcare is available (could be family members or friends); no need for subsidies.**

- Childcare is *reliable* if the childcare provider is consistently available and rarely cancels.
- *Affordable* – see definition above
- *Subsidies* – see definition above

**(5) Empowered - Able to select quality childcare of choice (could be from among family members or friends).**

- *Quality childcare* should be conceptualized as care which is warm and responsive, occurs in a safe environment in which the child is consistently monitored, and stimulates the child's development.

### **Childcare Domain Score Guide**

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client has no children, the client does not need to be directly asked whether they have any children).

**1. Does the client have any children or serve as the primary caregiver for any children?**

Yes = Next Question

No = N/A

**2. Does the client have any children who are 10 years old or younger?**

Yes = Go to Question #4

No = Next Question

**3. Does the client have any children who are under age 18 and have special needs?**

Yes = Next Question

No = N/A

*For the following questions, the client should base their responses on the childcare arrangements about which they are most concerned (across the children they care for who are 10 years old or younger, or any special needs children they care for who are under age 18).*

4. **Does the client have childcare arrangements for all eligible children (this can include childcare provided by family members, neighbors, or friends)?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = “In Crisis”
5. **Does the client spend more than 10% of their income on childcare costs?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”  
No = Next Question
6. **Do any of the client’s childcare providers unexpectedly cancel, fail to show up, or are otherwise inconsistently available?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”  
No = Next Question
7. **Does the client have any safety concerns with any of their childcare providers?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”  
No = Next Question
8. **Does the client feel like all of their childcare providers provide adequate supervision?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = “Vulnerable”
9. **Is childcare readily available to the client when needed?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = “Safe”
10. **Does the client receive some type of financial assistance in paying for childcare, such as childcare vouchers?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = Go to Question #12
11. **Is the financial assistance that the client receives some type of employer-supported childcare?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = “Safe”
12. **Can the client select from among high-quality childcare providers of their choice? In other words, is more than one desirable childcare option available to the client?**  
Yes = “Empowered”  
No = “Building Capacity”

## 2.24 Education of Client's Child(ren)

Domain	1 In Crisis	2 Vulnerable	3 Safe	4 Building Capacity	5 Empowered
<b>Education of Client's Child(ren)</b>	One or more school-aged children are not enrolled in school.	All school-aged children are enrolled in school, but one or more are not attending or only occasionally attending classes <u>OR</u> have unmet educational needs.	School-aged children are enrolled in school, but one or more only attend classes most of the time <u>OR</u> are struggling in at least 3, but not all, of their classes.	All school-aged children are enrolled in school and attend classes on a regular basis, but one or more are struggling in 1–2 classes.	All school-aged children are enrolled, attend classes on a regular basis, and are performing well in school.

*Definition:* This domain assesses the level of school engagement demonstrated by the client's child(ren). This domain refers to basic education (kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, and high school) and should not reflect any college-level education or vocational training which clients' child(ren) may be pursuing.

### *Subjects:*

- This domain should be completed for:
  - All clients who are the caregivers of children between the ages of 6 and 18 who have not yet graduated from high school or obtained their GED
- Select "N/A" for:
  - Clients who either do not serve as the caregiver of any children
  - Clients who serve(d) as the caregiver of children who:
    - i. are under 6 years old
    - ii. obtained their high school diplomas/GEDs, or
    - iii. are 19 years of age or older
- Select "DK/DA" for clients who don't know or declined to discuss the quality of their child(ren)'s education.

### *Special Issues:*

- The caliber of the school should not factor into the scoring of this domain—only attendance and children's academic performance should be considered.
- Please note that if the client has more than one child, the client's score should be based on the child who is struggling the most.

*Response Options:*

- (1) **In Crisis - One or more school-aged children not enrolled in school.**
- (2) **Vulnerable - All school-aged children are enrolled in school, but one or more are not attending or only occasionally attending classes OR have unmet educational needs.**
- Children who attend classes 50% of the time or less are considered to be only *occasionally attending classes*.
  - Clients who have at least one child whose special educational needs are not being met, who are not receiving other necessary accommodations, or who are earning Ds or Fs in all of their classes are considered to *have unmet educational needs*.
- (3) **Safe - School-aged children are enrolled in school, but one or more only attend classes most of the time OR are struggling in at least 3, but not all, of their classes.**
- Those who attend classes between 50%–90% of the time are considered to *attend classes most of the time*.
  - Clients who have at least one child who is *struggling* (i.e., earning Ds or Fs) in at least three, but not all, of their classes
- (4) **Building Capacity - All school-aged children enrolled in school and attend classes on a regular basis, but one or more are struggling in 1–2 classes.**
- Those who attend more than 90% of the time are considered to *attend classes on a regular basis*.
  - Clients who have at least one child who is *struggling* (i.e., earning Ds or Fs) in one or two of their classes
- (5) **Empowered - All school-aged children are enrolled, attend classes on a regular basis, and are performing well in school.**
- *Attend classes on a regular basis* – see definition above
  - Clients whose children are *performing well* at school are not earning Ds or Fs in any of their classes.

## Education of Client's Children Domain Score Guide

**Note:** Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client has no school-aged children, then the client does not need to ask about the ages of the client's children).

- 1. Does the client have any children or serve as the primary caregiver for any children?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = N/A
- 2. Are any of the client's children school-aged (between the ages of 6–18)?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = N/A
- 3. Are all of the client's school-aged children enrolled in school?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = "In Crisis"
- 4. Does the client have any children whose special education needs or other accommodations are not currently being met?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"  
No = Next Question
- 5. Are all of the client's school-aged children attending classes more than 90% of the time?**  
Yes = Go to Question #7  
No = Next Question
- 6. Are any of the client's school-aged children attending classes less than 50% of the time?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"  
No = "Safe"
- 7. Are any of the client's children earning Ds or Fs in any of their classes?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = "Empowered"
- 8. Are any of the client's children earning Ds or Fs in all of their classes?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"  
No = Next Question
- 9. Thinking about their child who is struggling the most in school, in how many classes is the client's child earning Ds or Fs?**  
1–2 = "Building Capacity"  
3+ = "Safe"

## 2.25 The “Does Not Know” and “Declined to Answer” Response Options

The **Does Not Know/Declined to Answer (DK/DA)** response options should only be selected if the domain is relevant to the client (i.e., the client is included in the pool of subjects who should be assessed), but they didn’t know or declined to provide the information necessary for scoring purposes. If the client does not know the answer to a particular question in the scoring guide or is simply unsure about how to describe their status regarding a particular aspect of self-sufficiency, then the client should not receive a score for that domain, and “Does Not Know” should be marked instead. Similarly, “Declined to Answer” should be selected for a given domain whenever a client refuses to discuss or provide information about that aspect of their self-sufficiency. The “Does Not Know/Declined to Answer” response options should never be selected because the user forgot to assess the domain or did not feel comfortable assessing the domain.

## 2.26 Identifying Goals

A specific domain should be marked as a **Goal** if the client identified that specific domain as an area on which they have been actively working and on which they would like to continue trying to improve through services. A domain should not be marked as a “Goal” simply because the client scored as “In Crisis” or “Vulnerable” on that specific domain. *Goals are defined by the client.* Please note that it is better to select fewer goals rather than a greater number of goals.

## 2.27 Confidence in Assessment

The **Confidence in Assessment** score should be used to indicate how strongly the user feels in their scoring of the client for a specific domain. This section of the LW-SSM should be completed using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all confident	Very little confidence	Moderately confident	Very confident	Extremely confident



This category is necessary, as there may be certain situations, particularly when a relationship with a client is in its early stages, in which the client provides questionable information. Most of the time, however, the score should be “5,” or “Very confident.” Nevertheless, this section provides users the opportunity to indicate when they do not feel confident in their assessment of the client’s self-sufficiency. *It is very important that users provide an honest assessment of their confidence and complete this section for every domain.*

### **3. Using the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix as an Outcome Measure**

Since its introduction, a number of organizations across the United States have adopted the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix (LW-SSM) as a tool to guide service planning, assess client progress, and report outcomes to funders. Because the LW-SSM can be used in more than one way to track clients' changes in self-sufficiency, this section provides some basic recommendations for agencies that would like to adopt the LW-SSM as an outcome measure. For additional technical support, please contact the author.

#### **3.1 Key Recommendations**

- Clients' self-sufficiency can be examined on a domain-by-domain basis, by considering all relevant domains in tandem, or by creating subscales. It is strongly recommended that users conduct a factor analysis to identify the appropriate latent variables.
- If users are interested in calculating clients' overall level of self-sufficiency, it is important to avoid calculating clients' level of self-sufficiency by simply summing their scores across all domains. Because not all domains are relevant to all clients, clients will differ in the "highest possible" score that could be obtained by summing across all domains. Instead, clients' scores should be averaged or treated as a percentage (i.e., the sum of clients' scores divided by the highest possible total score for the individual client).
- All scores of "N/A," "Does not know," and "Declined to answer" should be treated as null values.
- Because progress across each domain of the LW-SSM represents substantial change in clients' lives, users should not underestimate the amount of time it will take to observe progress, nor should they overestimate the number of domains in which they can expect to see progress. If using the LW-SSM to track program outcomes, users may find it helpful to limit the sample of clients eligible to be included in the outcome to those who participated in services for a minimum amount of time (e.g., three months).
- Because the "Education" and "Adult Education" domains overlap conceptually, only one domain should be included when calculating clients' self-sufficiency. When deciding which domain to

use, consider the age range of clients served, the specific services provided, and the anticipated impact of services on clients' educational progress (if relevant).

# Appendix A: Score Guide for the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix (Referring to Clients in the Third Person)

The following set of questions should be used to determine the client's score for each domain. Note that some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client's age, the client does not need to be asked directly about their age).

## Housing Domain Score Guide

**1. Is the client currently in jail, prison, or a juvenile detention facility?**

Yes = N/A

No = Next question

**2. Is the client currently housed?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "In Crisis"

**3. Is the client at immediate risk of losing their housing?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

**4. Does the client currently reside in a house or an apartment?**

Yes = Go to Question #7

No = Next Question

**5. Where does the client currently reside?**

Residential treatment center = "In Crisis"

Boarding home = "Vulnerable"

Emergency shelter = "In Crisis"

Residential project/halfway house = "Vulnerable"

Safe haven = "In Crisis"

Supervised independent living program = "Vulnerable"

Place not meant for habitation = "In Crisis"

Supportive housing = "Vulnerable"

Transitional living program = "Vulnerable"

Medical or psychiatric hospital = "Vulnerable"

Group home = "Vulnerable"

Hotel/motel = Next Question

Dorm/Co-op = Go to Question #9

**6. Is the client paying for the hotel/motel using their own money (or a friend's or family member's money), or do they receive assistance from a social service program?**

Paid for by a social service agency = "In Crisis"

Not paid for by a social service agency = "Vulnerable"

**7. Did the client obtain their housing through a social service program, Child Protective Services, or some other organization?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #9

**8. In what type of housing does the client currently reside?**

Group home = “Vulnerable”

Transitional living program = “Vulnerable”

Residential project/halfway house = “Vulnerable”

Boarding home = “Vulnerable”

Supportive housing = “Vulnerable”

Host home = “Vulnerable”

Supervised independent living program = “Vulnerable”

Foster family home = “Vulnerable”

Friend/Family home = Next Question

Rapid rehousing = Next Question

Permanent supportive housing = Next Question

Dorm/Co-op = Next Question

Unsubsidized apartment/house = Next Question

**9. Can the client continue living in their current residence for as long as they like?**

Yes = Next Question

No = “Vulnerable”

**10. Does the client—or whoever is responsible for paying for the client’s housing—spend more than 30% of their income on housing-related expenses?**

Yes = “Vulnerable”

No = Next Question

**11. Does the client have any safety concerns or accessibility concerns with respect to the physical structure of their housing?**

Yes = “Vulnerable”

No = Next Question

**12. Does the client consider their housing to be adequate and meeting their needs?**

Yes = Next Question

No = “Safe”

**13. Is the housing subsidized (i.e., some type of rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, affordable housing, low-income housing, a subsidized co-op, or some other type of government-supported housing)?**

Yes = “Building Capacity”

No = “Empowered”

## **Employment Domain Score Guide**

**1. How old is the client?**

13 years old or younger = N/A

14–17 years old = Go to Question #2

18 years old or older = Go to Question #3

**2. Does the client have a job?**

Yes = Go to Question #4

No = N/A

**3. Does the client have a job?**

Yes = Next Question

No = “In Crisis”

**4. Does the client work full-time (32+ hours a week)?**

*Note: If the client works at least 32 hours a week across multiple jobs, they should be considered to be working full-time.*

Yes = Next Question

No = “Vulnerable”

**5. Does the job pay a living wage?**

*Note: For clients who work at least 32 hours a week across multiple jobs, all of their jobs must pay a living wage to go on to the next question.*

Yes = Next Question

No = “Safe”

**6. Does the job offer health insurance options, paid time off, and some type of retirement plan?**

*Note: For clients who work at least 32 hours a week across multiple jobs, all of their jobs must offer the benefits described above to go on to the next question.*

Yes = Next Question

No = “Safe”

**7. Has the client been employed at their current workplace for at least three months?**

*Note: For clients who work at least 32 hours a week across multiple jobs, they must have been employed at all of their current workplaces for at least three months to go on to the next question.*

Yes = Next Question

No = “Building Capacity”

**8. Can the client remain at their current job for as long as they like?**

*Note: For clients who work at least 32 hours a week across multiple jobs, they must be able to remain at all of their jobs for as long as they like in order to be scored as “Empowered.”*

Yes = “Empowered”

No = “Vulnerable”

**Income Domain Score Guide**

**1. Is the client currently in foster care?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #3

**2. Is the client’s residential placement some type of a group home, residential treatment facility, emergency shelter, or other group living facility?**

Yes = “Safe”

No = Next Question

**3. What is the client’s household income and family size?**

No income = “In Crisis”

Income < 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines = “Vulnerable”

Income ≥ 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines = Next Question

**4. Do the household’s spending habits prevent the client from meeting their basic needs?**

Yes = “Vulnerable”

No = Next Question

**5. Does the household need or receive assistance (such as TANF, SNAP, Medicaid, or housing vouchers) to meet its basic needs?**

Yes = “Safe”

No = Next Question

**6. Does the household have money left over after meeting its basic needs and the ability to save?**

Yes = “Empowered”

No = “Building Capacity”

## **Food Domain Score Guide**

- 1. Is the client in foster care?**  
Yes = Go to Question #5                      No = Next Question
- 2. In the last six months, has the client ever gone without eating because they didn't have enough money for food?**  
Yes = "In Crisis"                      No = Next Question
- 3. In the last six months, has the client's household received SNAP (i.e., food stamps) or relied heavily on some other type of assistance to meet its basic food needs (WIC, food bank, charitable food boxes, family help, etc.)?**  
Yes = Go to Question #7                      No = Next Question
- 4. Can the client's household afford any food it wants?**  
Yes = "Empowered"                      No = "Building Capacity"
- 5. Does the client reside with a foster family?**  
Yes = "Safe"                      No = Next Question
- 6. Does the client meet most of their food needs through their housing placement, such as an emergency shelter, group home, transitional living program, or residential treatment facility?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"                      No = Next Question
- 7. Does the client meet most of their food needs through some type of shelter program, food banks, or soup kitchens?**  
Yes = "In Crisis"                      No = Next Question
- 8. Does the household have food and the means or ability to prepare it?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "In Crisis"
- 9. Does the household receive SNAP (i.e., food stamps) or rely heavily on some other type of assistance to meet its basic food needs (WIC, food bank, charitable food boxes, family help, etc.)?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"                      No = Next Question
- 10. Does the household ever have to skip meals because of financial reasons, or is the household ever unsure of when it will be able to find their next meal?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"                      No = "Safe"

## **Healthcare Coverage Domain Score Guide**

- 1. Is anyone in the household uninsured (that is, without any health insurance)?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #4

- 2. Does anyone in the household have a serious medical need (including pregnancy)?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”                      No = Next Question
- 3. Is it difficult for the uninsured household members to access medical care when needed?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “Safe”
- 4. Does anyone in the household have some type of publicly funded health coverage (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid) with no supplemental private insurance?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = Next Question
- 5. Does the household spend more than 10% of its income on healthcare premiums, deductibles, or medical expenses?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = Next Question
- 6. Does the client think that all household members’ health insurance policies provide adequate coverage?**  
Yes = “Empowered”                      No = “Building Capacity”

## Education Domain Score Guide

- 1. How old is the client?**  
Under 6 years old = N/A      6–18 years old = Next Question      19 years old or older = N/A
- 2. Does the client have a high school diploma or GED?**  
Yes = N/A      No = Next Question
- 3. Is the client currently enrolled in school?**  
Yes = Next Question      No = “In Crisis”
- 4. Does the client have any special education needs or other accommodations that are not being met?**  
Yes = Next Question      No = “Vulnerable”
- 5. What percent of their classes does the client attend?**  
< 50% = “Vulnerable”      50–90% = “Safe”      +90% = Next Question
- 6. Is the client earning Ds or Fs in any classes?**  
Yes = Next Question      No = “Empowered”
- 7. Is the client earning Ds or Fs in all of their classes?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”      No = Next Question
- 8. In how many classes is the client earning Ds or Fs?**  
1–2 = “Building Capacity”      3+ = “Safe”



## **Adult Education Domain Score Guide**

- 1. How old is the client?**  
13 years old or younger = N/A                      14 years old or older = Next Question
- 2. Does the client have a high school diploma or GED?**  
Yes = Go to Question #4                      No = Next Question
- 3. Is the client enrolled in high school, a GED program, or an alternative education program?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “In Crisis”
- 4. Has the client completed additional training or education beyond receiving a high school diploma or GED (and received a degree or vocational certification)?**  
Yes = “Empowered”                      No = Next Question
- 5. Is the client currently getting additional training or education to help their job opportunities or to earn more money?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = “Safe”

## **Language/Literacy Domain Score Guide**

- 1. How old is the client?**  
13 years old or younger = N/A                      14 years old or older = Next Question
- 2. Do the client’s English language skills ever interfere with their ability to manage daily living skills or employment-related tasks?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #14
- 3. Does the client’s ability to read or write ever interfere with their ability to manage daily living or employment tasks?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #11
- 4. Are the client’s English language skills or their reading and writing problems a *serious* barrier to obtaining employment or their ability to manage daily living or employment tasks?**  
Only their English language skills = Next Question  
Only their reading and writing skills = Go to Question #6  
Both their English language skills and their reading and writing skills = Go to Question #7  
Neither their English language skills and their reading and writing skills = Go to Question #9
- 5. Is the client enrolled in an English language program?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “In Crisis”
- 6. Is the client enrolled in any education or training program to improve their reading and writing skills?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “In Crisis”

- 7. Is the client enrolled in an English language program?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = “In Crisis”
- 8. Is the client enrolled in any education or training program to improve their reading and writing skills?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “In Crisis”
- 9. Is the client enrolled in an English language program?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = “Safe”
- 10. Is the client enrolled in any education or training program to improve their reading and writing skills?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = “Safe”
- 11. Are the client’s English language skills a *serious* barrier to obtaining employment or their ability to manage daily living or employment tasks?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #13
- 12. Is the client enrolled in an English language program?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “In Crisis”
- 13. Is the client enrolled in an English language program?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = “Safe”
- 14. Does the client’s ability to read or write ever interfere with their ability to manage daily living or employment tasks?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = “Empowered”
- 15. Are the client’s reading or writing skills a *serious* barrier to obtaining employment or their ability to manage daily living or employment tasks?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #17
- 16. Is the client enrolled in any education or training program to improve their English language skills?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “In Crisis”
- 17. Is the client enrolled in any education or training program to improve their English language skills?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = “Safe”

## **Mobility Domain Score Guide**

- 1. How old is the client?**  
15 years old or younger = N/A                      16 years old or older = Next Question
- 2. Does the client own a car?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #8
- 3. Does the client's car work?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #8
- 4. Is the car consistently available and usable?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #8
- 5. Is the car convenient and meeting the client's needs?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #8
- 6. Does the client have a valid driver's license?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Building Capacity"
- 7. Does the client have valid and adequate car insurance?**  
Yes = Go to Question #11                      No = "Building Capacity"
- 8. Does the client have access to some type of transportation, public or private, other than their own car?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "In Crisis"
- 9. Is the transportation consistently available and usable?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Vulnerable"
- 10. Is the transportation convenient and meeting the client's needs?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Safe"
- 11. Can the client afford their current means of transportation?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Vulnerable"
- 12. Would the client prefer to use a form of transportation that they currently cannot access or afford?**  
Yes = "Building Capacity"                      No = "Empowered"

## **Disabilities & Physical Health Domain Score Guide**

- 1. Does the client have any identified physical, developmental, or learning disabilities?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #9
- 2. Does the client have any physical health issues or concerns (including pregnancy)?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #6
- 3. Are the client's disabilities and current health issues appropriately managed by services or medication?**  
Yes = "Building Capacity"                      No = Next Question
- 4. Have the client's disabilities or current health issues ever interfered with their housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Building Capacity"
- 5. When was the last time the client's disabilities or current health issues interfered with their housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**  
Within the last month = "In Crisis"                      6–12 mos = "Safe"  
< 6 mos = "Vulnerable"                      +1 yr = "Building Capacity"
- 6. Are the client's disabilities appropriately managed by services or medication?**  
Yes = "Building Capacity"                      No = Next Question
- 7. Have the client's disabilities ever interfered with their housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Building Capacity"
- 8. When was the last time the client's disabilities interfered with their housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**  
Within the last month = "In Crisis"                      6–12 mos = "Safe"  
< 6 mos = "Vulnerable"                      +1 yr = "Building Capacity"
- 9. Does the client have any physical health issues or concerns?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Empowered"
- 10. Are the client's physical health issues appropriately managed by services or medication?**  
Yes = "Building Capacity"                      No = Next Question
- 11. Have the client's physical health issues ever interfered with their housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Building Capacity"
- 12. When was the last time the client's physical health issues interfered with their housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**  
Within the last month = "In Crisis"                      6–12 mos = "Safe"  
< 6 mos = "Vulnerable"                      +1 yr = "Building Capacity"

## **Mental Health Domain Score Guide**

- 1. How old is the client?**  
3 years old or younger = N/A                      4 years old or older = Next Question
- 2. Does the client have any mental health symptoms (such as anxiety, depression, or difficulty concentrating) beyond expected reactions to normal life stressors?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = “Empowered”
- 3. Has the client thought about hurting him-/herself or others within the last month?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”                      No = Next Question
- 4. Do the client’s mental health symptoms prevent them from completing day-to-day tasks as well as they would like?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #9
- 5. Does the client think that their symptoms seriously interfere with their day-to-day activities?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = Next Question
- 6. Do the client’s mental health symptoms interfere with their day-to-day activities a little bit or a moderate amount?**  
A little bit = Go to Question #8                      A moderate amount = Next Question
- 7. How frequently do the client’s mental health symptoms occur?**  
4+ times/week = “Vulnerable”                      Once per week = “Safe”  
2– 3 times/week = “Safe”                      Less than once per week = “Safe”
- 8. How frequently do the client’s mental health symptoms occur?**  
4+ times/week = “Vulnerable”                      Once per week = “Building Capacity”  
2– 3 times/week = “Safe”                      Less than once per week = “Building Capacity”
- 9. How frequently do the client’s mental health symptoms occur?**  
4+ times/week = “Vulnerable”                      Once per week = “Building Capacity”  
2– 3 times/week = “Safe”                      Less than once per week = “Empowered”

## **Substance Use Domain Score Guide**

- 1. How old is the client?**  
9 years old or younger = N/A                      10 years old or older = Next Question
- 2. Does the client drink alcohol?**  
Yes = Go to Question #6                      No = Next Question

- 3. Has the client ever used any recreational or prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Empowered"
- 4. When was the last time the client used any recreational or prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them?**  
Within the last 6 months = Next Question                      More than 6 months ago = "Empowered"
- 5. In the past three months, has anyone suggested that the client should be hospitalized or receive in-patient treatment for their drug use?**  
Yes = "In Crisis"                      No = Go to Question #9
- 6. Has the client ever used any recreational or prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #8
- 7. When was the last time the client used any recreational or prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them?**  
Within the last 6 months = Next Question                      More than 6 months ago = Go to Question #9
- 8. In the past three months, has anyone suggested that the client should be hospitalized or receive in-patient treatment for their alcohol/drug use?**  
Yes = "In Crisis"                      No = Next Question
- 9. In the past three months, how many of the following has the client experienced?**
- a. Does the client have any issues or concerns with how much or how often they drink/use?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = 0, Go to Question #9b
- Does the client drink/use more or for longer than they mean to?**  
Yes = 1, Next Question                      No = 0, Next Question
- Has the client unsuccessfully tried to cut down or stop drinking/using?**  
Yes = 1, Next Question                      No = 0, Next Question
- Has the client had to drink/use more in order to get the effect they want or found that drinking/using the same amount has less of an effect?**  
Yes = 1, Next Question                      No = 0, Next Question
- b. Has the client's alcohol/drug use interfered with how they spend their time, caused problems at work or in their relationships, or resulted in any legal or safety issues?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = 0, Go to Question #9c
- Does the client spend a lot of time getting, using alcohol/drugs, or recovering from their use?**  
Yes = 1, Next Question                      No = 0, Next Question

**Has the client's alcohol/drug use prevented them from meeting their responsibilities at work, home, or school?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Does the client's alcohol/drug use cause problems in their relationships?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Has the client's alcohol/drug use ever put them in danger or legal trouble?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Has the client's alcohol/drug use caused them to give up important social, recreational, or work-related activities?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**c. Does the client have physical or psychological symptoms related to their alcohol/drug use (including cravings or withdrawal symptoms)?**

Yes = Next Question

No = 0

**Does the client experience cravings or urges to drink/use?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Does the client have a physical or psychological problem that could be made worse by alcohol/drugs or that was caused by their use?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Has the client experienced any withdrawal symptoms or used in order to avoid withdrawal symptoms?**

Yes = 1

No = 0

**Sum the answers above to determine the client's score:**

If "yes" to 6+ criteria = "In Crisis"

If "yes" to 4–5 criteria = "Vulnerable"

If "yes" to 2–3 criteria = "Safe"

If "yes" to 0–1 criteria = "Building Capacity"

### **Legal Domain Score Guide**

**1. How old is the client?**

9 years old or younger = N/A

10 years old or older = Next Question

**2. Has the client ever had serious legal problems (such as being arrested, or being charged with or convicted of a misdemeanor or felony, or citizenship or documentation issues)?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Empowered"

**3. Is the client currently in jail, prison, or a juvenile detention facility?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

- 4. Does the client have any warrants for their arrest or any unpaid tickets?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”                      No = Next Question
- 5. Does the client have any current charges or a pending trial?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = Next Question
- 6. Is the client currently on probation or parole?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #8
- 7. Is the client meeting the terms of their probation or parole?**  
Yes = “Safe”                      No = “Vulnerable”
- 8. Has the client had any new charges filed or been actively involved with the criminal justice system within the last 12 months?**  
Yes = “Safe”                      No = Next Question
- 9. Did the client successfully complete probation or parole within the last 12 months?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = Next Question
- 10. Is the client’s history of legal issues currently negatively impacting their employment or housing opportunities?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = “Empowered”

## Safety Domain Score Guide

- 1. Has the client witnessed or been the victim of any dangerous behavior in the past week?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”  
No = Next Question
- 2. Does the client feel safe at home, at school or work, and in their neighborhood?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = Go to Question #4
- 3. Does the client feel there is a genuine risk of encountering an unsafe situation or unsafe person in their life?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”  
No = “Empowered”
- 4. Does the client currently have anyone in their life that is suicidal, physically or sexually aggressive, controlling, or otherwise makes the client feel unsafe?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = “Safe”
- 5. Does the client currently have a protective order against this individual?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”  
No = Next Question
- 6. Does the client have somewhere else they can stay or go if they feel threatened or unsafe?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”  
No = “In Crisis”



## **Credit Domain Score Guide**

- 1. How old is the client?**  
17 years old or younger = Next Question      18 years old or older = Go to Question #3
- 2. Has the client ever filed taxes with the IRS or had a credit card, student loan, lease, mortgage, or some other loan issued in their name?**  
Yes = Go to Question #4      No = N/A
- 3. Has the client ever had a credit card, student loan, lease, mortgage, or some other loan issued in their name?**  
Yes = Next Question      No = “Safe”
- 4. Has the client ever been evicted, defaulted on a loan, or experienced any bankruptcies, foreclosures, or repossessions?**  
Yes = Next Question      No = Go to Question #6
- 5. When did this occur?**  
Within the last 7 years = “In Crisis”      More than 7 years ago = Next Question
- 6. Is the client currently receiving calls from creditors or having their wages garnished?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”      No = Next Question
- 7. Does the client spend 40% or more of their income on housing costs, credit card debt, student loans, or car payments?**  
Yes = Next Question      No = Go to Question #9
- 8. Does the client have a poor credit score (a score less than 600)?**  
Yes = “Safe”      No = “Building Capacity”
- 9. Does the client have a poor credit score (a score less than 600)?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”      No = “Empowered”

## **Life Skills Domain Score Guide**

- 1. How old is the client?**  
15 years old or younger = N/A      16 years old or older = Next Question
- 2. How many of the following does the client have trouble with?**
  - a. Does the client ever have trouble figuring out how to find information online?**  
Yes = 1, Next Question      No = 0, Next Question
  - b. Does the client ever have a hard time scheduling appointments?**  
Yes = 1, Next Question      No = 0, Next Question

- c. **Does the client ever have a hard time figuring out which tasks are more important than others or the order in which tasks should be completed?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

- d. **Does the client ever have trouble arriving places on time?**

Yes = Next Question

No = 0, Go to Question #2e

**Does the client let the appropriate people know that they will be running late?**

Yes = 0, Next Question

No = 1, Next Question

- e. **Does the client ever have trouble completing tasks on time?**

Yes = Next Question

No = 0

**Does the client let the appropriate people know that they are behind schedule?**

Yes = 0

No = 1

**Sum the answers above to determine the client's score:**

If "yes" to all 5 criteria = "In Crisis"

If "yes" to 1 criterion = "Building Capacity"

If "yes" to 3–4 criteria = "Vulnerable"

If "yes" to 0 criteria = "Empowered"

If "yes" to 2 criteria = "Safe"

### **Community Involvement Score Guide**

1. **How old is the client?**

5 years old or younger = N/A

6 years old or older = Next Question

2. **Is the client involved in any activities in the community, such as a religious group, a support group, a volunteer organization, political activities, or organized sports?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #4

3. **Does the client have barriers that limit their involvement in the community (e.g., transportation or childcare issues)?**

Yes = "Building Capacity"

No = "Empowered"

4. **Is the client dealing with an immediate crisis that interferes with their ability to engage in normal day-to-day activities?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

5. ***USER OBSERVATION ONLY – DO NOT ASK CLIENT: Does the client lack social skills, to the point that they have difficulty engaging in casual conversation or behave seriously inappropriately in social situations?***

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

6. **Does the client feel disconnected or socially isolated?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

- Yes = Next Question                      No = "Vulnerable"

- Yes = Next Question                      No = “Safe”

- Yes = "Safe"                                      No = Next Question

- Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “Safe”

## **Network Support Domain Score Guide**

*For the following questions, the client should consider all members of their extended family who did not serve in a caregiving role (e.g., aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents), friends, coworkers, or other members of their social circles (with the exception of counselors or staff of social service programs designed to meet clients' basic needs).*

- Yes = Go to Question #3                      No = Next Question

- Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “In Crisis”

- Yes = "Vulnerable"                      No = Next Question

- a. Emotional support (e.g., acceptance, encouragement, or empathy)?**

- Yes = 1, Next Question      No = 0, Next Question

- Yes = 1, Next Question                      No = 0, Next Question

- Yes = 1, Next Question                      No = 0, Next Question

**Sum the answers above to determine the client's score:**

If “yes” to all 3 criteria = Next Question

If “yes” to 1–2 criteria = “Safe”

If “yes” to 0 criteria = Go to Question #2

- Yes = “Empowered”                      No = “Building Capacity”

## **Family of Origin Domain Score Guide**

- 1. Is the client in contact with any members of their family of origin (that is, their biological parents, biological siblings, stepparents, or stepsiblings)?**

Yes = Go to Question #3

No = Next Question

- 2. Does the client want to be in contact with any members of their family of origin?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = N/A

*For the following questions, the client should consider all members of their family of origin with whom they are currently in contact or with whom they would like to be in contact.*

- 3. Is any abuse or neglect currently taking place between the client and members of their family of origin?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

- 4. Does the client consider their relationship with their family of origin to be generally characterized by conflict, hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

- 5. Do the client and all relevant family members make an effort to reduce the amount of hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity that exists in their relationship?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Vulnerable"

- 6. Are the client and all relevant family members generally supportive of one another?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

- 7. Is communication between the client and all relevant family members consistently open?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Building Capacity"

- 8. Does the client consider their relationship with these members of their family of origin to be stable?**

Yes = "Empowered"

No = "Building Capacity"

## **Caregivers Domain Score Guide**

- 1. Was the client raised by anyone other than a member of their biological nuclear family or a stepparent?**

Yes = Next Question

No = N/A

- 2. Did the client ever have a foster parent, adoptive parent, grandparent, or other family member ever serve as their caregiver?**

Yes = Go to Question #4

No = Next Question

- 3. Were the client's only other caregivers staff members at a group home, shelter, residential treatment center, juvenile detention center, a hospital, or some other facility?**

Yes = N/A

No = Next Question

**4. Is the client in contact with any of these other caregivers (or their caregivers' family members)?**

Yes = Go to Question #6

No = Next Question

**5. Does the client want to be in contact with any of these other caregivers (or their caregivers' family members)?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = N/A

*For the following questions, the client should consider all non-staff caregivers (and their caregivers' family members) with whom they are currently in contact or with whom they would like to be in contact.*

**6. Is any abuse or neglect currently taking place between the client and their caregivers (or their caregivers' family members)?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

**7. Does the client consider their relationship with their caregivers (and their caregivers' families) to be generally characterized by conflict, hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**8. Do the client and their caregivers (and their caregivers' family members) make an effort to reduce the amount of hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity that exists in their relationship?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Vulnerable"

**9. Are the client and their caregivers (and their caregivers' family members) generally supportive of one another?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

**10. Is communication between the client and their caregivers (and their caregivers' family members) consistently open?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Building Capacity"

**11. Does the client consider their relationship with their caregivers (and their caregivers' family members) to be stable?**

Yes = "Empowered"

No = "Building Capacity"

### **Intimate Relationships Domain Score Guide**

**1. Is the client legally married?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #5

**2. Is the client separated from their spouse?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #4

**3. Is the client in contact with their spouse?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "In Crisis"

- 4. Is the client's relationship with their spouse characterized by abuse?**  
Yes = "In Crisis"                      No = Go to Question #7
- 5. Does the client have an intimate partner?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = N/A
- 6. Is the client's relationship with their partner characterized by abuse?**  
Yes = "In Crisis"                      No = Next Question
- 7. Does the client have any other intimate partners?**  
Yes = Go to Question #13                      No = Next Question
- 8. Does the client consider their relationship with their partner to be generally characterized by conflict, hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"                      No = Next Question
- 9. Do the client and their partner make an effort to reduce the amount of hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity that exists in their relationship?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Vulnerable"
- 10. Are the client and their partner generally supportive of one another?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Safe"
- 11. Is communication between the client and their partner consistently open?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Building Capacity"
- 12. Does the client consider their relationship with their partner to be stable?**  
Yes = "Empowered"                      No = "Building Capacity"

*For the following questions, the client should take into account their relationship with all of their current intimate partners with whom they are in contact.*

- 13. Does the client consider their relationship with their partners to be generally characterized by conflict, hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"                      No = Next Question
- 14. Do the client and their partners make an effort to reduce the amount of hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity that exists in their relationship?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Vulnerable"
- 15. Are the client and their partners generally supportive of one another?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Safe"
- 16. Is communication between the client and their partners consistently open?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Building Capacity"
- 17. Does the client consider their relationship with their partners to be stable?**  
Yes = "Empowered"                      No = "Building Capacity"

## Parent-Child Relations Domain Score Guide

- 1. Does the client have any children, or has the client ever served as a primary caregiver for any children?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = N/A
- 2. Is the client in contact with (any of) their child(ren)?**  
Yes = Go to Question #4                  No = Next Question
- 3. Does the client want to be in contact with (any of) their child(ren)?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”                         No = N/A
- 4. Is the client’s relationship with (any of) their child(ren) characterized by abuse or neglect?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”                         No = Next Question
- 5. Are there serious safety concerns in the client’s relationship with (any of) their child(ren)?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”                         No = Next Question

*For the following questions, the client should take into account their relationship with all of their children with whom they are in contact or with whom they would like to be in contact.*

- 6. Does the client make an effort to reduce the amount of hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity that exists in their relationship with their child(ren)?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = “Vulnerable”
- 7. Does the client make some effort to apply age-appropriate parenting techniques?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = “Vulnerable”
- 8. Does the client consistently use age-appropriate parenting techniques?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = “Safe”
- 9. Does the client generally support their child(ren)’s efforts?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = “Safe”
- 10. Is communication between the client and their child(ren) consistently open?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = “Building Capacity”
- 11. Do the client’s parenting skills need to be strengthened, improved, or diversified?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = Next Question
- 12. Is the client’s relationship with their child(ren) stable?**  
Yes = “Empowered”                      No = “Building Capacity”

## **Childcare Domain Score Guide**

**1. Does the client have any children or serve as the primary caregiver for any children?**

Yes = Next Question

No = N/A

**2. Does the client have any children who are 10 years old or younger?**

Yes = Go to Question #4

No = Next Question

**3. Does the client have any children who are under age 18 and have special needs?**

Yes = Next Question

No = N/A

*For the following questions, the client should base their responses on the childcare arrangements about which they are most concerned (across the children they care for who are 10 years old or younger, or any special needs children they care for who are under age 18).*

**4. Does the client have childcare arrangements for all eligible children (this can include childcare provided by family members, neighbors, or friends)?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "In Crisis"

**5. Does the client spend more than 10% of their income on childcare costs?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**6. Do any of the client's childcare providers unexpectedly cancel, fail to show up, or are otherwise inconsistently available?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**7. Does the client have any safety concerns with any of their childcare providers?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**8. Does the client feel like all of their childcare providers provide adequate supervision?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Vulnerable"

**9. Is childcare readily available to the client when needed?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

**10. Does the client receive some type of financial assistance in paying for childcare, such as childcare vouchers?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #12

**11. Is the financial assistance that the client receives some type of employer-supported childcare?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"



- 12. Can the client select from among high-quality childcare providers of their choice? In other words, is more than one desirable childcare option available to the client?**

Yes = “Empowered”

No = “Building Capacity”

### **Education of Client’s Children Domain Score Guide**

- 1. Does the client have any children or serve as the primary caregiver for any children?**

Yes = Next Question

No = N/A

- 2. Are any of the client’s children school-aged (between the ages of 6–18)?**

Yes = Next Question

No = N/A

- 3. Are all of the client’s school-aged children enrolled in school?**

Yes = Next Question

No = “In Crisis”

- 4. Does the client have any children whose special education needs or other accommodations are not currently being met?**

Yes = “Vulnerable”

No = Next Question

- 5. Are all of the client’s school-aged children attending classes more than 90% of the time?**

Yes = Go to Question #7

No = Next Question

- 6. Are any of the client’s school-aged children attending classes less than 50% of the time?**

Yes = “Vulnerable”

No = “Safe”

- 7. Are any of the client’s children earning Ds or Fs in any of their classes?**

Yes = Next Question

No = “Empowered”

- 8. Are any of the client’s children earning Ds or Fs in all of their classes?**

Yes = “Vulnerable”

No = Next Question

- 9. Thinking about their child who is struggling the most in school, in how many classes is the client’s child earning Ds or Fs?**

1–2 = “Building Capacity”

3+ = “Safe”

## Appendix B: Score Guide for the LifeWorks Self-Sufficiency Matrix (Referring to Clients in the First Person)

Note: Some questions may not need to be asked of the client directly when completing the LW-SSM, if the required information can be drawn from the client's file, intake information, the user's observation, or the user's knowledge of the client's situation (e.g., if the user definitively knows the client is in foster care, the client does not need to be directly asked about their foster care status).

### Housing Domain Score Guide

**1. Are you currently in jail, prison, or a juvenile detention facility?**

Yes = N/A

No = Next question

**2. Do you currently have a place to live?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "In Crisis"

**3. Are you at immediate risk of losing your housing?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

**4. Do you currently live in a house or an apartment?**

Yes = Go to Question #7

No = Next Question

**5. Where do you currently live?**

Residential treatment center = "In Crisis"

Emergency shelter = "In Crisis"

Safe haven = "In Crisis"

Place not meant for habitation = "In Crisis"

Transitional living program = "Vulnerable"

Group home = "Vulnerable"

Dorm/Co-op = Go to Question #9

Boarding home = "Vulnerable"

Residential project/halfway house = "Vulnerable"

Supervised independent living program = "Vulnerable"

Supportive housing = "Vulnerable"

Medical or psychiatric hospital = "Vulnerable"

Hotel/motel = Next Question

**6. Are you paying for the hotel/motel using your own money (or a friend's or family member's money), or do you receive assistance from a social service program?**

Paid for by a social service agency = "In Crisis"

Not paid for by a social service agency = "Vulnerable"

**7. Did you get your housing through a social service program, Child Protective Services, or some other organization?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #9

**8. What type of housing do you currently have?**

Group home = “Vulnerable”	Foster family home = “Vulnerable”
Transitional living program = “Vulnerable”	Friend/Family home = Next Question
Residential project/halfway house = “Vulnerable”	Rapid rehousing = Next Question
Boarding home = “Vulnerable”	Permanent supportive housing = Next Question
Supportive housing = “Vulnerable”	Dorm/Co-op = Next Question
Host home = “Vulnerable”	Unsubsidized apartment/house = Next Question
Supervised independent living program = “Vulnerable”	

**9. Can you continue living in your current residence for as long as you like?**

Yes = Next Question	No = “Vulnerable”
---------------------	-------------------

**10. Do you spend more than 30% of your income on housing-related expenses (or does whoever is responsible for paying for your housing spend more than 30% of their income on housing-related expenses)?**

Yes = “Vulnerable”	No = Next Question
--------------------	--------------------

**11. Do you have any safety concerns or accessibility concerns with respect to the physical structure of your housing?**

Yes = “Vulnerable”	No = Next Question
--------------------	--------------------

**12. Do you consider your housing to be adequate and meeting your needs?**

Yes = Next Question	No = “Safe”
---------------------	-------------

**13. Is your housing subsidized—that is, do you live in some type of rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, affordable housing, low-income housing, a subsidized co-ops, or some other type of government-supported housing?**

Yes = “Building Capacity”	No = “Empowered”
---------------------------	------------------

**Employment Domain Score Guide**

**1. How old are you?**

13 years old or younger = N/A  
14–17 years old = Go to Question #2  
18 years old or older = Go to Question #3

**2. Do you have a job?**

Yes = Go to Question #4	No = N/A
-------------------------	----------

**3. Do you have a job?**

Yes = Next Question	No = “In Crisis”
---------------------	------------------

**4. Do you work full-time (32+ hours a week)?**

*Note: If you work at least 32 hours a week across multiple jobs, you are considered to be working full-time.*

Yes = Next Question	No = “Vulnerable”
---------------------	-------------------

**5. Does your job pay a living wage?**

*Note: If you work at least 32 hours a week across multiple jobs, all of your jobs must pay a living wage to go on to the next question.*

Yes = Next Question

No = “Safe”

**6. Does your job offer health insurance options, paid time off, and some type of retirement plan?**

*Note: If you work at least 32 hours a week across multiple jobs, all of your jobs must offer the benefits described above to go on to the next question.*

Yes = Next Question

No = “Safe”

**7. Have you been employed at your current workplace for at least three months?**

*Note: If you work at least 32 hours a week across multiple jobs, you must have been employed at all of your current workplaces for at least three months to go on to the next question.*

Yes = Next Question

No = “Building Capacity”

**8. Can you remain at your current job for as long as you like?**

*Note: If you work at least 32 hours a week across multiple jobs, you must be able to remain at all of your jobs for as long as you like in order to be scored as “Empowered.”*

Yes = “Empowered”

No = “Vulnerable”

### **Income Domain Score Guide**

**1. Are you currently in foster care?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #3

**2. Is your residential placement some type of a group home, residential treatment facility, emergency shelter, or other group living facility?**

Yes = “Safe”

No = Next Question

**3. What is your household income and family size?**

No income = “In Crisis”

Income < 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines = “Vulnerable”

Income ≥ 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines = Next Question

**4. Do your household’s spending habits prevent you from meeting your basic needs?**

Yes = “Vulnerable”

No = Next Question

**5. Does your household need or receive assistance (such as TANF, SNAP, Medicaid, or housing vouchers) to meet its basic needs?**

Yes = “Safe”

No = Next Question

**6. Does your household have the ability to save or any money left over after meeting its basic needs?**

Yes = “Empowered”

No = “Building Capacity”

## **Food Domain Score Guide**

**1. Are you currently in foster care?**

Yes = Go to Question #5

No = Next Question

**2. In the last six months, have you ever gone without eating because you didn't have enough money for food?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

**3. In the last six months, has your household received SNAP (i.e., food stamps) or relied heavily on some other type of assistance to meet its basic food needs (WIC, food bank, charitable food boxes, family help, etc.)?**

Yes = Go to Question #7

No = Next Question

**4. Can your household afford any food it wants?**

Yes = "Empowered"

No = "Building Capacity"

**5. Do you reside with a foster family?**

Yes = "Safe"

No = Next Question

**6. Do you meet most of your food needs through your housing placement, such as a group home, transitional living program, residential treatment facility, or emergency shelter?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**7. Do you meet most of your food needs through some type of shelter program, food banks, or soup kitchens?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

**8. Does your household have food and the means or ability to prepare it?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "In Crisis"

**9. Does your household receive SNAP (i.e., food stamps) or rely heavily on some other type of assistance to meet its basic food needs (WIC, food bank, charitable food boxes, family help, etc.)?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**10. Does your household ever have to skip meals because of financial reasons, or are you or your household ever unsure of when you'll be able to find your next meal?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = "Safe"

## **Healthcare Coverage Domain Score Guide**

**1. Is anyone in your household uninsured (that is, without any health insurance)?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #4

**2. Does anyone in your household have a serious medical need (including pregnancy)?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

- 3. Is it difficult for the uninsured members of your household to access medical care when needed?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “Safe”
- 4. Does anyone in your household have some type of publicly funded health coverage (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid) with no supplemental private insurance?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = Next Question
- 5. Does your household spend more than 10% of its income on healthcare premiums, deductibles, or medical expenses?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = Next Question
- 6. Do you think that all household members’ health insurance policies provide adequate coverage?**  
Yes = “Empowered”                      No = “Building Capacity”

## Education Domain Score Guide

- 1. How old are you?**  
Under 6 years old = N/A                      6–18 years old = Next Question                      19 years old or older = N/A
- 2. Do you have a high school diploma or GED?**  
Yes = N/A    No = Next Question
- 3. Are you currently enrolled in school?**  
Yes = Next Question    No = “In Crisis”
- 4. Do you have any special education needs or other accommodations that are not being met?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”    No = Next Question
- 5. How often do you attend classes?**  
< 50% of the time = “Vulnerable”                      50–90% of the time = “Safe”                      +90% of the time = Next Question
- 6. Are you earning Ds or Fs in any classes?**  
Yes = Next Question    No = “Empowered”
- 7. Are you earning Ds or Fs in all of your classes?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”    No = Next Question
- 8. In how many classes are you earning Ds or Fs?**  
1–2 = “Building Capacity”    3+ = “Safe”

## **Adult Education Domain Score Guide**

- 1. How old are you?**  
13 years old or younger = N/A                      14 years old or older = Next Question
- 2. Do you have a high school diploma or GED?**  
Yes = Go to Question #4                      No = Next Question
- 3. Are you enrolled in high school, a GED program, or an alternative education program?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “In Crisis”
- 4. Have you completed additional training or education beyond receiving a high school diploma or GED (and received a degree or vocational certification)?**  
Yes = “Empowered”                      No = Next Question
- 5. Are you currently getting additional training or education to help your job opportunities or to earn more money?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = “Safe”

## **Language/Literacy Domain Score Guide**

- 1. How old are you?**  
13 years old or younger = N/A                      14 years old or older = Next Question
- 2. Do your English language skills ever interfere with your ability to manage daily living skills or employment-related tasks?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #14
- 3. Does your ability to read or write ever interfere with your ability to manage daily living or employment tasks?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #11
- 4. Are your English language skills or your reading and writing problems a *serious* barrier to obtaining employment or your ability to manage daily living or employment tasks?**  
Only their English language skills = Next Question  
Only their reading and writing skills = Go to Question #6  
Both their English language skills and their reading and writing skills = Go to Question #7  
Neither their English language skills and their reading and writing skills = Go to Question #9
- 5. Are you enrolled in an English language program?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “In Crisis”
- 6. Are you enrolled in any education or training program to improve your reading and writing skills?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “In Crisis”

7. **Are you enrolled in an English language program?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = “In Crisis”
8. **Are you enrolled in any education or training program to improve your reading and writing skills?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “In Crisis”
9. **Are you enrolled in an English language program?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = “Safe”
10. **Are you enrolled in any education or training program to improve your reading and writing skills?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = “Safe”
11. **Are your English language skills a *serious* barrier to obtaining employment or your ability to manage daily living or employment tasks?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #13
12. **Are you enrolled in an English language program?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “In Crisis”
13. **Are you enrolled in an English language program?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = “Safe”
14. **Does your ability to read or write ever interfere with your ability to manage daily living or employment tasks?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = “Empowered”
15. **Are your reading or writing skills a *serious* barrier to obtaining employment or your ability to manage daily living or employment tasks?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #17
16. **Are you enrolled in any education or training program to improve your English language skills?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = “In Crisis”
17. **Are you enrolled in any education or training program to improve your English language skills?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                      No = “Safe”



## **Mobility Domain Score Guide**

- 1. How old are you?**  
15 years old or younger = N/A                      16 years old or older = Next Question
- 2. Do you own a car?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #8
- 3. Does your car work?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #8
- 4. Is your car consistently available and usable?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #8
- 5. Is your car convenient and meeting your needs?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #8
- 6. Do you have a valid driver's license?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Building Capacity"
- 7. Do you have valid and adequate car insurance?**  
Yes = Go to Question #11                      No = "Building Capacity"
- 8. Do you have access to some type of transportation, public or private, other than your own car?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "In Crisis"
- 9. Is the transportation consistently available and usable?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Vulnerable"
- 10. Is the transportation convenient and meeting your needs?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Safe"
- 11. Can you afford your current means of transportation?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Vulnerable"
- 12. Would you prefer to use a form of transportation that you currently cannot access or afford?**  
Yes = "Building Capacity"                      No = "Empowered"

## **Disabilities & Physical Health Domain Score Guide**

- 1. Do you have any identified physical, developmental, or learning disabilities?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #9
- 2. Do you have any physical health issues or concerns (including pregnancy)?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #6
- 3. Are your disabilities and current health issues appropriately managed by services or medication?**  
Yes = "Building Capacity"                      No = Next Question
- 4. Have your disabilities or current health issues ever interfered with your housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Building Capacity"
- 5. When was the last time your disabilities or current health issues interfered with your housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**  
Within the last month = "In Crisis"                      6–12 mos = "Safe"  
< 6 mos = "Vulnerable"                      +1 yr = "Building Capacity"
- 6. Are your disabilities appropriately managed by services or medication?**  
Yes = "Building Capacity"                      No = Next Question
- 7. Have your disabilities ever interfered with your housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Building Capacity"
- 8. When was the last time your disabilities interfered with your housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**  
Within the last month = "In Crisis"                      6–12 mos = "Safe"  
< 6 mos = "Vulnerable"                      +1 yr = "Building Capacity"
- 9. Do you have any physical health issues or concerns?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Empowered"
- 10. Are your physical health issues appropriately managed by services or medication?**  
Yes = "Building Capacity"                      No = Next Question
- 11. Have your physical health issues ever interfered with your housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Building Capacity"
- 12. When was the last time your physical health issues interfered with your housing arrangements, employment, or social interactions?**  
Within the last month = "In Crisis"                      6–12 mos = "Safe"  
< 6 mos = "Vulnerable"                      +1 yr = "Building Capacity"

## **Mental Health Domain Score Guide**

- 1. How old are you?**  
3 years old or younger = N/A                      4 years old or older = Next Question
- 2. Do you have any mental health symptoms (such as anxiety, depression, or difficulty concentrating) beyond expected reactions to normal life stressors?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = “Empowered”
- 3. Have you thought about hurting yourself or others within the last month?**  
Yes = “In Crisis”                      No = Next Question
- 4. Do your mental health symptoms prevent you from completing day-to-day tasks as well as you would like?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #9
- 5. Do you think that your symptoms seriously interfere with your day-to-day activities?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                      No = Next Question
- 6. Do your mental health symptoms interfere with your day-to-day activities a little bit or a moderate amount?**  
A little bit = Go to Question #8                      A moderate amount = Next Question
- 7. How frequently do you have mental health symptoms?**  
4+ times/week = “Vulnerable”                      Once per week = “Safe”  
2–3 times/week = “Safe”                      Less than once per week = “Safe”
- 8. How frequently do you have mental health symptoms?**  
4+ times/week = “Vulnerable”                      Once per week = “Building Capacity”  
2–3 times/week = “Safe”                      Less than once per week = “Building Capacity”
- 9. How frequently do you have mental health symptoms?**  
4+ times/week = “Vulnerable”                      Once per week = “Building Capacity”  
2–3 times/week = “Safe”                      Less than once per week = “Empowered”

## **Substance Use Domain Score Guide**

- 1. How old are you?**  
9 years old or younger = N/A                      10 years old or older = Next Question
- 2. Do you drink alcohol?**  
Yes = Go to Question #6                      No = Next Question
- 3. Have you ever used any recreational or prescription drugs that were not prescribed to you?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = “Empowered”

4. **When was the last time that you used any recreational or prescription drugs that were not prescribed to you?**  
 Within the last 6 months = Next Question      More than 6 months ago = “Empowered”
5. **In the past three months, has anyone suggested that you should be hospitalized or receive in-patient treatment for your drug use?**  
 Yes = “In Crisis”      No = Go to Question #9
6. **Have you ever used any recreational or prescription drugs that were not prescribed to you?**  
 Yes = Next Question      No = Go to Question #8
7. **When was the last time that you used any recreational or prescription drugs that were not prescribed to you?**  
 Within the last 6 months = Next Question      More than 6 months ago = Go to Question #9
8. **In the past three months, has anyone suggested that you should be hospitalized or receive in-patient treatment for your alcohol/drug use?**  
 Yes = “In Crisis”      No = Next Question
9. **In the past three months, how many of the following have you experienced?**
  - a. **Have you had any issues or concerns with how much or how often you drink/use?**  
 Yes = Next Question      No = 0, Go to Question #9b  
  
**Do you drink/use more or for longer than you mean to?**  
 Yes = 1, Next Question      No = 0, Next Question  
  
**Have you unsuccessfully tried to cut down or stop drinking/using?**  
 Yes = 1, Next Question      No = 0, Next Question  
  
**Have you had to drink/use more in order to get the effect you want or found that drinking/using the same amount has less of an effect?**  
 Yes = 1, Next Question      No = 0, Next Question
  - b. **Has your alcohol/drug use interfered with how you spend your time, caused problems at work or in your relationships, or resulted in any legal or safety issues?**  
 Yes = Next Question      No = 0, Go to Question #9c  
**Do you spend a lot of time getting, using alcohol/drugs, or recovering from your use?**  
 Yes = 1, Next Question      No = 0, Next Question  
  
**Has your alcohol/drug use prevented you from meeting your responsibilities at work, home, or school?**  
 Yes = 1, Next Question      No = 0, Next Question  
  
**Does your alcohol/drug use cause problems in your relationships?**  
 Yes = 1, Next Question      No = 0, Next Question

**Has your alcohol/drug use ever put you in danger or legal trouble?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Has your alcohol/drug use caused you to give up important social, recreational, or work-related activities?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**c. Do you have physical or psychological symptoms related to your alcohol/drug use (including cravings or withdrawal symptoms)?**

Yes = Next Question

No = 0

**Do you experience cravings or urges to drink/use?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Do you have a physical or psychological problem that could be made worse by alcohol/drugs or that was caused by their use?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**Have you experienced any withdrawal symptoms or used in order to avoid withdrawal symptoms?**

Yes = 1

No = 0

**Sum the answers above to determine the client's score:**

If "yes" to 6+ criteria = "In Crisis"

If "yes" to 4–5 criteria = "Vulnerable"

If "yes" to 2–3 criteria = "Safe"

If "yes" to 0–1 criteria = "Building Capacity"

### **Legal Domain Score Guide**

**1. How old are you?**

9 years old or younger = N/A

10 years old or older = Next Question

**2. Have you ever had serious legal problems (such as being arrested, or being charged with or convicted of a misdemeanor or felony, or citizenship or documentation issues)?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Empowered"

**3. Are you currently in jail, prison, or a juvenile detention facility?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

**4. Do you have any warrants for your arrest or any unpaid tickets?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

**5. Do you have any current charges or a pending trial?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**6. Are you currently on probation or parole?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #8

7. **Are you meeting the terms of your probation or parole?**  
Yes = “Safe” No = “Vulnerable”
8. **Have you had any new charges filed or been actively involved with the criminal justice system within the last 12 months?**  
Yes = “Safe” No = Next Question
9. **Did you successfully complete probation or parole within the last 12 months?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity” No = Next Question
10. **Is your history of legal issues currently negatively impacting your employment or housing opportunities?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity” No = “Empowered”

### **Safety Domain Score Guide**

1. **Have you witnessed or been the victim of any dangerous behavior in the past week?**  
Yes = “In Crisis” No = Next Question
2. **Do you feel safe at home, at school or work, and in your neighborhood?**  
Yes = Next Question No = Go to Question #4
3. **Do you feel there is a genuine risk of encountering an unsafe situation or unsafe person in your life?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity” No = “Empowered”
4. **Do you have anyone that is currently in your life that is suicidal, physically or sexually aggressive, controlling, or otherwise makes you feel unsafe?**  
Yes = Next Question No = “Safe”
5. **Do you currently have a protective order against this individual?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable” No = Next Question
6. **Do you have somewhere else you can stay or go if you feel threatened or unsafe?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable” No = “In Crisis”

### **Credit Domain Score Guide**

1. **How old are you?**  
17 years old or younger = Next Question 18 years old or older = Go to Question #3
2. **Have you ever filed taxes with the IRS or had a credit card, student loan, lease, mortgage, or some other loan issued in your name?**  
Yes = Go to Question #4 No = N/A

- 3. Have you ever had a credit card, student loan, lease, mortgage, or some other loan issued in your name?**  
Yes = Next Question                                      No = “Safe”
- 4. Have you ever been evicted, defaulted on a loan, or experienced any bankruptcies, foreclosures, or repossessions?**  
Yes = Next Question                                      No = Go to Question #6
- 5. When did this occur?**  
Within the last 7 years = “In Crisis”                      More than 7 years ago = Next Question
- 6. Are you currently receiving calls from creditors or having your wages garnished?**  
Yes = “Vulnerable”                                      No = Next Question
- 7. Do you spend 40% or more of your income on housing costs, credit card debt, student loans, or car payments?**  
Yes = Next Question                                      No = Go to Question #9
- 8. Do you have a poor credit score (a score less than 600)?**  
Yes = “Safe”                                      No = “Building Capacity”
- 9. Do you have a poor credit score (a score less than 600)?**  
Yes = “Building Capacity”                              No = “Empowered”

## **Life Skills Domain Score Guide**

- 1. How old are you?**  
15 years old or younger = N/A  
16 years old or older = Next Question
- 2. How many of the following do you have trouble with?**
  - a. Do you ever have trouble figuring out how to find information online?**  
Yes = 1, Next Question  
No = 0, Next Question
  - b. Do you ever have a hard time scheduling appointments?**  
Yes = 1, Next Question  
No = 0, Next Question
  - c. Do you ever have a hard time figuring out which tasks are more important than others or the order in which tasks should be completed?**  
Yes = 1, Next Question  
No = 0, Next Question
  - d. Do you ever have trouble arriving places on time?**  
Yes = Next Question  
No = 0, Go to Question #2e

**Do you let the appropriate people know that you will be running late?**  
Yes = 0, Next Question  
No = 1, Next Question

**e. Do you ever have trouble completing tasks on time?**

Yes = Next Question

No = 0

**Do you let the appropriate people know that you are behind schedule?**

Yes = 0

No = 1

**Sum the answers above to determine the client's score:**

If "yes" to all 5 criteria = "In Crisis"

If "yes" to 1 criterion = "Building Capacity"

If "yes" to 3–4 criteria = "Vulnerable"

If "yes" to 0 criteria = "Empowered"

If "yes" to 2 criteria = "Safe"

**Community Involvement Score Guide**

**1. How old are you?**

5 years old or younger = N/A

6 years old or older = Next Question

**2. Are you involved in any activities in the community, such as a religious group, a support group, a volunteer organization, political activities, or organized sports?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #4

**3. Do you have barriers that limit your involvement in the community (e.g., transportation or childcare issues)?**

Yes = "Building Capacity"

No = "Empowered"

**4. Are you dealing with an immediate crisis that interferes with your ability to engage in normal day-to-day activities?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

**5. *USER OBSERVATION ONLY – DO NOT ASK CLIENT: Does the client lack social skills, to the point that they have difficulty engaging in casual conversation or behave seriously inappropriately in social situations?***

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**6. Do you feel disconnected or socially isolated?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**7. Do you want to become involved in the community in some way?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Vulnerable"

**8. Do you know how to find ways to become involved in the community?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

**9. Do you have barriers that are preventing you from becoming involved in the community, such as a lack of transportation or childcare?**

Yes = "Safe"

No = Next Question



**10. Are you aware of opportunities to become involved in the community but haven't been motivated to follow through?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = "Safe"

**Network Support Domain Score Guide**

*For the following questions, you should consider all members of your extended family who did not serve in a caregiving role (e.g., aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents), friends, coworkers, or other members of your social circles (with the exception of counselors or staff of social service programs designed to meet your basic needs).*

**1. Do you receive any type of support (emotional, financial, or material) from your extended family, friends, or other members of your social circle?**

Yes = Go to Question #3

No = Next Question

**2. Do your extended family or friends want to provide support?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = "In Crisis"

**3. Do your extended family or friends have a negative effect on you (e.g., they are demanding, critical, or a bad influence)?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**4. When or if necessary, would you be able to rely on someone among your extended family/friends to provide:**

**a. Emotional support (e.g., acceptance, encouragement, or empathy)?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**b. Financial support?**

Yes = 1, Next Question

No = 0, Next Question

**c. Material support, such as a place to stay, food, or clothing?**

Yes = 1

No = 0

**Sum the answers above to determine the client's score:**

If "yes" to all 3 criteria = Next Question

If "yes" to 1–2 criteria = "Safe"

If "yes" to 0 criteria = Go to Question #2

**5. Is your support network growing?**

Yes = "Empowered"

No = "Building Capacity"

## **Family of Origin Domain Score Guide**

- 1. Are you in contact with any members of your family of origin (that is, your biological parents, biological siblings, stepparents, or stepsiblings)?**

Yes = Go to Question #3

No = Next Question

- 2. Do you want to be in contact with any members of your family of origin?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = N/A

*For the following questions, you should consider all members of your family of origin with whom you are currently in contact or with whom you would like to be in contact.*

- 3. Is any abuse or neglect currently taking place between you and members of your family of origin?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

- 4. Do you consider your relationship with your family of origin to be generally characterized by conflict, hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

- 5. Do you and all relevant family members make an effort to reduce the amount of hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity that exists in your relationship?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Vulnerable"

- 6. Are you and all relevant family members generally supportive of one another?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

- 7. Is communication between you and all relevant family members consistently open?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Building Capacity"

- 8. Do you consider your relationship with these members of your family of origin to be stable?**

Yes = "Empowered"

No = "Building Capacity"

## **Caregivers Domain Score Guide**

- 1. Were you raised by anyone other than a member of your biological nuclear family or a stepparent?**

Yes = Next Question

No = N/A

- 2. Were your only other caregivers staff members at a group home, shelter, residential treatment center, juvenile detention center, or a hospital, or did you have some other type of caregiver, like a grandparent, foster parent, or adoptive parent?**

Staff as caregivers = N/A

Some other type = Next Question

3. **Are you in contact with any of these other caregivers (or their family members)?**  
Yes = Go to Question #5                      No = Next Question
4. **Do you want to be in contact with any of these other caregivers (or their family members)?**  
Yes = "In Crisis"                      No = N/A
5. **Do you want to be in contact with any of these other caregivers (or your caregivers' family members)?**  
Yes = "In Crisis"                      No = N/A

*For the following questions, you should consider all non-staff caregivers and their family members with whom you are currently in contact or with whom you would like to be in contact.*

6. **Is any abuse or neglect currently taking place between you and your caregivers (or your caregivers' family members)?**  
Yes = "In Crisis"                      No = Next Question
7. **Do you consider your relationship with your caregivers (and your caregivers' families) to be generally characterized by conflict, hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"                      No = Next Question
8. **Do you and your caregivers (and your caregivers' family members) make an effort to reduce the amount of hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity that exists in your relationship?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Vulnerable"
9. **Are you and your caregivers (and your caregivers' family members) generally supportive of one another?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Safe"
10. **Is communication between you and your caregivers (and your caregivers' family members) consistently open?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Building Capacity"
11. **Do you consider your relationship with your caregivers (and your caregivers' family members) to be stable?**  
Yes = "Empowered"                      No = "Building Capacity"

### **Intimate Relationships Domain Score Guide**

1. **Are you legally married?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #5
2. **Are you separated from your spouse?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = Go to Question #4

3. **Are you in contact with your spouse?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "In Crisis"
4. **Is your relationship with your spouse characterized by abuse?**  
Yes = "In Crisis"                      No = Go to Question #7
5. **Do you have an intimate partner?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = N/A
6. **Is your relationship with your partner characterized by abuse?**  
Yes = "In Crisis"                      No = Next Question
7. **Do you have any other intimate partners?**  
Yes = Go to Question #13                      No = Next Question
8. **Do you consider your relationship with your partner to be generally characterized by conflict, hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"                      No = Next Question
9. **Do you and your partner make an effort to reduce the amount of hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity that exists in your relationship?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Vulnerable"
10. **Are you and your partner generally supportive of one another?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Safe"
11. **Is communication between you and your partner consistently open?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Building Capacity"
12. **Do you consider your relationship with your partner to be stable?**  
Yes = "Empowered"                      No = "Building Capacity"

*For the following questions, you should take into account your relationship with all of your current intimate partners with whom you are in contact.*

13. **Do you consider your relationship with your partners to be generally characterized by conflict, hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity?**  
Yes = "Vulnerable"                      No = Next Question
14. **Do you and your partners make an effort to reduce the amount of hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity that exists in your relationship?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Vulnerable"
15. **Are you and your partners generally supportive of one another?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Safe"
16. **Is communication between you and your partners consistently open?**  
Yes = Next Question                      No = "Building Capacity"
17. **Do you consider your relationship with your partners to be stable?**  
Yes = "Empowered"                      No = "Building Capacity"

## **Parent-Child Relations Domain Score Guide**

- 1. Do you have any children, or have you ever served as a primary caregiver for any children?**

Yes = Next Question

No = N/A

- 2. Are you in contact with (any of) your child(ren)?**

Yes = Go to Question #4

No = Next Question

- 3. Do you want to be in contact with (any of) your child(ren)?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = N/A

- 4. Is your relationship with (any of) your child(ren) characterized by abuse or neglect?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

- 5. Are there serious safety concerns in your relationship with (any of) your child(ren)?**

Yes = "In Crisis"

No = Next Question

*For the following questions, you should take into account your relationship with all of your children with whom you are in contact or with whom you would like to be in contact.*

- 6. Do you make an effort to reduce the amount of hostility, criticism, avoidance, or negativity that exists in your relationship with your child(ren)?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Vulnerable"

- 7. Do you make some effort to apply age-appropriate parenting techniques?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Vulnerable"

- 8. Do you consistently use age-appropriate parenting techniques?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

- 9. Do you generally support your child(ren)'s efforts?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

- 10. Is communication between you and your child(ren) consistently open?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Building Capacity"

- 11. Do your parenting skills need to be strengthened, improved, or diversified?**

Yes = "Building Capacity"

No = Next Question

- 12. Is your relationship with your child(ren) stable?**

Yes = "Empowered"

No = "Building Capacity"

## **Childcare Domain Score Guide**

**1. Do you have any children or serve as the primary caregiver for any children?**

Yes = Next Question

No = N/A

**2. Do you have any children who are 10 years old or younger?**

Yes = Go to Question #4

No = Next Question

**3. Do you have any children who are under age 18 and have special needs?**

Yes = Next Question

No = N/A

*For the following questions, you should base your responses on the childcare arrangements about which you are most concerned (across the children you care for who are 10 years old or younger, or any special needs children you care for who are under age 18).*

**4. Do you have childcare arrangements for all eligible children (this can be childcare provided by family members, neighbors, or friends)?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "In Crisis"

**5. Do you spend more than 10% of your income on childcare costs?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**6. Do any of your childcare providers unexpectedly cancel, fail to show up, or are otherwise inconsistently available?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**7. Do you have any safety concerns with any of your childcare providers?**

Yes = "Vulnerable"

No = Next Question

**8. Do you feel like all of your childcare providers provide adequate supervision?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Vulnerable"

**9. Is childcare readily available when you need it?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

**10. Do you receive some type of financial assistance in paying for childcare, such as childcare vouchers?**

Yes = Next Question

No = Go to Question #12

**11. Is the financial assistance that you receive some type of employer-supported childcare?**

Yes = Next Question

No = "Safe"

**12. Can you select from among high-quality childcare providers of your choice? In other words, is more than one desirable childcare option available to you?**

Yes = “Empowered”

No = “Building Capacity”

### **Education of Client’s Children Domain Score Guide**

**1. Do you have any children or serve as the primary caregiver for any children?**

Yes = Next Question

No = N/A

**2. Are any of your children school-aged (between the ages of 6–18)?**

Yes = Next Question

No = N/A

**3. Are all of your school-aged children enrolled in school?**

Yes = Next Question

No = “In Crisis”

**4. Do you have any children whose special education needs or other accommodations are not currently being met?**

Yes = “Vulnerable”

No = Next Question

**5. Are all of your school-aged children attending classes more than 90% of the time?**

Yes = Go to Question #7

No = Next Question

**6. Are any of your school-aged children attending classes less than 50% of the time?**

Yes = “Vulnerable”

No = “Safe”

**7. Are any of your children earning Ds or Fs in any of their classes?**

Yes = Next Question

No = “Empowered”

**8. Are any of your children earning Ds or Fs in all of their classes?**

Yes = “Vulnerable”

No = Next Question

**9. Thinking about your child who is struggling the most in school, in how many classes is your child earning Ds or Fs?**

1–2 = “Building Capacity”

3+ = “Safe”

# Appendix C: Modifications to the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix

After field-testing the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix (ASSM) across LifeWorks programs, a number of modifications were proposed and incorporated into the tool. The rationale for these changes and a description of the specific changes that were made to the wording of the instrument are presented below.

## C.1 Housing

The response options for this domain were only slightly modified from the original ASSM. Specifically, the “and/or” found in the description for “Vulnerable” clients has been changed to “OR” (emphasis added to the matrix). Additionally, the notion of “safety” was removed from response options #3–5 (“Safe,” “Building Capacity,” and “Empowered”), as clients’ safety is captured in the “Safety” domain and thereby allowing a cleaner picture of client’s actual housing situation. The wording of the response options in the original version of the ASSM is as follows:

In Crisis: Homeless or threatened with eviction.

Vulnerable: In transitional, temporary, or substandard housing; and/or current rent/mortgage payment is unaffordable (over 30% of income).

Safe: In stable housing that is safe but only marginally adequate.

Building Capacity: Household is in safe, adequate subsidized housing.

Empowered: Household is in safe, adequate, unsubsidized housing.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: Homeless or threatened with eviction.

Vulnerable: In transitional, temporary, or substandard housing OR current rent/mortgage payment is unaffordable (over 30% of income).

Safe: In stable housing that is ~~safe but~~ only marginally adequate.

Building Capacity: Household is in ~~safe,~~adequate, subsidized housing.

Empowered: Household is in ~~safe,~~adequate, unsubsidized housing.

## C.2 Employment

This domain and its response options were only slightly modified from the original ASSM. The only response options that were modified for the LW-SSM were options #2 and #5 (“Vulnerable” and “Empowered”); to add clarity, the word “job” was added to the second response option (additionally, the word “and” was substituted for the comma in “inadequate pay, no benefits”), and “full-time” was added to the fifth response option. The original wording of this domain is as follows:



In Crisis: No job.

Vulnerable: Temporary, part-time or seasonal; inadequate pay, no benefits.

Safe: Employed full time; inadequate pay; few or no benefits.

Building Capacity: Employed full time with adequate pay and benefits.

Empowered: Maintains permanent employment with adequate income and benefits.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: No job.

Vulnerable: Temporary, part-time or seasonal **job**; inadequate pay, **and** no benefits.

Safe: Employed full time; inadequate pay; few or no benefits.

Building Capacity: Employed full time with adequate pay and benefits.

Empowered: Maintains permanent **full-time** employment with adequate income and benefits.

### C.3 Income

The only response options that were modified from the original version of this domain were options #3 and #4 (“Safe” and “Building Capacity”). Specifically, the “and/or” found in the description for “Vulnerable” clients has been changed to “**OR**” (emphasis added to the matrix), and a slash was substituted for the word “or” in the phrase, “spontaneous or inappropriate spending.” The response option for “Safe” no longer includes “appropriate spending,” as its inclusion proved to be confusing and its deletion does not influence scoring. The response option for “Building Capacity” no longer includes “and manage debt,” as this aspect of clients’ self-sufficiency is captured in the “Credit” domain. Additionally, in the response option for “Empowered,” the word “and” was substituted for the comma in “sufficient, well-managed.” The response options found in the original version of the ASSM are as follows:

In Crisis: No income.

Vulnerable: Inadequate income and/or spontaneous or inappropriate spending.

Safe: Can meet basic needs with subsidy; appropriate spending.

Building Capacity: Can meet basic needs and manage debt without assistance.

Empowered: Income is sufficient, well managed; has discretionary income and is able to save.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: No income.

Vulnerable: Inadequate income **OR** spontaneous/inappropriate spending.

Safe: Can meet basic needs with subsidy; ~~appropriate spending~~.

Building Capacity: Can meet basic needs ~~and manage debt~~ without assistance.

Empowered: Income is sufficient, **and** well managed; has discretionary income and is able to save.

## C.4 Food

The only substantive change that was made to this domain was the modification of response option #2 (“Vulnerable”), where “food stamps” was changed to “SNAP” (the current name for the program). Additionally, the response option was broadened to include other forms of assistance on which individuals may rely in order to satisfy their nutritional needs. The response options found in the original version of the ASSM are as follows:

In Crisis: No food or means to prepare it. Relies to a significant degree on other sources of free or low-cost food.

Vulnerable: Household is on food stamps.

Safe: Can meet basic food needs, but requires occasional assistance.

Building Capacity: Can meet basic food needs without assistance.

Empowered: Can choose to purchase any food household desires.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: No food or means to prepare it. Relies ~~to a~~ significantly ~~degree~~ on other sources of free or low-cost food.

Vulnerable: Household is on ~~food stamps~~ SNAP or relies on some other type of assistance.

Safe: Can meet basic food needs, but requires occasional assistance.

Building Capacity: Can meet basic food needs without assistance.

Empowered: Can choose to purchase any food ~~the~~ household desires.

## C.5 Healthcare Coverage

The response options have been reworded in order to clarify that this domain is intended to be scored at the household level. Perhaps most notably, response options #1 and #2 (“In Crisis” and “Vulnerable”) now allow for some household members to be insured, provided at least one member of the household meet the qualifying criteria for the score. To add clarity, a reference to clients’ household members is now included in responses #1 and #2, and references to “members” have been changed to “household” or “at least one household member.” The description for “In Crisis” has been expanded in order to clarify the type of immediate need, and household members’ medical need is now mentioned prior to the level of coverage, in order to increase the consistency of the structure of the response options. The sentence “Some household members may be in poor health” has been eliminated from the description for “Vulnerable,” and “no immediate need” has been added to further differentiate this option from the description for “In Crisis.” The description for “Safe” has been changed to account for the fact that some individuals without health insurance may still be able to access health care when needed.

to remove references to geographically specific types of medical coverage and. The reference to “less than adequate” coverage has been included in the description for “Building Capacity” (to further differentiate this score from the description for “Empowered”), and household members’ ability to “get medical care” has been changed to having “some type of medical coverage.” The response options found in the original version of the ASSM are as follows:

In Crisis: No medical coverage with immediate need.

Vulnerable: No medical coverage and great difficulty accessing medical care when needed. Some household members may be in poor health.

Safe: Some members (e.g., children) on AHCCCS.

Building Capacity: All members can get medical care when needed, but may strain budget.

Empowered: All members are covered by affordable, adequate health insurance.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: At least one household member has immediate need for medical care or attention and has no medical coverage ~~with immediate need~~.

Vulnerable: No immediate need, but at least one household member has no medical coverage and great difficulty accessing medical care when needed. ~~Some household members may be in poor health.~~

Safe: At least one household member has no immediate need an on medical coverage, but is able to access medical care when needed. Some members (e.g., children) have medical coverage.

Building Capacity: All household members have some type of medical coverage ~~can get medical care when needed~~, but may strain budget or is less than adequate.

Empowered: All household members are covered by affordable, adequate health insurance.

## C.6 Education

Because the ASSM was not originally intended to be used with individuals under the age of 18, the educational performance of school-aged clients was not measured in the original version of the tool.

However, the response options for this domain are essentially identical to those for “Child(ren)’s Education” in the original ASSM, and the modifications to this domain are the same as described below (see section C.24).

## C.7 Adult Education

In the original ASSM, the LW-SSM domains “Adult Education” and “Language/Literacy” were collapsed into a single domain. In order to accurately assess both components, these two facets of self-sufficiency have been broken into two separate domains. The response options follow the same basic progression found in the original version, but they have been modified in order to make it easier to score clients. In the “Adult

Education” domain, each response option now indicates the client’s level of educational attainment and enrollment status. The response options found in the original version of the ASSM are as follows:

In Crisis: Literacy problems and/or no high school diploma/GED are serious barriers to employment.

Vulnerable: Enrolled in literacy and/or GED program and/or has sufficient command of English to where language is not a barrier to employment.

Safe: Has high school diploma/GED.

Building Capacity: Needs additional education/training to improve employment situation and/or to resolve literacy problems to where they are able to function effectively in society.

Empowered: Has completed education/training needed to become employable. No literacy problems.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: No HS diploma/GED and is not enrolled in high school or a GED program.

Vulnerable: No HS diploma/GED, but the client is enrolled in high school or a GED program.

Safe: Client has HS diploma/GED but is not seeking additional education/training to benefit employment.

Building Capacity: Client has HS diploma/GED and is seeking additional education/training to benefit employment.

Empowered: Client has completed additional education/training beyond HS diploma/GED (and is in a position where he/she is employable).

## C.8 Language/Literacy

In the original ASSM, the LW-SSM domains “Adult Education” and “Language/Literacy” were collapsed into a single domain. In order to accurately assess both components, these two facets of self-sufficiency have been broken into two separate domains. The response options follow the same basic progression found in the original version, but they have been modified in order to make it easier to score clients. Specifically, each response option now references clients’ level of command over their language skills in addition to their literacy skills and indicates whether or not clients are receiving additional schooling. The descriptions have also been expanded to account for the fact that all clients may not be old enough to get a job. The response options found in the original version of the ASSM are as follows:

In Crisis: Literacy problems and/or no high school diploma/GED are serious barriers to employment.

Vulnerable: Enrolled in literacy and/or GED program and/or has sufficient command of English to where language is not a barrier to employment.

Safe: Has high school diploma/GED.

Building Capacity: Needs additional education/training to improve employment situation and/or to resolve literacy problems to where they are able to function effectively in society.

Empowered: Has completed education/training needed to become employable. No literacy problems.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: Literacy ~~or language~~ problems ~~and/or no high school diploma/GED~~ are serious, ~~unaddressed~~ barriers to employment ~~or accomplishing basic day-to-day tasks~~.

Vulnerable: ~~Client has serious language or literacy issues but is enrolled in a literacy or language and/or GED program and/or has sufficient command of English to where language is not a barrier to employment.~~

Safe: ~~Has high school diploma/GED.~~ Client has a sufficient command of English to where language or literacy is not a barrier to employment or accomplishing basic day-to-day tasks.

Building Capacity: ~~Needs additional education/training to improve employment situation and/or to resolve literacy problems to where they are able to function effectively in society.~~ Client has sufficient command of English but is seeking additional education to resolve remaining language or literacy problems.

Empowered: ~~Has completed education/training needed to become employable.~~ Client has no language or literacy problems.

## C.9 Mobility

The response options were modified slightly from the original version of the ASSM to make it easier to score clients. The original response options did not reflect an intuitive progression from “In Crisis” to “Empowered;” the inclusion of car ownership items across the response options detracted from the central goal of assessing clients’ access to transportation. Thus, the reference to car ownership has been removed from response options #1–3 (“In Crisis,” “Vulnerable” and “Safe”). The reference to “limited” transportation has been removed from response option #3 and is subsumed under the term “unreliable.” The notion of preference has also been included in order to further differentiate between clients scored as “Building Capacity” and those scored as “Empowered.” The wording of the original response options is as follows:

In Crisis: No access to transportation, public or private; may have car that is inoperable.

Vulnerable: Transportation is available, but unreliable, unpredictable, unaffordable; may have car but no insurance, license, etc.

Safe: Transportation is available and reliable, but limited and/or inconvenient; drivers are licensed and minimally insured.

Building Capacity: Transportation is generally accessible to meet basic travel needs.

Empowered: Transportation is readily available and affordable; car is adequately insured.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: No access to transportation; (public or private); ~~may have car that is inoperable.~~

Vulnerable: Transportation is available, but unreliable, unpredictable, ~~or~~ ~~unaffordable~~; ~~may have car but no insurance, license, etc.~~

Safe: Transportation is available and reliable, but ~~limited and/or~~ ~~inconvenient~~; ~~drivers are licensed and minimally insured.~~

Building Capacity: Transportation is ~~readily available and convenient but not preferred; generally accessible to meet basic travel needs.~~ if client owns a car, lacks either a driver's license or insurance.

Empowered: Transportation is readily available, ~~and~~ ~~affordable~~, ~~and~~ ~~satisfactory~~; ~~has driver's license and a car that~~ is adequately insured.

### C.10 Disabilities & Physical Health

The domain “Disabilities and Physical Health” was not measured in the original version of the ASSM, nor was it measured in the version adopted by HUD. However, it was assessed in the Minnesota version of the Self-Sufficiency Matrix<sup>59</sup> and was included in the LW-SSM because of the critical impact of physical health on overall self-sufficiency. Besides emphasizing that clients' symptoms should currently be impacting their lives in the description for “In Crisis” and changing the wording for “Empowered” to include “or health concerns,” the response options in the LW-SSM are largely identical to those found in the Minnesota version of the SSM. The response options found in the latter version are as follows:

In Crisis: Acute or chronic symptoms affecting housing, employment, social interactions, etc.

Vulnerable: Sometimes or periodically has acute or chronic symptoms affecting housing, employment, social interactions, etc.

Safe: Rarely has acute or chronic symptoms affecting housing, employment, social interactions, etc.

Building Capacity: Asymptomatic; condition controlled by services or medication.

Empowered: No identified disability.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: Acute or chronic symptoms ~~are~~ ~~currently~~ affecting housing, employment, social interactions, etc.

Vulnerable: Sometimes or periodically has acute or chronic symptoms affecting housing, employment, social interactions, etc.

Safe: Rarely has acute or chronic symptoms affecting housing, employment, social interactions, etc.

---

<sup>59</sup> Minnesota HMIS. Self-Sufficiency Matrix. Retrieved from <https://www.cascw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Self-sufficiency-matrix.pdf>

Building Capacity: Asymptomatic; condition **is** controlled by services or medication.  
Empowered: No identified disability **or health concerns**.

### C.11 Mental Health

This domain was modified by changing all references to mental health “problems” to mental health “issues.” The response options found in the original version of the ASSM are as follows:

In Crisis: Danger to self or others; recurring suicidal ideation; experiencing severe difficulty in day-to-day life due to psychological problems.

Vulnerable: Recurrent mental health symptoms that may affect behavior, but not a danger to self/others; persistent problems with functioning due to mental health symptoms.

Safe: Mild symptoms may be present but are transient; only moderate difficulty in functioning due to mental health problems.

Building Capacity: Minimal symptoms that are expectable responses to life stressors; only slight impairment in functioning.

Empowered: Symptoms are absent or rare; good or superior functioning in wide range of activities; no more than every day problems or concerns.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: Danger to self or others; recurring suicidal ideation; experiencing severe difficult**ies** in day-to-day life due to psychological **issues**.

Vulnerable: Recurrent mental health symptoms that may affect behavior, but not a danger to self/others; persistent **issues** with functioning due to mental health symptoms.

Safe: Mild symptoms may be present but are transient; only moderate difficulty in functioning due to mental health **issues**.

Building Capacity: Minimal symptoms that are expectable responses to life stressors; only slight impairment in functioning.

Empowered: Symptoms are absent or rare; good or superior functioning in wide range of activities; no more than **everyday** problems **and** concerns.

### C.12 Substance Abuse

The response options have been significantly simplified from the response options in the original ASSM. Specifically, clients’ scores should be determined based on the number of criteria for substance abuse/dependence the client meets, as specified by the *DSM-5*. The original response options are as follows:

In Crisis: Meets criteria for severe abuse/dependence; resulting problems so severe that institutional living or hospitalization may be necessary.



Vulnerable: Meets criteria for dependence; preoccupation with use and/or obtaining drugs/alcohol; withdrawal or withdrawal avoidance behavior evident; use results in avoidance or neglect of essential life activities.

Safe: Use within last 6 months; evidence of persistent or recurrent social, occupational, emotional, or physical problems related to use (such as disruptive behavior or housing problems); problems have persisted for at least one month.

Building Capacity: Client has used during the last 6 months, but no evidence of persistent or recurrent social, occupational, emotional, or physical problems related to use; no evidence of recurrent dangerous use.

Empowered: No drug use/alcohol abuse in last 6 months.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: Meets criteria for severe abuse/dependence (i.e., 6+ criteria); ~~resulting~~ problems so severe that institutional living or hospitalization may be necessary.

Vulnerable: Meets criteria for dependence (i.e., 4–5 criteria); ~~preoccupation with use and/or obtaining drugs/alcohol; withdrawal or withdrawal avoidance behavior evident; use results in avoidance or neglect of essential life activities.~~

Safe: ~~Client has used~~ within ~~the~~ last 6 months; ~~meets 2–3 criteria for dependence evidence of persistent or recurrent social, occupational, emotional, or physical problems related to use (such as disruptive behavior or housing problems); problems have persisted for at least one month.~~

Building Capacity: Client has used during the last 6 months; ~~meets 0–1 criteria for dependence; but no evidence of persistent or recurrent social, occupational, emotional, or physical problems related to use; no evidence of recurrent dangerous use.~~

Empowered: No drug use/alcohol abuse in ~~the~~ last 6 months.

### C.13 Legal

The original response options for the “Legal” domain of the ASSM were modified slightly to clarify how clients should be scored if they have a criminal history that interferes with their current level of self-sufficiency (instead of referencing clients’ “felony criminal history”) and to account for clients who are currently incarcerated. The original response options are as follows:

In Crisis: Current outstanding tickets or warrants.

Vulnerable: Current charges/trial pending, noncompliance with probation/parole.

Safe: Fully compliant with probation/parole terms.

Building Capacity: Has successfully completed probation/parole within past 12 months, no new charges filed.

Empowered: No active criminal justice involvement in more than 12 months and/or no felony criminal history.



The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: Current outstanding tickets or warrants OR currently incarcerated.

Vulnerable: Current charges/trial pending, OR non-compliance with probation/parole.

Safe: Fully compliant with probation/parole terms with no charges pending.

Building Capacity: Has successfully completed probation/parole within the last past 12 months, no new charges filed OR no active criminal justice involvement in more than 12 mo, but prior arrests pose problem to current self-sufficiency.

Empowered: No criminal history OR no active criminal justice involvement in more than 12 months, and prior arrests do not pose a problem to current self-sufficiency and/or no felony criminal history.

#### C.14 Safety

The response options in this domain are essentially identical to those found in the original version of the ASSM; however, the phrasing for those “In Crisis” was broadened to account for potentially unsafe environments outside the home, as well as possible police involvement (and not merely CPS involvement). Additionally, the phrase “may be” has been changed to “is” in the description for “Vulnerable,” in order to reduce ambiguity. The original response options are as follows:

In Crisis: Home or residence is not safe; immediate level of lethality is extremely high; possible CPS involvement.

Vulnerable: Safety is threatened/temporary protection is available; level of lethality is high.

Safe: Current level of safety is minimally adequate; ongoing safety planning is essential.

Building Capacity: Environment is safe, however, future of such is uncertain; safety planning is important.

Empowered: Environment is apparently safe and stable.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: Environment ~~Home or residence~~ is not safe; immediate level of lethality is extremely high; possible CPS or police involvement.

Vulnerable: Safety is threatened, but temporary protection is available; level of lethality is high.

Safe: Current level of safety is minimally adequate; ongoing safety planning is essential.

Building Capacity: Environment is safe, but future safety is uncertain; however, future of such is uncertain; safety planning is important.

Empowered: Environment is apparently safe and stable.

#### C.15 Credit

The “Credit” domain was not included in the ASSM, but it was included in the version of the Matrix adopted by Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues. Most

notably, the reference to credit repair plans has been removed from the response options. The description for “In Crisis” was expanded to include a history of evictions and repossessions, and the description for “Vulnerable” was expanded to include garnishments. Response options #3–5 (“Safe,” “Building Capacity,” and “Empowered”) were modified to provide greater precision in scoring by taking clients’ debt ratios and credit histories into consideration. The response options found in the Santa Clara County version of the ASSM are as follows:

In Crisis: Outstanding judgments or bankruptcy/foreclosures with no credit repair plan.

Vulnerable: Outstanding judgments or bankruptcy/foreclosures with a credit repair plan or debt in collection with no credit repair plan.

Safe: No credit history or debts in collection with a credit repair plan.

Building Capacity: Moderate credit rating.

Empowered: Good credit/manageable debt ratio.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: ~~History of Outstanding judgments or~~ bankruptcies, foreclosures, ~~evictions or repossessions with no credit repair plan.~~

Vulnerable: Outstanding judgments, ~~garnishments, bankruptcy/foreclosures with a credit repair plan~~ or debts in collection ~~with no credit repair plan.~~

Safe: ~~Has an unmanageable debt ratio and poor credit, OR has no credit history or debts in collection with a credit repair plan.~~

Building Capacity: ~~Has an unmanageable debt ratio or poor credit. Moderate credit rating.~~

Empowered: ~~Has a Good credit/~~manageable debt ratio ~~and good credit.~~

## C.16 Life Skills

Based on substantial feedback from staff, the “Life Skills” domain was modified to limit the number of life skills that should be taken into account when determining clients’ scores. Notably, these life skills are more reflective of clients’ executive functioning (as opposed to their basic or instrumental activities of daily living). By restricting the life skills under consideration, scoring is simplified and determined based on the number of these life skills clients are able to complete without assistance, thereby reducing subjectivity and ambiguity. The original response options found in the ASSM are as follows:

In Crisis: Unable to meet basic needs such as hygiene, food, activities of daily living.

Vulnerable: Can meet a few but not all needs of daily living without assistance.

Safe: Can meet most but not all daily living needs without assistance.

Building Capacity: Able to meet all basic needs of daily living without assistance.

Empowered: Able to provide beyond basic needs of daily living for self and family.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: Unable to ~~meet basic needs such as hygiene, food, activities of daily living~~ to complete any of the following life skills without assistance: looking up information online, scheduling appointments, prioritizing tasks, arriving on time, and completing tasks on time.

Vulnerable: Able to complete one or two of these life skills ~~Can meet a few but not all needs of daily living~~ without assistance.

Safe: Able to complete three of these life skills ~~Can meet most but not all daily living needs~~ without assistance.

Building Capacity: Able to complete four of these life skills ~~meet all basic needs of daily living~~ without assistance.

Empowered: Able to complete all five of these life skills without assistance ~~provide beyond basic needs of daily living for self and family~~.

### C.17 Community Involvement

The response options for this domain are essentially identical to those found in the original version of the ASSM, but they have been modified slightly in order to add clarity and to account for the fact that some clients may not have the desire or opportunity to become involved in the community. The original response options are as follows:

In Crisis: Not applicable due to crisis situation; in “survival” mode.

Vulnerable: Socially isolated and/or no social skills and/or lacks motivation to become involved.

Safe: Lacks knowledge of ways to become involved.

Building Capacity: Some community involvement (advisory group, support group), but has barriers such as transportation, childcare issues.

Empowered: Actively involved in community.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: Not applicable due to crisis situation; in “survival” mode.

Vulnerable: Socially isolated, ~~and/or no lacks~~ social skills, ~~and/or lacks motivation~~ ~~unmotivated/does not desire~~ to become involved.

Safe: ~~Has adequate social skills and motivation/desire but~~ lacks ~~the opportunity or~~ knowledge of ways to become involved.

Building Capacity: Some community involvement (advisory group, support group, ~~church, volunteering, etc.~~), but has barriers ~~such as~~ (transportation, childcare issues, ~~etc.~~).

Empowered: Actively involved in community.

## C.18 Network Support

This domain was originally called “Family Relations,” although the guidelines for the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Scoring Sheet developed by the Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues specified that the client’s relationships with all household members, other family members, and close friends should be considered when scoring this domain. Because the client’s relationships with their nuclear family/caregiver(s), extended family, romantic partners, and broader social network can vary in quality, the decision was made to assess the client’s extended family and broader social network separately from these other relationships. The response options for this domain now consider the extent to which clients’ extended family, friends, and coworkers are involved, interested, and motivated to provide support; directly reference the different types of support which can be provided (financial, material, emotional); and account for the fact that network members may serve as a bad influence on the client. A couple of additional small modifications were also made to enhance clarity. The wording of the response options for the “Family Relations” domain found in the original version of the ASSM is as follows:

In Crisis: Lack of necessary support from family or friends; abuse (DV, child) is present or there is child neglect.

Vulnerable: Family/friends may be supportive, but lack ability or resources to help; family members do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse or neglect.

Safe: Some support from family/friends; family members acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.

Building Capacity: Strong support from family or friends. Household members support each other’s efforts.

Empowered: Has healthy/expanding support network; household is stable and communication is consistently open.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: **Extended family or friends are uninvolved, uninterested, or unmotivated to provide support** ~~Lack of necessary support from family or friends; abuse (DV, child) is present or there is child neglect.~~

Vulnerable: **Extended family/friends** ~~may be supportive,~~ but lack **the** ability or resources to help (either financially, emotionally, or materially) or provide negative support; ~~family members do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse or neglect.~~

Safe: **Client receives some positive support (financial/emotional/material) from extended family or friends;** ~~family members acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.~~

Building Capacity: Strong support from **extended** family or friends. ~~Household members support each other's efforts.~~

Empowered: Has healthy **and** expanding support network; ~~household is stable and communication is consistently open.~~

### **C.19 Family Relations: Family of Origin**

This domain was originally called “Family Relations,” although the guidelines for the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Scoring Sheet developed by the Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues specified that the client’s relationships with all household members, other family members, and close friends should be considered when scoring this domain. Because the client’s relationships with their nuclear family/caregiver(s), extended family, romantic partners, and broader social network can vary in quality, the decision was made to assess the client’s relationship with their family of origin separately from these other relationships. The response options now account for the actual or potential severing of relationships. The wording of the response options for the “Family Relations” domain found in the original version of the ASSM is as follows:

In Crisis: Lack of necessary support from family or friends; abuse (DV, child) is present or there is child neglect.

Vulnerable: Family/friends may be supportive, but lack ability or resources to help; family members do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse or neglect.

Safe: Some support from family/friends; family members acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.

Building Capacity: Strong support from family or friends. Household members support each other’s efforts.

Empowered: Has healthy/expanding support network; household is stable and communication is consistently open.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: ~~Lack of necessary support from family or friends;~~ Abuse (DV, child) is present, ~~or~~ there is child neglect, **or all relations have been severed.**

Vulnerable: ~~Family/friends may be supportive, but lack ability or resources to help;~~ Family members do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse, ~~or~~ neglect, **or relations being severed.**

Safe: ~~Some support from family/friends;~~ Family members acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.

Building Capacity: ~~Strong support from family or friends. Household~~ **Family** members support each other’s efforts.

Empowered: ~~Has healthy/expanding support network; household~~ Family is stable and communication is consistently open.

## **C.20 Family Relations: Caregiver(s)**

This domain was originally called “Family Relations,” although the guidelines for the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Scoring Sheet developed by the Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues specified that the client’s relationships with all household members, other family members, and close friends should be considered when scoring this domain. Because the client’s relationships with their nuclear family/caregiver(s), extended family, romantic partners, and broader social network can vary in quality, the decision was made to assess the client’s relationship with their caregiver(s) separately from these other relationships. The response options now account for the actual or potential severing of relationships. A couple of additional small modifications were also made to enhance clarity. The wording of the response options for the “Family Relations” domain found in the original version of the ASSM is as follows:

In Crisis: Lack of necessary support from family or friends; abuse (DV, child) is present or there is child neglect.

Vulnerable: Family/friends may be supportive, but lack ability or resources to help; family members do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse or neglect.

Safe: Some support from family/friends; family members acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.

Building Capacity: Strong support from family or friends. Household members support each other’s efforts.

Empowered: Has healthy/expanding support network; household is stable and communication is consistently open.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: ~~Lack of necessary support from family or friends;~~ Abuse (DV, child) is present, ~~or~~ there is child neglect, ~~or all relations have been severed.~~

Vulnerable: ~~Family/friends may be supportive, but lack ability or resources to help; family members~~ Caregiver(s) and client do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse, ~~or~~ neglect, ~~or relations being severed.~~

Safe: ~~Some support from family/friends; family members~~ Caregiver(s) and client acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.

Building Capacity: ~~Strong support from family or friends. Household members~~ Caregiver(s) and client support each other’s efforts.

Empowered: ~~Has healthy/expanding support network; household is~~ Relationships are stable and communication is consistently open.

## C.21 Intimate Relationship(s)

This domain was originally called “Family Relations,” although the guidelines for the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Scoring Sheet developed by the Santa Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues specified that the client’s relationships with all household members, other family members, and close friends should be considered when scoring this domain. Because the client’s relationships with their nuclear family/caregiver(s), extended family, romantic partners, and broader social network can vary in quality, the decision was made to assess the client’s intimate relationship(s) separately from these other relationships. The response options now account for the actual or potential severing of relationships. A couple of additional small modifications were also made to enhance clarity. The wording of the response options for the “Family Relations” domain found in the original version of the ASSM is as follows:

In Crisis: Lack of necessary support from family or friends; abuse (DV, child) is present or there is child neglect.

Vulnerable: Family/friends may be supportive, but lack ability or resources to help; family members do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse or neglect.

Safe: Some support from family/friends; family members acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.

Building Capacity: Strong support from family or friends. Household members support each other’s efforts.

Empowered: Has healthy/expanding support network; household is stable and communication is consistently open.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: ~~Lack of necessary support from family or friends;~~ Abuse (~~DV, child~~) is present, ~~or there is child neglect,~~ or all relations have been severed.

Vulnerable: ~~Family/friends may be supportive, but lack ability or resources to help; family members~~ Partners do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse ~~or neglect,~~ or relations being severed.

Safe: ~~Some support from family/friends; family members~~ Partners acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.

Building Capacity: ~~Strong support from family or friends. Household members~~ Partners support each other’s efforts.

Empowered: ~~Has healthy/expanding support network; household~~ Relationship is stable and communication is consistently open.



## C.22 Parent-Child Relations

This domain was originally called “Parenting Skills.” Because the response options in the original ASSM only captured the client’s ability to parent effectively (which only applies to children for whom the client functions as an active caregiver) and shed little light on the overall quality of the parent-child relationship, these response options were blended with the response options from the original “Family Relations” domain, allowing for a more holistic view of clients’ relationships with their children and providing an appropriate means of capturing the quality of parent-child relationships for clients with adult children. The response options also account for the actual or potential severing of relationships. To enhance clarity, a couple of additional small modifications were also made to the pieces of the response options that were incorporated from the original “Family Relations” domain. The wording of the response options for the “Parenting Skills” domain in the original version of the ASSM is as follows:

In Crisis: There are safety concerns regarding parenting skills.

Vulnerable: Parenting skills are minimal.

Safe: Parenting skills are apparent but not adequate.

Building Capacity: Parenting skills are adequate.

Empowered: Parenting skills are well developed.

The wording of the response options for the “Family Relations” domain found in the original version of the ASSM is as follows:

In Crisis: Lack of necessary support from family or friends; abuse (DV, child) is present or there is child neglect.

Vulnerable: Family/friends may be supportive, but lack ability or resources to help; family members do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse or neglect.

Safe: Some support from family/friends; family members acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.

Building Capacity: Strong support from family or friends. Household members support each other’s efforts.

Empowered: Has healthy/expanding support network; household is stable and communication is consistently open.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: There are safety concerns regarding parenting skills; ~~Lack of necessary support from family or friends~~; Abuse (~~DV, child~~) or neglect is present, ~~or there is child neglect~~, or all relations have been severed.

Vulnerable: Parenting skills are minimal; ~~Family/friends may be supportive, but lack ability or resources to help; family members~~ client does not relate well with child(ren) ~~one another~~; potential for abuse or neglect.



Safe: Parenting skills are apparent but not adequate; ~~Some support from family/friends; family members~~ client acknowledges and seeks to change negative behaviors; ~~are~~ is learning to communicate and support.

Building Capacity: Parenting skills are adequate; ~~Strong support from family or friends. Household members~~ client supports ~~each other's~~ their child(ren)'s efforts.

Empowered: Parenting skills are well-developed; ~~Has healthy/expanding support network; household~~ parent-child relationship(s) is stable and communication is consistently open.

### C.23 Childcare

Additions were made in order to account for childcare that is provided by relatives or friends.

Additionally, the notion of child eligibility has been removed from the description for “In Crisis,” as ineligibility is captured by the first part of the description as well. The wording of the response options in the original version of the ASSM is as follows:

In Crisis: Needs childcare, but none is available/accessible and/or child is not eligible.

Vulnerable: Childcare is unreliable or unaffordable, inadequate supervision is a problem for childcare that is available.

Safe: Affordable subsidized childcare is available, but limited.

Building Capacity: Reliable, affordable childcare is available, no need for subsidies.

Empowered: Able to select quality childcare of choice.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: Needs childcare; but none is available or accessible (including family members or friends) and/or child is not eligible.

Vulnerable: Childcare is unreliable or unaffordable; inadequate supervision is a problem for childcare that is available (including family members or friends).

Safe: Affordable, subsidized childcare is available; but limited (if family members or friends: availability or interest is limited).

Building Capacity: Reliable, affordable childcare is available (could be family members or friends); no need for subsidies.

Empowered: Able to select quality childcare of choice (could be from among family members or friends).

### C.24 Education of Client's Child(ren)

This domain was modified to enhance clarity and to account for children's performance in school. To do this effectively, the breakdown regarding attendance had to be adjusted. Additionally, the description for “Vulnerable” in the LW-SSM also captures those whose educational needs are not being met.

Finally, the guidelines specified in the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Scoring Sheet developed by the Santa

Clara County Collaborative on Affordable Housing and Homeless Issues indicated that clients' children should be scored on this domain through their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday as a substantial proportion of 18-year-olds are still enrolled in secondary school. The response options found in the original version of the ASSM are as follows:

In Crisis: One or more school-aged children not enrolled in school.

Vulnerable: One or more school-aged children enrolled in school, but not attending classes.

Safe: Enrolled in school, but one or more children only occasionally attending classes.

Building Capacity: Enrolled in school and attending classes most of the time.

Empowered: All school-aged children enrolled and attending on a regular basis.

The wording of the response options in the LW-SSM is as follows, with changes shown in red:

In Crisis: One or more school-aged children **are** not enrolled in school.

Vulnerable: **~~One or more~~ All** school-aged children **are** enrolled in school, but **one or more are** not attending classes **or only occasionally attending classes OR have unmet educational needs.**

Safe: **School-aged children are** enrolled in school, but one or more **children** only occasionally attend**ing** classes **most of the time OR are struggling in at least 3, but not all, of their classes.**

Building Capacity: **All school-aged children are** enrolled in school and attend**ing** classes **on a regular basis ~~most of the time~~, but one or more are struggling in 1–2 classes.**

Empowered: All school-aged children **are** enrolled, **~~and~~ attend**ing** classes** on a regular basis, **and are performing well in school.**

Client Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Client ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Domain	1 (In Crisis)	2 (Vulnerable)	3 (Safe)	4 (Building Capacity)	5 (Empowered)	DK/DA	N/A	Score	Goal	Con
<b>Housing*</b>	Homeless or threatened with eviction.	In transitional, temporary, or substandard housing <u>OR</u> current rent/mortgage payment is unaffordable (over 30% of income)	In stable housing that is only marginally adequate.	Household is in adequate, subsidized housing.	Household is in adequate, unsubsidized housing.					
<b>Employment</b>	No job.	Temporary, part-time, or seasonal job; inadequate pay and no benefits.	Employed full-time; inadequate pay; few or no benefits.	Employed full-time with adequate pay and benefits.	Maintains permanent full-time employment with adequate pay and benefits.					
<b>Income*</b>	No income.	Inadequate income <u>OR</u> spontaneous/inappropriate spending.	Can meet basic needs with subsidy.	Can meet basic needs without assistance.	Income is sufficient and well-managed; has discretionary income and is able to save.					
<b>Food*</b>	No food or means to prepare it. Relies significantly on other sources of free or low-cost food.	Household is on SNAP or relies on some other type of assistance.	Can meet basic food needs but requires occasional assistance.	Can meet basic food needs without assistance.	Can choose to purchase any food the household desires.					
<b>Healthcare Coverage*</b>	At least one household member has immediate need for medical care or attention and has no medical coverage.	No immediate need, but at least one household member has no medical coverage and great difficulty accessing medical care when needed.	At least one household member has no immediate need and no medical coverage, but is able to access medical care when needed.	All household members have some type of medical coverage, but it may strain budget or is less than adequate.	All household members are covered by affordable, adequate health insurance.					
<b>Education</b>	Client is not enrolled in school.	Client is enrolled in school but is not attending or only occasionally attending classes <u>OR</u> whose educational needs are not being met.	Client is enrolled in school and attending classes most of the time <u>OR</u> who is struggling in at least 3, but not all, classes.	Client is enrolled in school and attending classes on a regular basis but is struggling in one or two classes.	Client is enrolled in school, attending classes on a regular basis, and performing well in school.					
<b>Adult Education</b>	No HS diploma/GED and is not enrolled in high school or a GED program.	No HS diploma/GED, but the client is enrolled in high school or a GED program.	Client has HS diploma/GED but is not seeking additional education/training to benefit employment.	Client has HS diploma/GED and is seeking additional education/training to benefit employment.	Client has completed additional education/training beyond HS diploma/GED (and is in a position where he/she is employable).					
<b>Language/Literacy</b>	Literacy or language problems are serious, unaddressed barriers to employment or accomplishing basic day-to-day tasks.	Client has serious language or literacy issues but is enrolled in a literacy or language program.	Client has a sufficient command of English to where language or literacy is not a barrier to employment or accomplishing basic day-to-day tasks.	Client has sufficient command of English but is seeking additional education to resolve remaining language or literacy problems.	Client has no language or literacy problems.					
<b>Mobility</b>	No access to transportation (public or private).	Transportation is available but unreliable, unpredictable, or unaffordable.	Transportation is available and reliable, but inconvenient.	Transportation is readily available and convenient but not preferred; if client owns a car, lacks either a driver's license or insurance.	Transportation is readily available, affordable, and satisfactory; if client owns a car, has driver's license and a car that is adequately insured.					
<b>Disabilities &amp; Physical Health</b>	Acute or chronic symptoms are currently affecting housing, employment, social interactions, etc.	Sometimes or periodically has acute or chronic symptoms affecting housing, employment, social interactions, etc.	Rarely has acute or chronic symptoms affecting housing, employment, social interactions, etc.	Asymptomatic; condition is controlled by services or medication.	No identified disability or health concerns.					
<b>Mental Health</b>	Danger to self or others; recurring suicidal ideation; experiencing severe difficulties in day-to-day life due to psychological issues.	Recurrent mental health symptoms that may affect behavior but not a danger to self/others; persistent issues with functioning due to mental health symptoms.	Mild symptoms may be present but are transient; only moderate difficulty in functioning due to mental health issues.	Minimal symptoms that are expectable responses to life stressors; only slight impairment in functioning.	Symptoms are absent or rare; good or superior functioning in wide range of activities; no more than everyday problems and concerns.					
<b>Substance Use</b>	Meets criteria for severe abuse/dependence; (i.e., 6+ criteria); problems so severe that institutionalized living or hospitalization may be necessary.	Meets criteria for dependence (i.e., 4–5 criteria).	Client has used within the last 6 mo; meets 2–3 criteria for dependence	Client has used during the last 6 mo; meets 0–1 criteria for dependence.	No drug use/alcohol abuse in the last six months.					

Domain	1 (In Crisis)	2 (Vulnerable)	3 (Safe)	4 (Building Capacity)	5 (Empowered)	DK/DA	N/A	Score	Goal	Con
<b>Legal</b>	Current outstanding tickets or warrants <u>OR</u> currently incarcerated.	Current charges/trial pending <u>OR</u> non-compliance with probation/parole.	Fully compliant with probation/parole terms with no charges pending.	Has successfully completed probation/parole within the last 12 mo; no new charges filed <u>OR</u> no active criminal justice involvement in more than 12 mo, but prior arrests pose problem to current self-sufficiency.	No criminal history <u>OR</u> no active criminal justice involvement in more than 12 mo, and prior arrests do not pose a problem to current self-sufficiency.					
<b>Safety</b>	Environment is not safe; immediate level of lethality is extremely high; possible CPS or police involvement.	Safety is threatened, but temporary protection is available; level of lethality is high.	Current level of safety is minimally adequate; ongoing safety planning is essential.	Environment is safe, but future safety is uncertain; safety planning is important.	Environment is apparently safe and stable.					
<b>Credit</b>	History of bankruptcies, foreclosures, evictions, or repossessions.	Outstanding judgments, garnishments, or debts in collection.	Has an unmanageable debt ratio <u>and</u> poor credit, <u>OR</u> has no credit history.	Has an unmanageable debt ratio <u>or</u> poor credit.	Has a manageable debt ratio <u>and</u> good credit.					
<b>Life Skills</b>	Unable to complete any of the following life skills without assistance: looking up information online, scheduling appts, prioritizing tasks, arriving on time, and completing tasks on time.	Able to complete one or two of these life skills without assistance.	Able to complete three of these life skills without assistance.	Able to complete four of these life skills without assistance.	Able to complete all five of these life skills without assistance.					
<b>Community Involvement</b>	Not applicable due to crisis situation; in "survival" mode.	Socially isolated, lacks social skills, or unmotivated/does not desire to become involved.	Has adequate social skills and motivation/desire but lacks the opportunity or knowledge of ways to become involved.	Some community involvement (advisory group, support group, church, volunteering, etc.), but has barriers (transportation, childcare issues, etc.).	Actively involved in community.					
<b>Network Support</b>	Extended family or friends are uninvolved, uninterested, or unmotivated to provide support.	Extended family/friends lack the ability or resources to help (either financially, emotionally, or materially) or provide negative support.	Client receives some positive support (financial/emotional/ material) from extended family or friends.	Strong support from extended family or friends.	Has healthy and expanding support network.					
<b>Family Relations: Family of origin</b>	Abuse (DV, child) is present, there is child neglect, or all relations have been severed.	Family members do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse, neglect, or relations being severed.	Family members acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.	Family members support each other's efforts.	Family is stable and communication is consistently open.					
<b>Family Relations: Caregiver(s)</b>	Abuse (DV, child) is present, there is child neglect, or relations have been severed.	Caregiver(s) and client do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse, neglect, or relations being severed.	Caregiver(s) and client acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.	Caregiver(s) and client support each other's efforts.	Relationships are stable and communication is consistently open.					
<b>Intimate Relationship(s)</b>	Abuse is present, or all relations have been severed.	Partners do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse or relations being severed.	Partners acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.	Partners support each other's efforts.	Relationship is stable and communication is consistently open.					
<b>Parent-child Relations</b>	There are safety concerns regarding parenting skills; abuse or neglect is present, or all relations have been severed.	Parenting skills are minimal; client does not relate well with child(ren); potential for abuse or neglect.	Parenting skills are apparent but not adequate; client acknowledges and seeks to change negative behaviors; is learning to communicate and support.	Parenting skills are adequate; client supports their child(ren)'s efforts.	Parenting skills are well-developed; parent-child relations are stable and communication is consistently open.					
<b>Childcare</b>	Needs childcare but none is available or accessible (including family members or friends).	Childcare is unreliable or unaffordable; inadequate supervision is a problem for childcare that is available (including family members or friends).	Affordable, subsidized childcare is available but limited (if family members or friends: availability or interest is limited).	Reliable, affordable childcare is available (could be family members or friends); no need for subsidies.	Able to select quality childcare of choice (could be from among family members or friends).					
<b>Education of Client's Child(ren)</b>	One or more school-aged children are not enrolled in school.	All school-aged children are enrolled in school, but one or more are not attending or only occasionally attending classes <u>OR</u> have unmet educational needs.	School-aged children are enrolled in school, but one or more only attend classes most of the time <u>OR</u> are struggling in at least 3, but not all, of their classes.	All school-aged children are enrolled in school and attend classes on a regular basis, but one or more are struggling in 1–2 classes.	All school-aged children are enrolled, attend classes on a regular basis, and are performing well in school.					

\*Domains marked with an asterisk should reflect the level of self-sufficiency of the household (i.e., family members or romantic partners that share an address) and not merely the client's self-sufficiency.