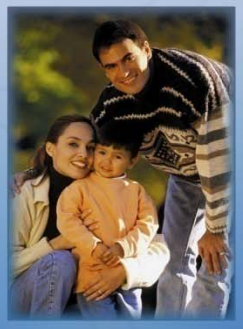
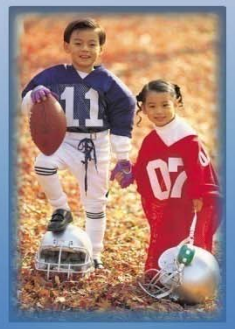
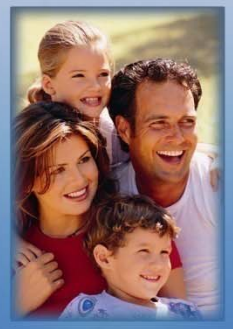
OWRA: An Online Tool for Supporting Self-Sufficiency

Client Assessments and the Reemployment of Low-Income Workers

July 29, 2010

TANFTechConnections
Integrated Support—Innovative Solutions

Acknowledgement

This project is sponsored by:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,

Administration for Children and Families,

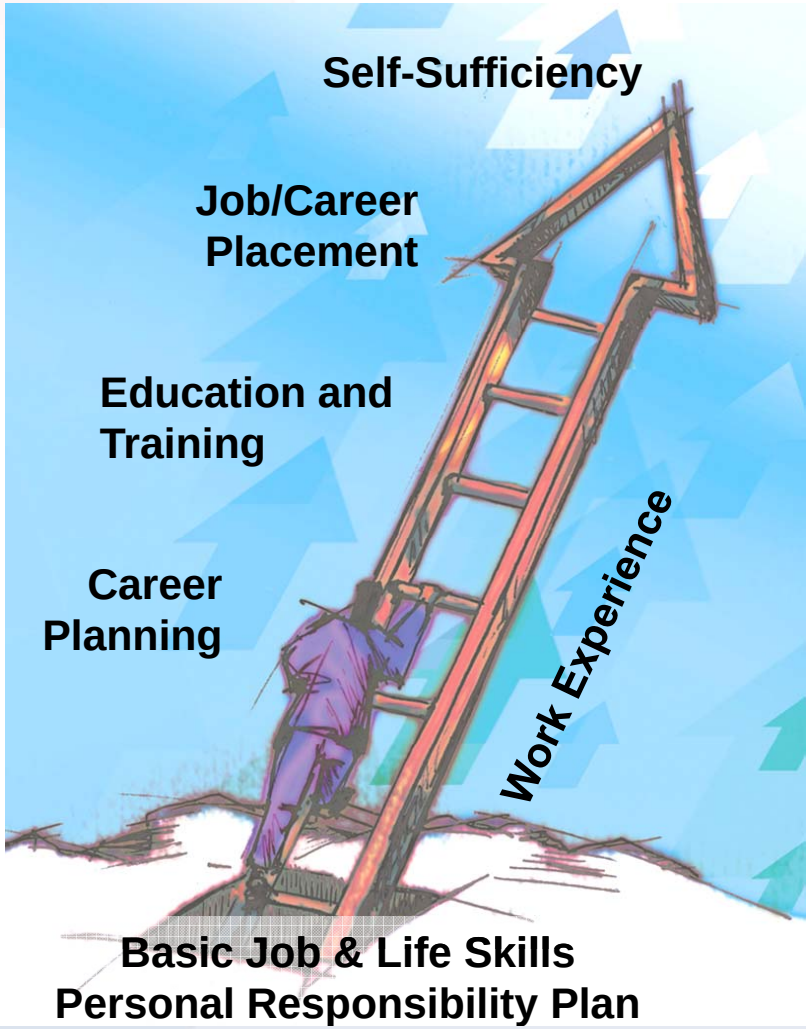
Office of Family Assistance.

Agenda

- OWRA Overview
- Setting the Stage
- Showcase Tool
- Lessons Learned

Online Work Readiness Assessment (OWRA) Tool

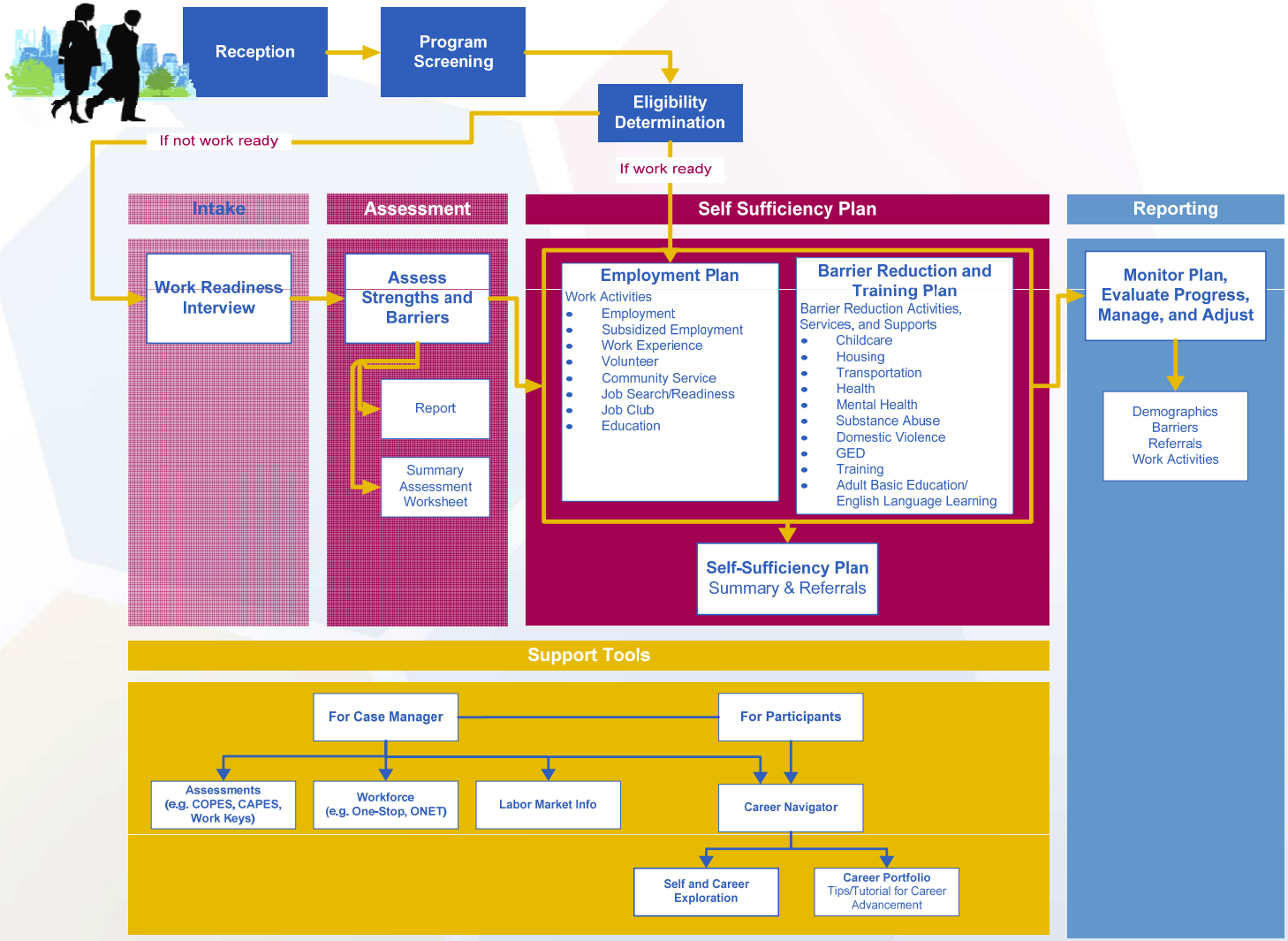
Web-based suite of resources, tools, assessments and guidelines that will help TANF agency staff engage participants in work-focused activities leading to long-term self-sufficiency



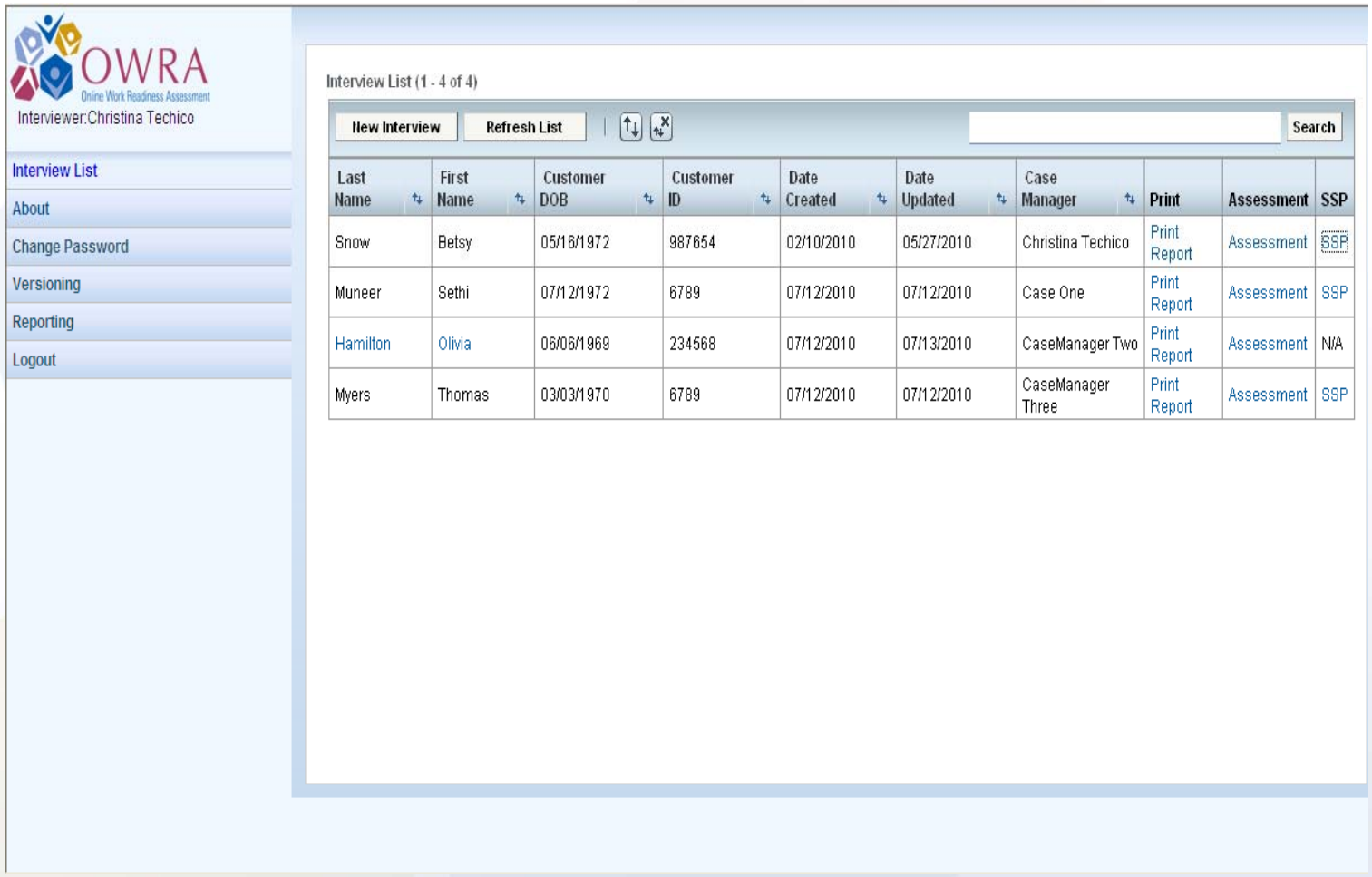
Evidence-Based Research and Practice

- Importance of quickly identifying and addressing personal, family, logistical and community challenges and barriers
- Increased need for range of assessment and service strategies that can help uncover barriers
- Differentiation between “screening” and “assessment”

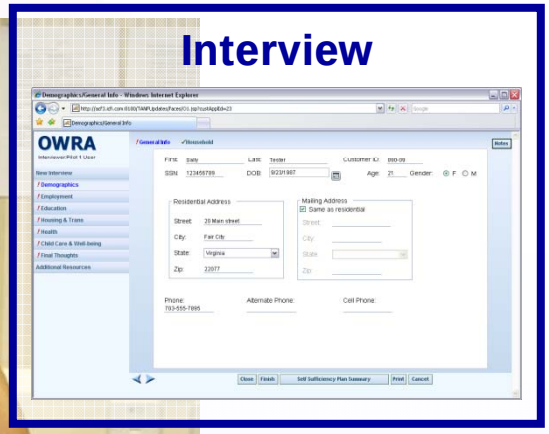
OWRA Schema

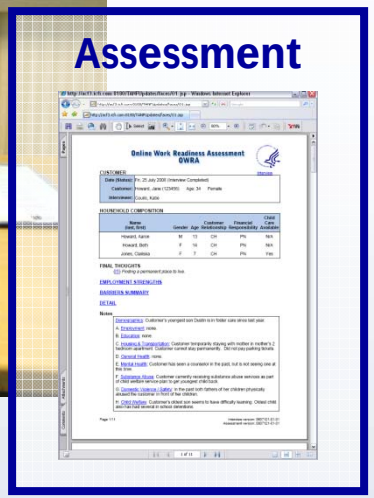

Reception
Program Screening
Eligibility Determination
If not work ready
If work ready
Intake
Assessment
Self Sufficiency Plan
Reporting
Work Readiness Interview
Assess Strengths and Barriers
Report
Summary Assessment Worksheet
Employment Plan
Work Activities
Employment
Subsidized Employment
Work Experience
Volunteer
Community Service
Job Search/Readiness
Job Club
Education
Barrier Reduction and Training Plan
Barrier Reduction Activities, Services, and Supports
Childcare
Housing
Transportation
Health
Mental Health
Substance Abuse
Domestic Violence
GED
Training
Adult Basic Education/ English Language Learning
Self-Sufficiency Plan
Summary & Referrals
Monitor Plan, Evaluate Progress, Manage, and Adjust
Demographics
Barriers
Referrals
Work Activities
Support Tools
For Case Manager
For Participants
Assessments (e.g. COPES, CAPES, Work Keys)
Workforce (e.g. One-Stop, ONET)
Labor Market Info
Career Navigator
Self and Career Exploration
Career Portfolio
Tips/Tutorial for Career Advancement

Logging Into OWRA



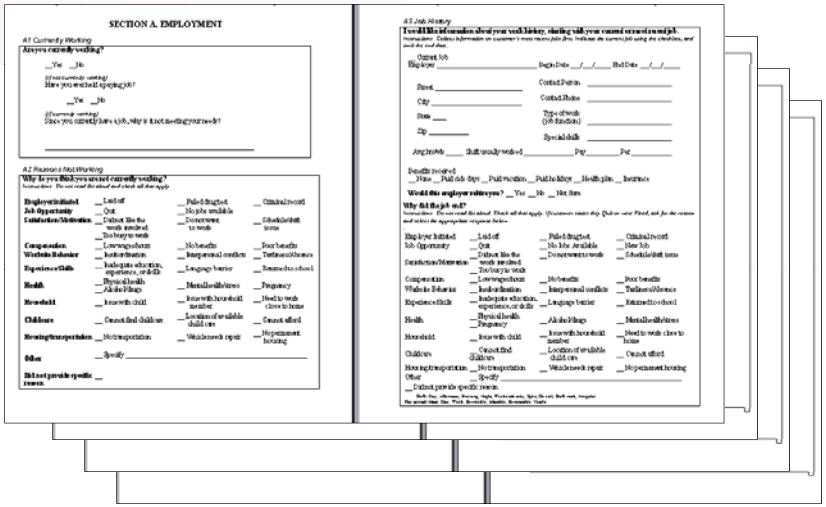
Intake and Assessment Overview



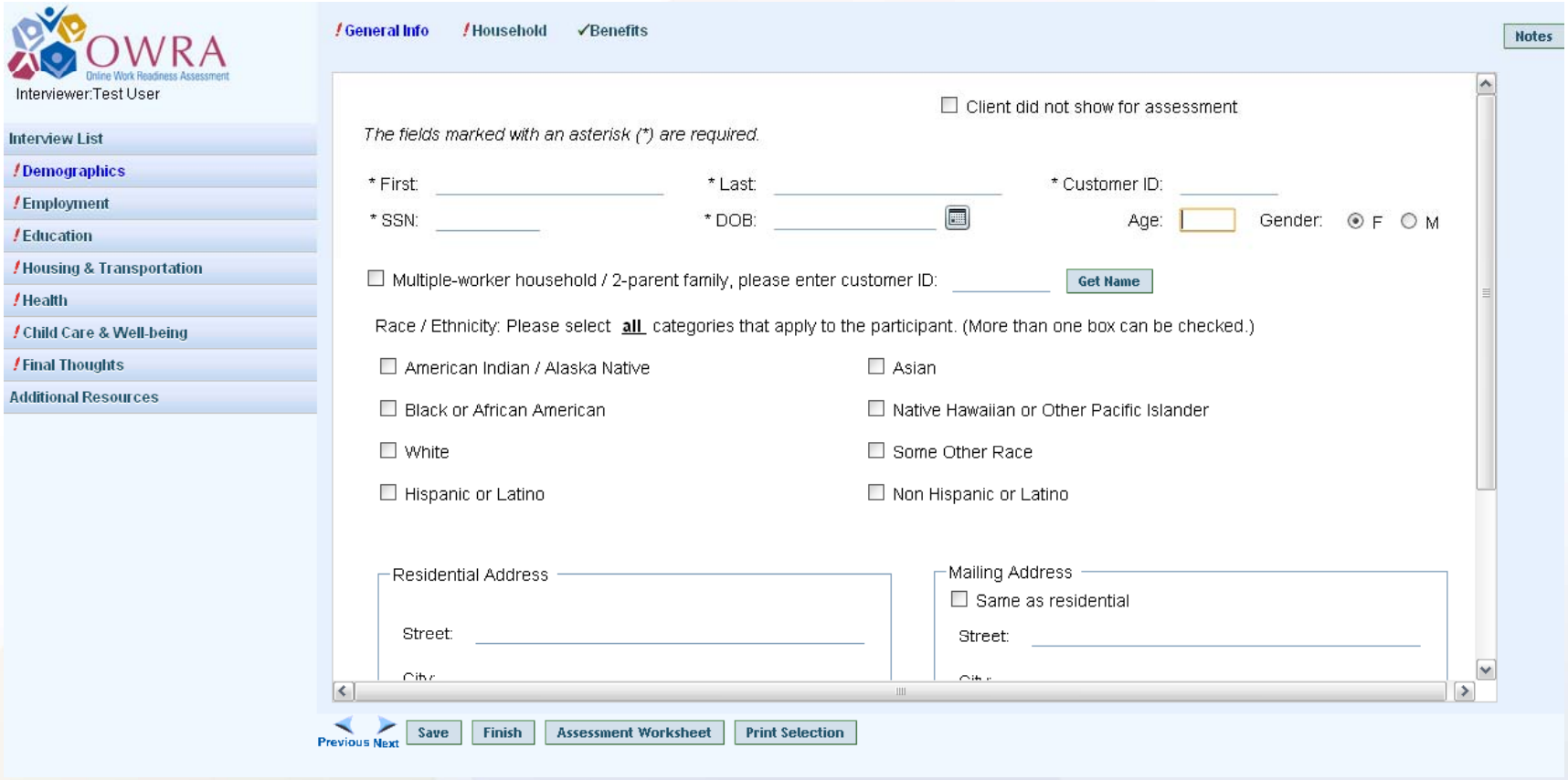


Intake and Assessment Modules Features

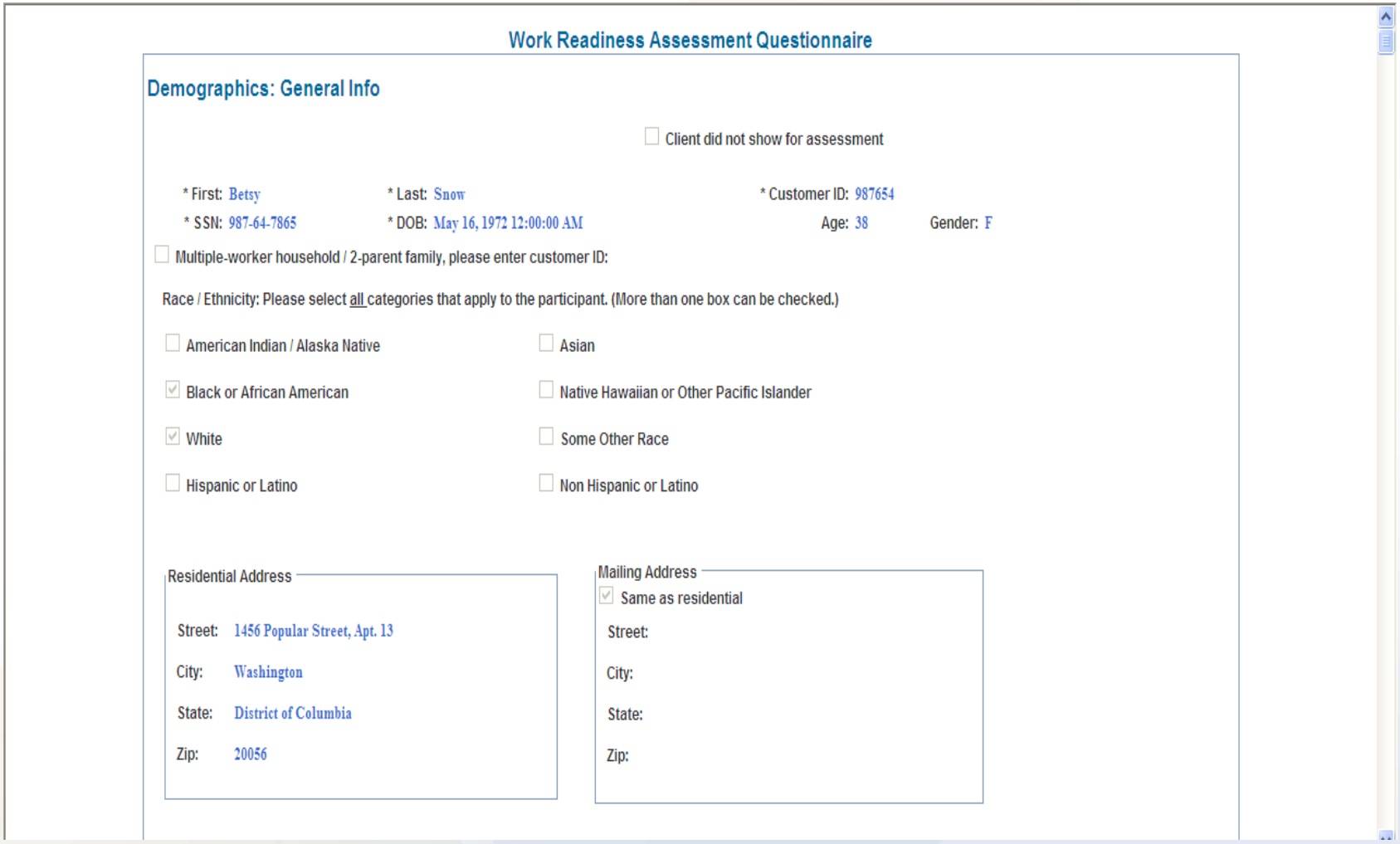
- Interactive dialog between case manager and participant
- Nine topic areas:
  - Demographics;
  - Employment;
  - Education;
  - Housing and Transportation;
  - Health
    - General Health;
    - Mental Health;
    - Substance Abuse;
    - Domestic Violence & Safety; and
  - Child Care, Child Support, Parenting, and Well-being



Inside the Modules



Print Questionnaire



Work Readiness Assessment Questionnaire

Demographics: General Info

☐ Client did not show for assessment

* First: Betsy * Last: Snow * Customer ID: 987654

* SSN: 987-64-7865 * DOB: May 16, 1972 12:00:00 AM Age: 38 Gender: F

☐ Multiple-worker household / 2-parent family, please enter customer ID:

Race / Ethnicity: Please select all categories that apply to the participant. (More than one box can be checked.)

☐ American Indian / Alaska Native
☐ Asian
☑ Black or African American
☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
☑ White
☐ Some Other Race
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Non Hispanic or Latino

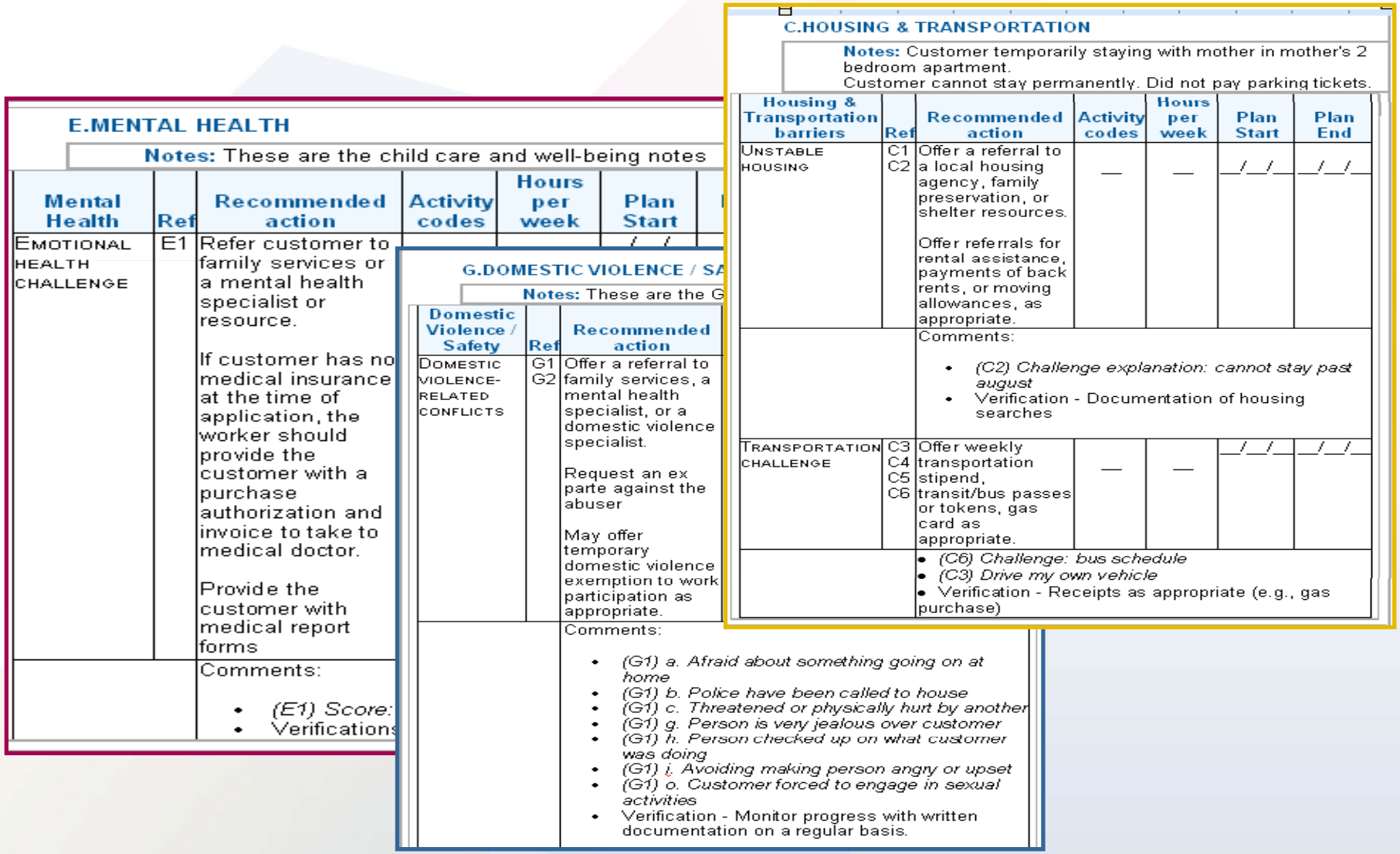
Residential Address

Street: 1456 Popular Street, Apt. 13
City: Washington
State: District of Columbia
Zip: 20056

Mailing Address

☑ Same as residential
Street:
City:
State:
Zip:

Summary Assessment



C.HOUSING & TRANSPORTATION

Notes: Customer temporarily staying with mother in mother's 2 bedroom apartment.
Customer cannot stay permanently. Did not pay parking tickets.

Housing & Transportation barriers	Ref	Recommended action	Activity codes	Hours per week	Plan Start	Plan End
UNSTABLE HOUSING	C1 C2	Offer a referral to a local housing agency, family preservation, or shelter resources. Offer referrals for rental assistance, payments of back rents, or moving allowances, as appropriate.	__	__	__/__/__	__/__/__
		Comments: • *(C2) Challenge explanation: cannot stay past august* • Verification - Documentation of housing searches				
TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGE	C3 C4 C5 C6	Offer weekly transportation stipend, transit/bus passes or tokens, gas card as appropriate.	__	__	__/__/__	__/__/__
		• *(C6) Challenge: bus schedule* • *(C3) Drive my own vehicle* • Verification - Receipts as appropriate (e.g., gas purchase)				

E.MENTAL HEALTH

Notes: These are the child care and well-being notes

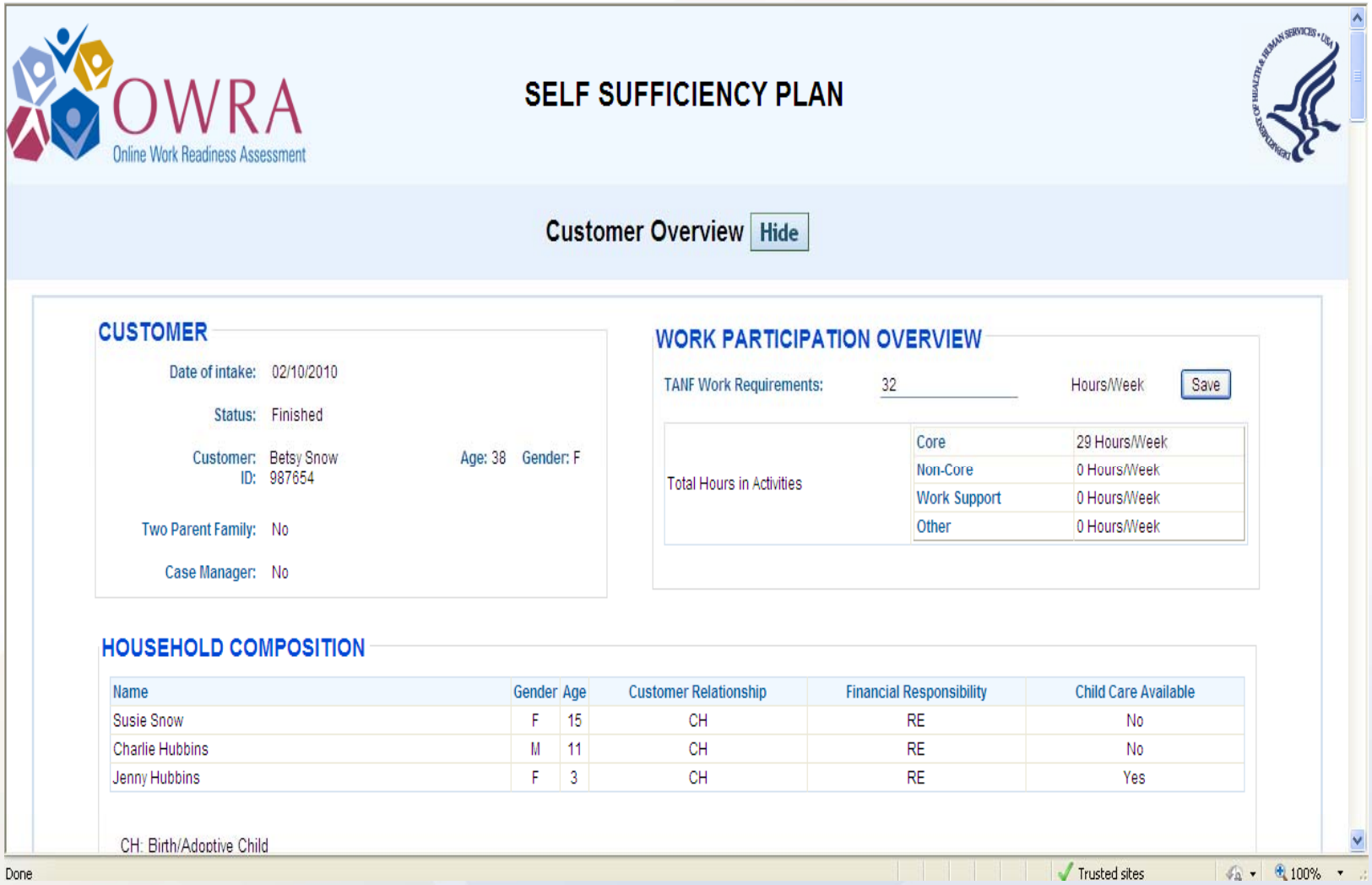
Mental Health	Ref	Recommended action	Activity codes	Hours per week	Plan Start	Plan End
EMOTIONAL HEALTH CHALLENGE	E1	Refer customer to family services or a mental health specialist or resource. If customer has no medical insurance at the time of application, the worker should provide the customer with a purchase authorization and invoice to take to medical doctor. Provide the customer with medical report forms			/ /	
		Comments: • *(E1) Score:* • Verifications				

G.DOMESTIC VIOLENCE / SA

Notes: These are the G

Domestic Violence / Safety	Ref	Recommended action
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE-RELATED CONFLICTS	G1 G2	Offer a referral to family services, a mental health specialist, or a domestic violence specialist. Request an ex parte against the abuser May offer temporary domestic violence exemption to work participation as appropriate.
		Comments: • *(G1) a. Afraid about something going on at home* • *(G1) b. Police have been called to house* • *(G1) c. Threatened or physically hurt by another* • *(G1) g. Person is very jealous over customer* • *(G1) h. Person checked up on what customer was doing* • *(G1) i. Avoiding making person angry or upset* • *(G1) o. Customer forced to engage in sexual activities* • Verification - Monitor progress with written documentation on a regular basis.

Self-Sufficiency Plan



OWRA
Online Work Readiness Assessment

SELF SUFFICIENCY PLAN

Customer Overview [Hide]

CUSTOMER

Date of intake: 02/10/2010

Status: Finished

Customer: Betsy Snow Age: 38 Gender: F
ID: 987654

Two Parent Family: No

Case Manager: No

WORK PARTICIPATION OVERVIEW

TANF Work Requirements: 32 Hours/Week [Save]

Total Hours in Activities	Core	29 Hours/Week
	Non-Core	0 Hours/Week
	Work Support	0 Hours/Week
	Other	0 Hours/Week

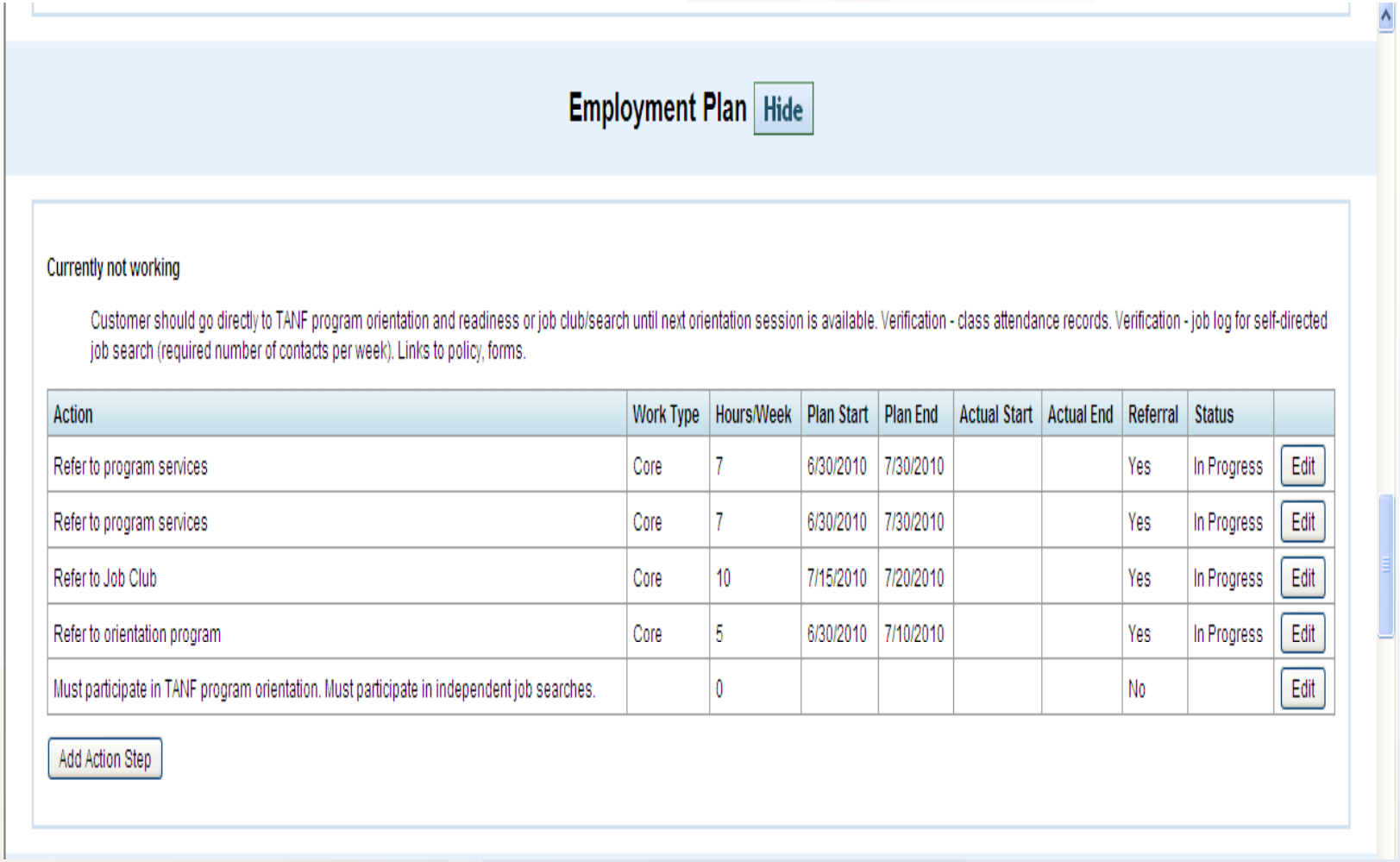
HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Name	Gender	Age	Customer Relationship	Financial Responsibility	Child Care Available
Susie Snow	F	15	CH	RE	No
Charlie Hubbins	M	11	CH	RE	No
Jenny Hubbins	F	3	CH	RE	Yes

CH: Birth/Adoptive Child

Done Trusted sites 100%

Employment Plan



Employment Plan Hide

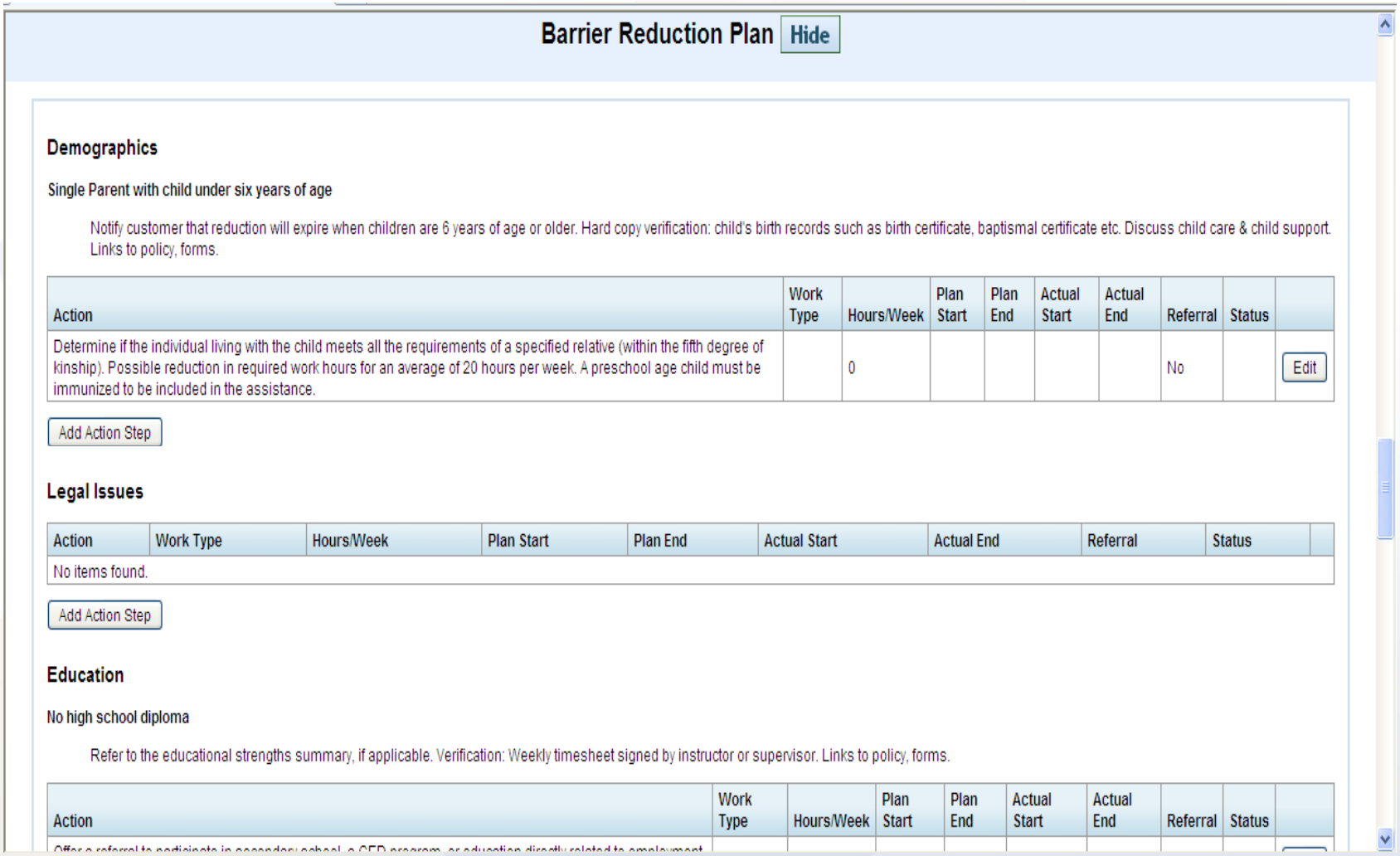
Currently not working

Customer should go directly to TANF program orientation and readiness or job club/search until next orientation session is available. Verification - class attendance records. Verification - job log for self-directed job search (required number of contacts per week). Links to policy, forms.

Action	Work Type	Hours/Week	Plan Start	Plan End	Actual Start	Actual End	Referral	Status	
Refer to program services	Core	7	6/30/2010	7/30/2010			Yes	In Progress	Edit
Refer to program services	Core	7	6/30/2010	7/30/2010			Yes	In Progress	Edit
Refer to Job Club	Core	10	7/15/2010	7/20/2010			Yes	In Progress	Edit
Refer to orientation program	Core	5	6/30/2010	7/10/2010			Yes	In Progress	Edit
Must participate in TANF program orientation. Must participate in independent job searches.		0					No		Edit

Add Action Step

Barrier Reduction Plan



Barrier Reduction Plan Hide

Demographics

Single Parent with child under six years of age

Notify customer that reduction will expire when children are 6 years of age or older. Hard copy verification: child's birth records such as birth certificate, baptismal certificate etc. Discuss child care & child support. Links to policy, forms.

Action	Work Type	Hours/Week	Plan Start	Plan End	Actual Start	Actual End	Referral	Status	
Determine if the individual living with the child meets all the requirements of a specified relative (within the fifth degree of kinship). Possible reduction in required work hours for an average of 20 hours per week. A preschool age child must be immunized to be included in the assistance.		0					No		Edit

Add Action Step

Legal Issues

Action	Work Type	Hours/Week	Plan Start	Plan End	Actual Start	Actual End	Referral	Status
No items found.								

Add Action Step

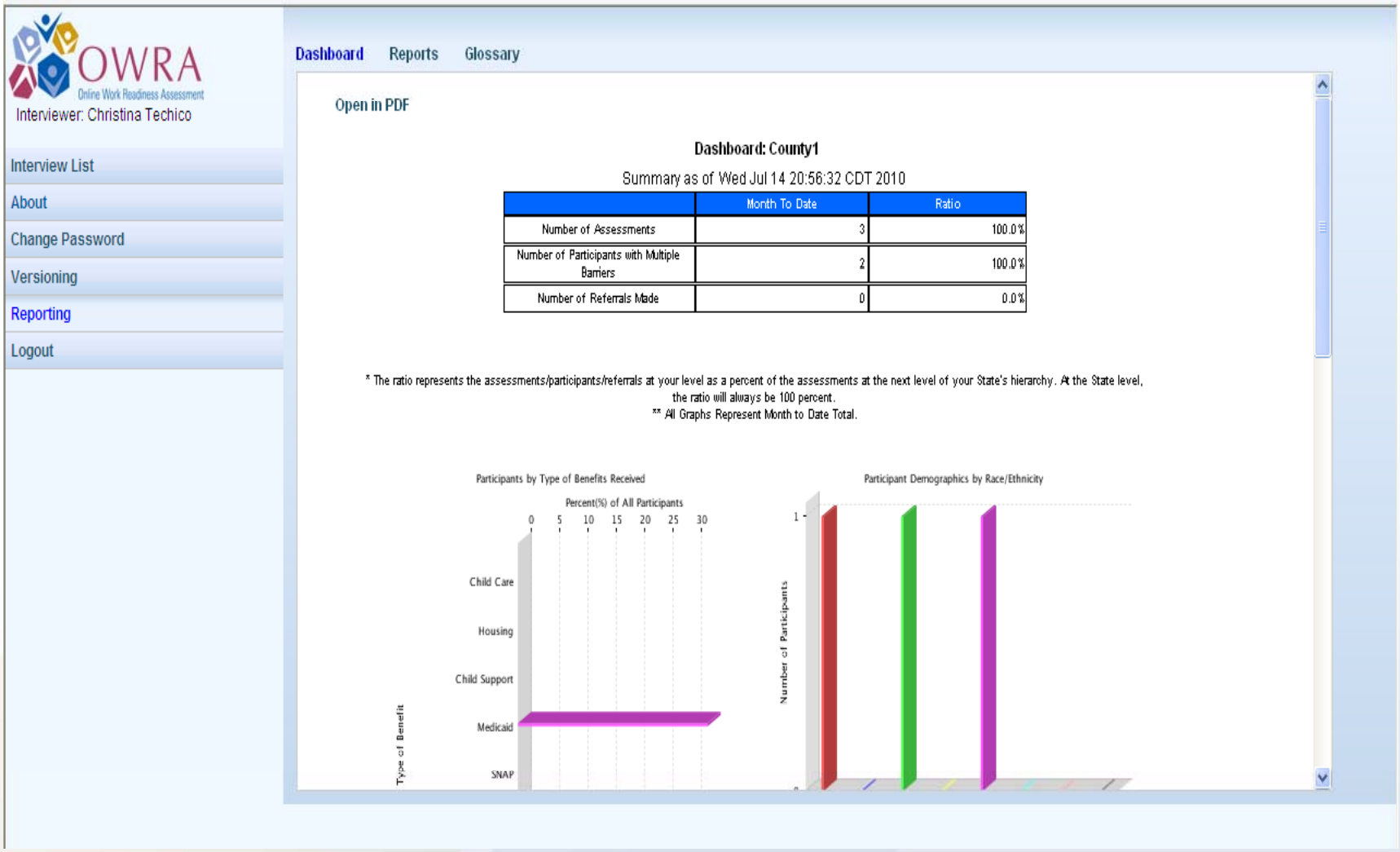
Education

No high school diploma

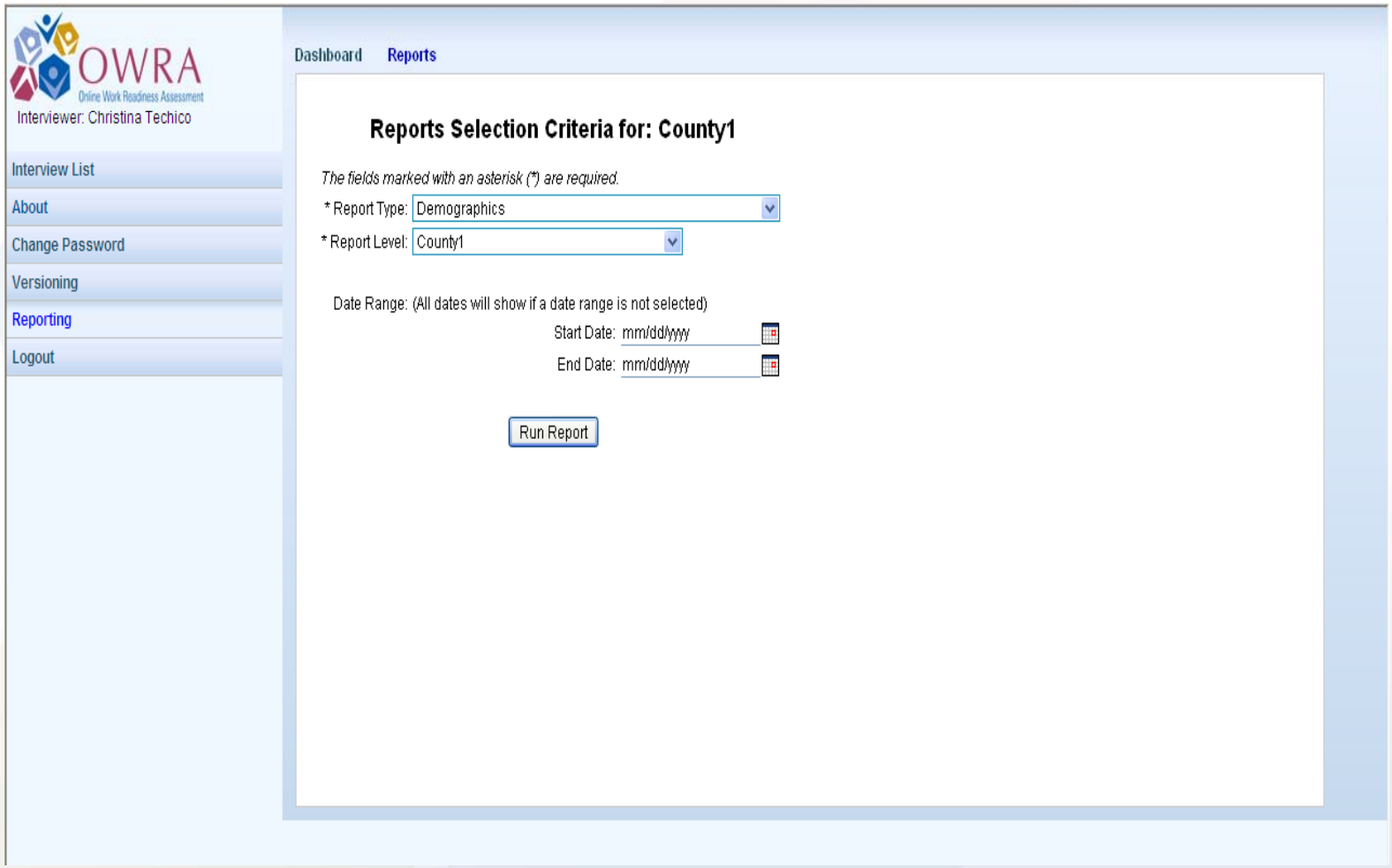
Refer to the educational strengths summary, if applicable. Verification: Weekly timesheet signed by instructor or supervisor. Links to policy, forms.

Action	Work Type	Hours/Week	Plan Start	Plan End	Actual Start	Actual End	Referral	Status	
Offer a referral to participate in secondary school, a GED program, or education directly related to employment									

Reporting Module – Dashboard

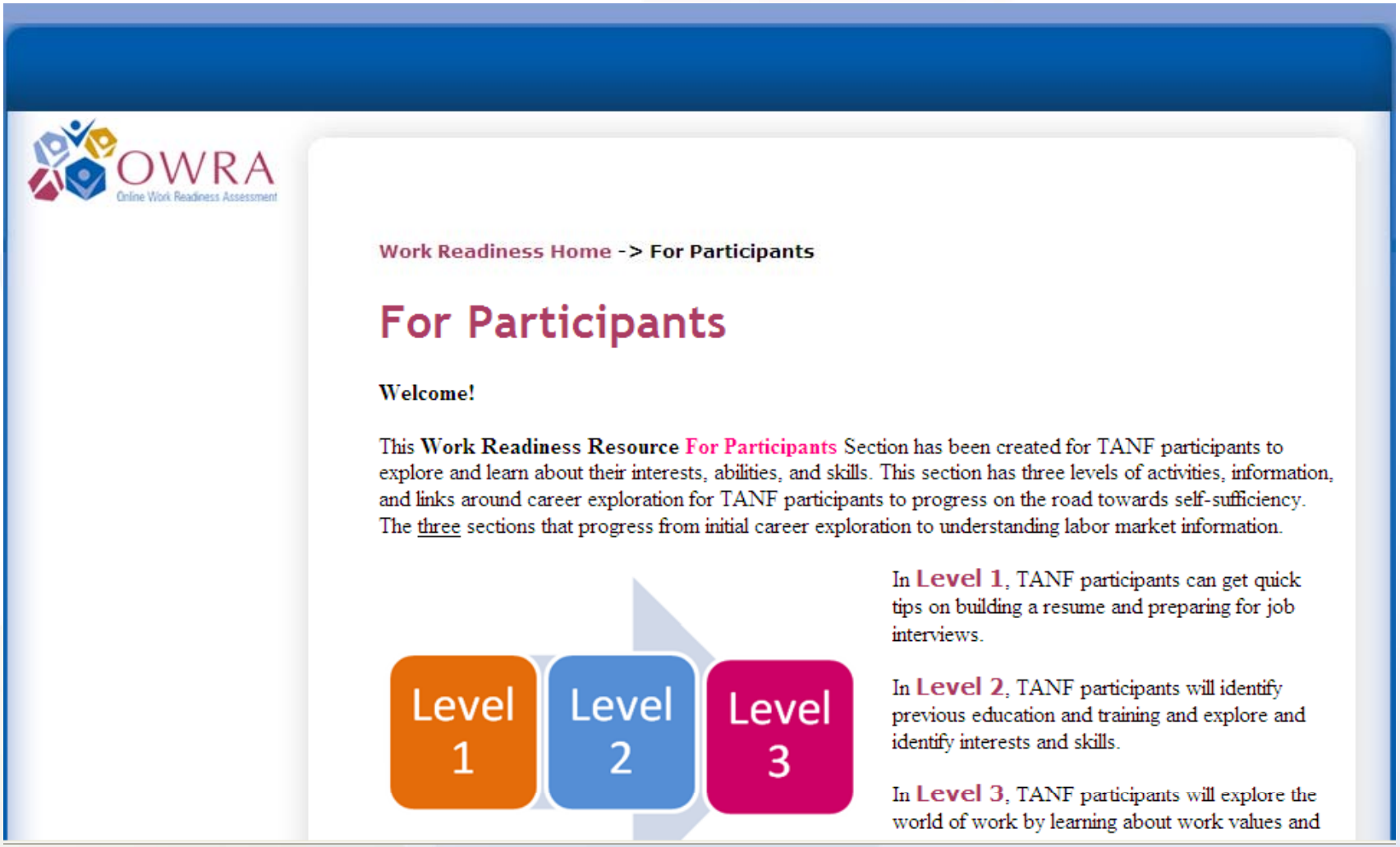


Reporting Module –Reports



Support Tools

For Participants



Level 1

For Participants

Level One Homepage

Hello! The Work Readiness Resource **For Participant** Section **Level 1** has been created as a tool for you to explore the world of work. In this level, you will:

- Learn how to write a **resume**,
- Learn about writing ***cover letters***,
- Explore all the things you need to do to get ready for an **interview**,
- Create a ***career portfolio***, and
- Learn about what employers are looking for in their employees!

Let's get started!

Level 2

For Participants

Level Two Homepage

Hello! The Work Readiness Resource **For Participants Level 2** has been created as a tool for you to explore the world of work. In this level, you will:

- Identify your previous **education and training**;
- Learn about your ***skills***;
- Explore and identify your **interests**;
- Identify your **abilities** as they relate to the world of work;
- Looking at ***why*** you should explore your interests, abilities, and skills; and
- **Set career goals and objectives!**

Let's get started!

Level 3

For Participants

Level Three Homepage

Hello! The Work Readiness Resource **For Participants Level 3** has been created as a tool for you to explore the world of work. In this level, you will:

- Have the option to **further explore your interests, abilities**, and what you value in your work environment (**work values**),
- Explore information about **jobs and occupations**,
- Learn about **career clusters and pathways** and the knowledge and skills that are similar across multiple occupations,
- Get information about **jobs, training, and opportunities** in your local or state, and
- Build a **personal education plan** of education, training, and work experience opportunities that:
  - aligns with **your** goals, interests, abilities, skills, and work values;
  - builds on the knowledge of jobs and occupations that match **your** interests and goals; and
  - details what your next steps are such as education, and training, work experience, and work supports in order for you to meet **your** interests and goals in a career.

Let's get started!

For Case Managers

For Case Managers

The **Work Readiness Resource** **For Case Managers** is created for TANF caseworkers, job developers, Job Club instructors, and any other person that works with TANF participants. This section provides an interactive hub of information, resources, and tools so that you can help your TANF participants become self-sufficient. There are 6 subsections:

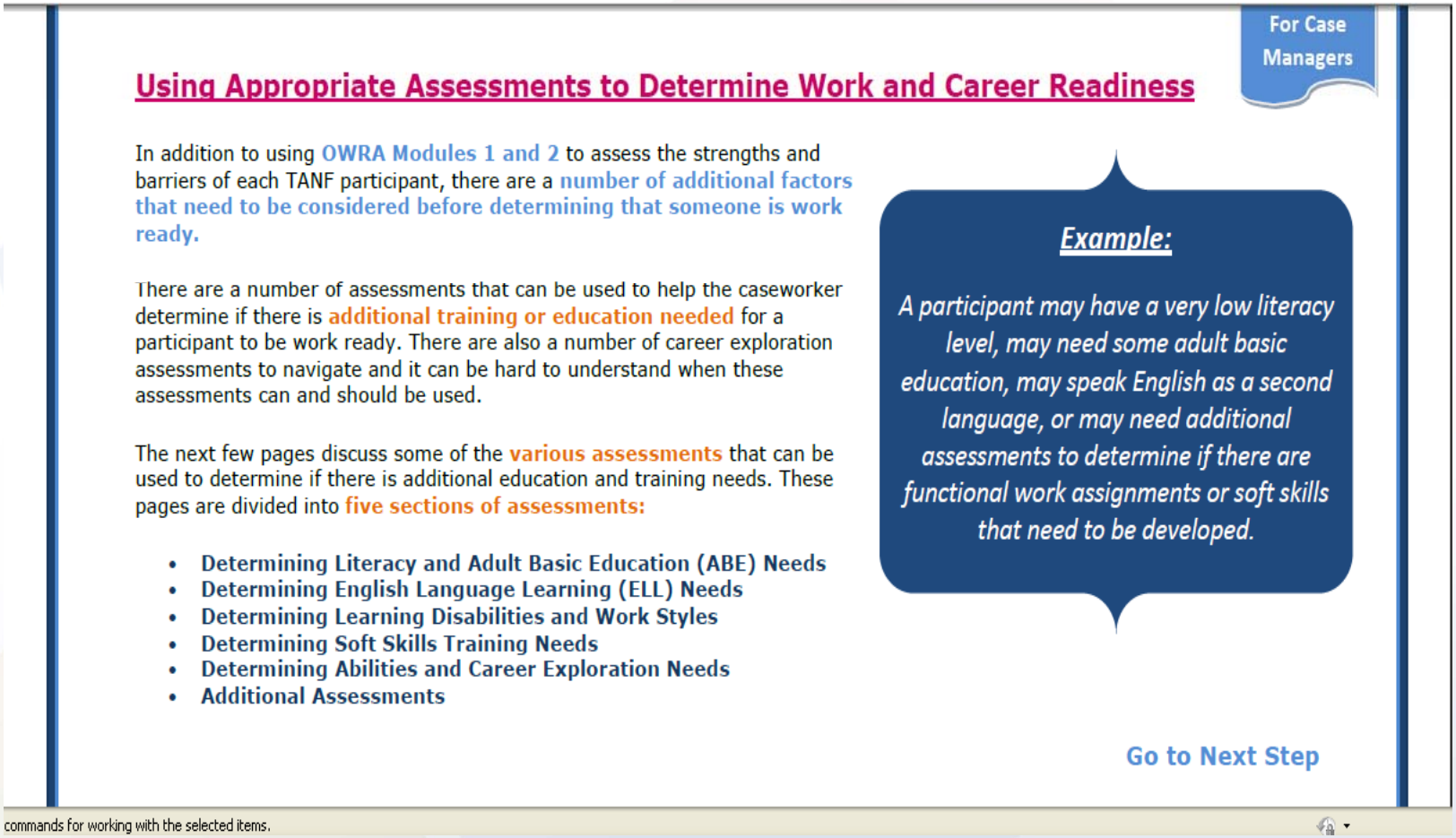
1. **For Participants Overview**
   - Explains the For Participant section.
   - Orients you to the 3 levels that your participants will explore as they learn about career exploration.

2. **Key Words and Concepts and Exploring Jobs, Occupations, and Careers Overview**
   - This will give you a brief overview of some important concepts.

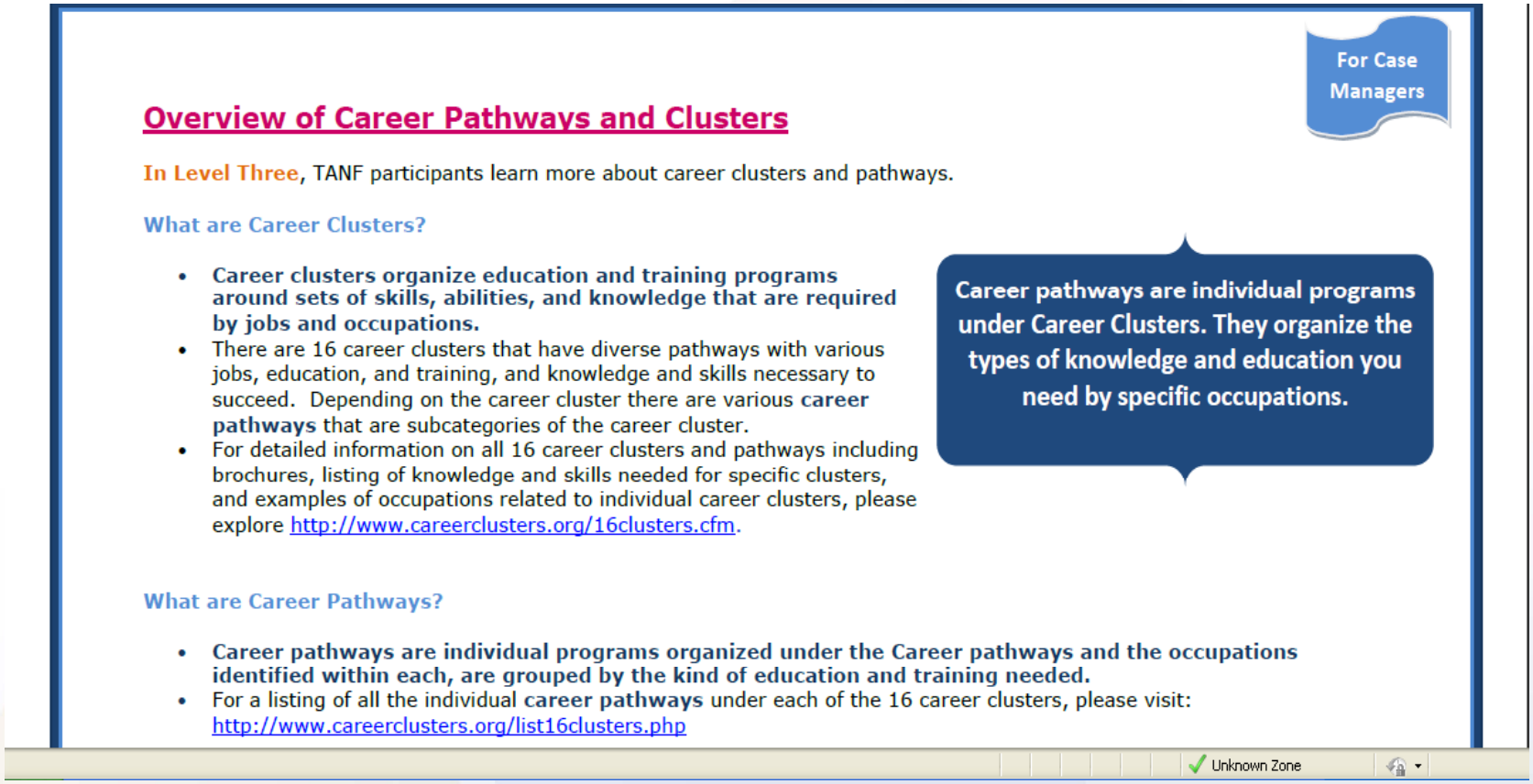
3. **Different Work Assessments**
   - Help you gain a better of understanding of your participants' abilities, skills, and additional education, literacy, language, and other training that may be needed before initial career exploration can begin.
   - Some assessments are proprietary.
   - Some assessments may need additional fees.

4. **Overview of Career Pathways and Clusters**
5. **Understanding Labor Market Information**
6. **Labor Market Information Resources**
   - Help you understand the world of workforce development and labor market information lingo, language, and available resources.
   - Lets you explores education and training opportunities, options, and available resources.

Inside For Case Managers



Inside For Case Managers



For Case Managers

Overview of Career Pathways and Clusters

In Level Three, TANF participants learn more about career clusters and pathways.

What are Career Clusters?

- **Career clusters organize education and training programs around sets of skills, abilities, and knowledge that are required by jobs and occupations.**
- There are 16 career clusters that have diverse pathways with various jobs, education, and training, and knowledge and skills necessary to succeed. Depending on the career cluster there are various **career pathways** that are subcategories of the career cluster.
- For detailed information on all 16 career clusters and pathways including brochures, listing of knowledge and skills needed for specific clusters, and examples of occupations related to individual career clusters, please explore http://www.careerclusters.org/16clusters.cfm.

Career pathways are individual programs under Career Clusters. They organize the types of knowledge and education you need by specific occupations.

What are Career Pathways?

- **Career pathways are individual programs organized under the Career pathways and the occupations identified within each, are grouped by the kind of education and training needed.**
- For a listing of all the individual **career pathways** under each of the 16 career clusters, please visit: http://www.careerclusters.org/list16clusters.php

Unknown Zone

Inside For Case Managers

For Case Managers

Labor Market Information Resources

Below you will find some resources to explore and better understand labor market information and how to access information around careers, occupations, and employment projections to share with your TANF participants.

- *A Teacher's Guide: US Bureau of Labor Statistics*
- *Occupational Outlook Handbook*
- *Occupational Outlook Quarterly*
- *Occupational Projections and Training Data*
- *America's Career InfoNet*
- *Americas Job Bank*
- *Apprenticeship Programs*
- *America's Service Locator*
- *Career Info Net*
- *O*NET Resource Center*

A Teacher's Guide: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

This Guide provides a great starting place for caseworkers and job developers to understand how to navigate and use the US Bureau of Labor Statistics Web site and all of its resources. It provides a user friendly Web page that provides useful career information that is concise and to the point including how to

Unknown Zone

2009 Pilots

- Piloted:
  - February 1 – July 31, 2009
  - 16 sites in 5 States and the Quinault Indian Nation
- Kickoff Meeting with State/Tribal/county leadership mapping out business processes
- Customization of assessment for each State/Tribe
- On-site training (User Guide, Mock Interviews, On-site Job Coaching)
- 4-8 weeks of usage:
  - weekly check in calls, Virtual Help Desk with 1-800 number ongoing technical assistance and technical support
- Close-out Focus Groups:
  - Caseworkers and supervisors
  - State/Tribal/county leadership

Lessons Learned – Leadership

- Comprehensive assessment – thorough questions with recommendations helped create work opportunities for participants
- Standardization of assessment – critical when population is transient in nature
- Consistency across caseworkers in terms of diagnosing untreated barriers among participants
- Effective roadmap providing detailed information to guide employment planning for participants

Lessons Learned – Caseworkers and Participants

- User-friendly
- Assisted caseworkers to think more holistically about participants' desires, objectives, and strengths and barriers
- Helped identify "risk" characteristics resulting in higher number of referrals for mental health and domestic violence
- Encouraged dialogue with the participant which ensured participant engagement
- Generated more buy-in to recommendations among participants–resulting in participant success in assigned activity

Current Activities and Next Steps

- 2010 Pilot Sites for Modules 3 and 4
  - Washington, DC
  - South Carolina
  - Maryland
  - Illinois
  - Fort Belknap Indian Community (Montana)
- National Rollout of Modules 1 and 2 on Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Web site

Contact Information

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