ADULT FOSTER CARE ASSESSMENTS

ReBAR Program Overview

ReBAR stands for “Restructuring Budgets, Assessments and Rates.” It is a program in the Office of Developmental Disability Services of SPD. It began in 2005 with a federal grant to create a change in the way the support needs of individuals with DD are measured, and how their service rates are calculated to match their needs.

Since it was implemented in 2008, the ReBAR Program has completed over 3000 assessments for individuals in 24hr Group Homes and has implemented a new 24 Hour Residential Rate Model to identify the funding that each individual is to receive following an assessment of his/her needs. As of June 2011, all individuals in DD Group Homes have had an assessment and have received adjustments to their service rates, based on those assessments.

The DD Assessment Unit, which is part of the ReBAR Program, consists of specially trained staff known as Assessment Specialists. The Assessment Specialists conduct the needs assessments in a group interview with the people that know the Individual with DD very well.

Over the 2011-2013 Biennium, assessments will be completed for the remaining majority of Individuals in the DD Comprehensive Services System, including those in Supported Living Programs, Employment/Community Inclusion Programs and in Adult Foster Care. The Adult Foster Care (AFC) assessments will be conducted over the period from August 2011 through December 2012.

After the AFC Assessments and corresponding rate adjustment are completed, the Assessment Unit will conduct the remaining needs assessments for those individuals in Supported Living and Employment and Community Inclusion Programs. During this same period other ReBAR Program staff will be working on the design and implementation plan for the new service rate models for each of these services. Near the end of this Biennium (2011-2013), when all assessments for people receiving these services are completed, the rate models will be implemented. No changes to current service rates in Supported Living or Employment Programs will occur until all assessments are completed and the new rate models are ready for implementation.

If you are not already familiar with the ReBAR Program or the assessment process, there is a lot of helpful information available to you and the person who will be receiving an assessment. In preparation please review the information contained on the ReBAR Web site at www.oregon.gov/DHS/dd/rebar/assess-afc.shtml.
What About DD Adult Foster Care Assessments and the Service Rate Adjustments?

In the month of August 2011, the Assessment Unit will begin conducting assessments for individuals living in DD Adult Foster Care. There are about 1800 individuals that have not had a needs assessment or an adjustment in their service rate (funding paid to AFC Provider for residential services provided), or they have only had an assessment using an early version of the assessment tool.

There will be either one (1), or two (2) assessments conducted for each of the Individuals in DD Adult Foster Care services. The SNAP (Support Needs Assessment Profile) is the instrument that will completed for each person living in foster care.

The SIS (Supports Intensity Scale) is the other assessment instrument that will be completed for each individual living in foster care who also attends an employment or community inclusion day program outside of their foster home.

So, some individuals will only receive one (1) assessment, the SNAP (if they do not attend a work or day program). And, some individuals will receive two (2) assessments, the SIS and the SNAP (if they live in foster care and attend a work or a day program).

The reason that individuals who live in foster care and who also attend a work/day program must have both the SNAP and the SIS, is that the SIS level of support, or the “tier” that someone receives following their SIS Assessment, will eventually be used to determine the service rate for the support they receive from their Employment/Commumity Inclusion program.

Regarding Service Rate Adjustments:

1) All individuals receiving the SNAP, will have their foster care service rate adjusted within 7 business days of the assessment being conducted

2) However, Individuals who ALSO receive a SIS (because they attend an employment/day program), will not have their employment/day program service rate adjusted at this time. The level of support, or “tier” will be determined as a result of the SIS assessment. This Tier will be the Tier used to eventually adjust the Employment/Day Service Rate for the Individual when the new ReBAR Employment Rate Model is ready to be implemented. This implementation is not likely to occur until near the end of the 2011-2013 Biennium.
When and How Will These Assessments Occur?

The ReBAR Assessment Unit will conduct four (4) “Rounds” of assessments (3-4 months in length each), until all 1800 some individuals in Adult Foster Care have been assessed and receive a provider rate adjustment.

Individuals will be scheduled largely by geography. In larger counties assessments are likely to be scheduled in every round and will involve the entire time period in order to complete all assessments in that county. Some mid-to-smaller size counties will have assessments completed within one or two rounds.

The “1st Round” of assessments will begin in August 2011 and will include approximately 700 individuals who will receive assessments.

Not all individuals will be scheduled for assessments at the same time. The Assessment Unit will use the following to proceed with these assessments over the next approximately 15 months:

The 2nd Round” will begin in November 2011
The 3rd Round” will begin in March of 2012
The 4th Round will begin in July 2012

Providers and Individuals will be notified by their CDDP Service Coordinator in the month prior to “the round,” in which they are on the list to receive an assessment.

Steps in the Scheduling Process:

1. For the 1st Round of assessments, the Assessment Unit will contact CDDP Service Coordinators in July 2011, and confirm the names of Individuals in each county who will need to receive assessments. For the subsequent rounds (2nd, 3rd, and 4th), the Unit will contact CDDP Service Coordinators one month before the assessments are to begin, so that scheduling can occur.

2. CDDP Service Coordinators will select from the, “available dates and times” that they get from the Assessment Unit to schedule the assessments.

3. CDDP Service Coordinators will then make arrangements directly with the Foster Care Provider, the Individual, the Employment/Community Inclusion Program Provider (if applicable), family members or guardians (if applicable) to participate in the assessment.
4. CDDP Service Coordinators will also select the appropriate location for the assessment to occur to best accommodate the group of participants, known as “Respondents.”

**Notes about the location:** An assessment can be held in any location that can accommodate the following:

- Ensure confidentiality
- Large enough to fit the Respondent Group size
- Absent of any other distractions or interruptions
- Available for the entire time period necessary

There are other important points about scheduling these assessments. Service Coordinators and others can find information by viewing, “How to Ensure a Successful Assessment” at www.oregon.gov/DHS/dd/rebar/docs/afc-assess/successful-assess.pdf

5. The Assessment Specialist will arrive at least 15-20 minutes ahead of time to set up his/her computer and organize materials for the interview.

6. The Assessment Specialist and the Respondents meet at the designated date, time and location and begin the assessment interview.

All contact for scheduling of assessments will be made by the local CDDP Service Coordinator for each Individual.

**The SIS and the SNAP**

The SIS and the SNAP are both conducted in a group interview with people who know the individual very well. The participants are called “Respondents,” and they will need to be present for both the assessments (if both a SIS and a SNAP are needed) until each is fully completed.

**Who Attends the Assessment Interviews?**

Respondents who participate are named by the Service Coordinator (and the Individual him/herself) because they know the Individual and his/her daily support needs very well. Respondents in these interviews (whether one or both assessments are conducted) must agree to stay throughout the assessment(s) until fully completed. See The Role of A Respondent at www.oregon.gov/DHS/dd/rebar/docs/afc-assess/role-respondent.pdf.

There is only one exception to this: the Employment Provider (if applicable) does not need to attend the SNAP Assessment that occurs after the SIS is conducted. They must be present for the SIS Assessment however.
Sometimes **one observer is approved ahead of time** by the Assessment Specialist to attend. See The Role of An Observer [www.oregon.gov/DHS/dd/rebar/docs/afc-assess/role-observer.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/dd/rebar/docs/afc-assess/role-observer.pdf). An observer may not participate in the discussion and is asked to refrain from causing any distractions to the Assessment Interviewer or the Respondents during their discussion. An observer is not to “come and go” during the interview, but is asked to remain for the entire interview like everyone else.

**Reminder:** The assessment is a meeting for and about *THE INDIVIDUAL*. Confidential information will be shared. It is a time when the Individual’s support needs must be captured accurately by people who know the Individual very well. Any other people who attend must be invited by the Individual or receive his/her permission to attend.

Additionally, these are not ISP meetings, nor are they a time when service rates are to be discussed.

These assessments are only as good as the information that participants bring to the interview about what the individual needs (including the information offered by the Individual him/herself). So it is very important that a “valid respondent group” be gathered for the assessment. The description of a “Valid Respondent Group” can be found at [www.oregon.gov/DHS/dd/rebar/docs/afc-assess/valid-respondent.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/dd/rebar/docs/afc-assess/valid-respondent.pdf)

At a minimum, the following people are expected to participate in the assessment:

1) The **Adult Foster Care Provider** (and/or hired staff)

and

2) The **Employment Provider** (if applicable)  
3) The **Service Coordinator** for the Individual  
4) The **Individual** (for as much time in the interview as possible)

There may also be other respondents who participate because they know the Individual and his/her daily support needs very well. But the **AFC Provider and a Service Coordinator are expected to participate along with the Employment Provider** (if applicable).
How Much Time Will It Take?

If a SIS is to be conducted, the SIS will be conducted first and be followed by the SNAP on the same day (with breaks, including one for lunch).

The SIS Assessment typically takes 3-3½ hours to complete, and the SNAP usually takes 1-1½ hours to complete. So respondents for the interview should plan to reserve up to 6 hours (including a break for lunch, etc.) on the day the assessment interview(s) take place. Attendees are asked to stay for the entire assessment(s) until it is completed.

It is wise to plan ahead for someone to be available to take the Individual home or elsewhere, if they are unable stay until the assessment is completed. Water and available snacks can also be a good idea.

It is also important that Foster Care Providers arrange for substitute to care for other Individuals, if there are other persons in their home. If participating as a Respondent in an interviewer, the Provider and/or hired staff for the home must be available to focus exclusively on the assessment for one individual while it is being conducted.

Who Schedules the Assessment?

It is the responsibility of the CDDP Service Coordinator to invite the appropriate people to the assessment. It is also the responsibility of the CDDP Service Coordinator to ensure that everyone is notified of where and when the assessment is to occur, AND to notify the Assessment Specialist ahead of time about any accommodations that are needed for the individual or by other participants in the assessment interview.

If there is information that providers have about the Individual that might make him/her uncomfortable in a group discussion (yet is important information about what the person’s support needs are), the Assessment Specialist should be informed before the interview so that alternative arrangements can be made to avoid a difficult situation, but still capture the important information.

There are other very important things associated with scheduling these assessment interviews. “How to Ensure a Successful Assessment” can be found at www.oregon.gov/DHS/dd/rebar/docs/afc-assess/successful-assess.pdf. If things on this list are taken care of ahead of time, the assessment should go more smoothly and even perhaps more quickly.

Sometimes, when some things don’t occur before the assessment starts, it can cause the Assessment Specialist to have to cancel and reschedule it. See the “Top Ten Reasons An Assessment Can Get Canceled” at www.oregon.gov/DHS/dd/rebar/docs/afc-assess/why-assess-canceled.pdf.
What Happens During a SIS Assessment?

To conduct the SIS Assessment, the ReBAR Assessment Specialist (Interviewer) facilitates a group discussion. The participants, called “Respondents,” are considered “experts” on the support needs of the Individual. However, the Specialist is considered “the expert” on the appropriate interpretation and completion of the SIS.

ReBAR Assessment Specialists have been especially trained to conduct the SIS by AAIDD (the American Association for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities – authors of the SIS instrument). They were all first tested in the administration of the SIS before they could begin conducting assessments. Then every year thereafter, they are tested again to ensure they are maintaining reliability in the way they conduct the assessment. The testing is done by a Senior SIS Trainer from AAIDD. Each Specialist must receive a “full pass” from the SIS Trainer in order to be endorsed to continue to conduct SIS Assessments for another year.

The Interviewer begins the assessment with introductions of all persons gathered for the assessment. He/She will make sure that everyone who should be present to provide information in the assessment [whether a SIS or SNAP], is present before proceeding.

The Specialist will then provide a brief overview of the SIS, including how items are rated by the group. The Interviewer will guide the group to a “match” between the description of the support that the person needs (given by the group), with the appropriate rating in the SIS (definitions are clarified by the Interviewer).

Do not misinterpret the frequent “probing questions” that the Interviewer will be asking the group of respondents. It is not that the Interviewer doesn’t believe or doesn’t agree with how group is rating a particular question. The Interviewer is required by training, to ask in detail about, “What does the support you provide actually look like?,” or “What are the actions that you take when providing support to this individual?.”

A sample of the SIS tool and how it is used in an assessment for an individual named Darlene Simmons (a composite profile), can be found at www.oregon.gov/DHS/dd/rebar/docs/afc-assess/sis-simmons-example.pdf. It is helpful to review Darlene’s Assessment to become more familiar with how the SIS is filled out and the areas in which the group will be responding.

More information about the SNAP and SIS can be found at: www.oregon.gov/DHS/dd/rebar/assess-afc.shtml
Foster Care Providers, CDDP Service Coordinators, Employment Providers and others who are not familiar with the SIS and/or the SNAP assessment tools, are strongly encouraged to review the above information prior to participating in either a SNAP or a SIS Assessment.

The Consumer/Self-advocate Handbook is specifically designed for the person who will receive the assessment and will help them understand the process. https://apps.state.or.us/Forms/Served/de9711.pdf Please share this information with the person who is going to receive the assessment, so that he/she can be prepared for their Assessment Interview!