

Goodwill Industries of Northern New England

Stability Calculator
Handbook

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Introduction to the Stability Calculator

This Handbook describes the appropriate use of the Stability Calculator, a modified version of the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix (ASSM) developed for use with individuals accessing services or supports at Goodwill NNE. The Stability Calculator Handbook is based largely on the Self-Sufficiency Matrix Handbook developed by the Opportunity Alliance. Among other things, this Handbook includes (1) a detailed explanation of each domain and response category, (2) the protocol for scoring the calculator, and (3) a complete description of the modifications that have been made to the ASSM.

Benefits of Using the Stability Calculator

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 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 in their areas of vulnerability.
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.
4. As a **measurement tool**, by allowing programs to clearly document client progress and communicate outcomes to funding organizations.
5. As a **communication tool**, by documenting the weaknesses of individuals in the community and illustrating the success of programs offering services to such individuals.

In addition to the purposes outlined above, Goodwill NNE has incorporated the Stability Calculator as part of its standard intake process in order to: (1) provide holistic supports and services to both clients and employees, and (2) adopt a standardized measure for assessing progress.

Collection Requirements for the Stability Calculator

The Stability Calculator should be completed by staff alone (i.e., clients should not self-select their own scores for each domain), in order to ensure consistency in scoring and to maintain the reliability of the tool.

For Clients Enrolled in One Program

For the majority of programs, the Stability Calculator should be used to assess clients' level of self-sufficiency upon intake, at regular intervals for the duration of their involvement at Goodwill NNE, and upon exiting services.

The completion of the Stability Calculator at intake will be informed by clients' responses to intake questions, as well as supplemental questions used to score the domains in the Stability Calculator that are not captured as a part of intake. The follow-up scores (i.e., the closing assessment and any assessments taken at intervals) should be informed by staff's knowledge of client progress.

For Clients Enrolled in More than One Program*

In the event that a client is enrolled in more than one program, when the client first enrolls in a program at Goodwill NNE (Program A), a baseline Stability Calculator will be completed (as described above). **If the client is co-enrolled in Job Connections, then Job Connection staff will always complete Stability**

Calculator assessments. If the client is referred to another program (Program B) while still receiving services from Program A, then please follow the procedures outlined below:

- If it has been less than 6 months (approximately 180 days) since a Stability Calculator was completed for the client, then there is no need for Program B to complete a baseline assessment for their program (as the most recent assessment completed by Program A will function as the client's baseline assessment for Program B).
- If it has been 6 months or more since a Stability Calculator was completed for the client, then Program B should complete a baseline assessment for the client.

In most cases, the client's assigned staff in his or her program of origin (i.e., Program A) will be responsible for completing or coordinating the completion of the follow-up Stability Calculator for the client. This individual is encouraged to consult any other case managers or programs with whom the client is actively collaborating in order to accurately assess the client's progress in each domain. Please note that, if the client stops receiving services in Program A while still enrolled in Program B, the client's assigned staff in Program A is responsible for communicating this change to the client's assigned staff in Program B (who will then act as the client's primary, in the event that the client enrolls in another program).

*Depending on the programs the client is enrolled in, communication about client enrollment may break confidentiality rules. Please keep your programs protocols in mind before sharing any client information.

The Stability Calculator Matrix Domains & Descriptions

Domains: Introduction

This section describes the 14 unique domains captured by the Stability Calculator. 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. It is important to remember that your ratings should reflect the client's *current* level of self-sufficiency for each domain.

The 15 domains found within the SSM are as follows:¹

1. Housing*
2. Employment
3. Mental Health
4. Substance Use
5. Legal
6. Physical Health & Disabilities
7. Financial*
8. Education
9. Child(rens) Education
10. Transportation
11. Community Involvement
12. Language/Literacy
13. Parent-Child Relationship(s)
14. Family Relations: Family of Origin
15. Food Security

¹ 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.

Domain Descriptions

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 his or her recent eviction.

Subjects: This domain should be completed for all clients except for those who are currently incarcerated (for whom the N/A response option should be selected) or who don’t know or decline to discuss their housing situation (for whom the DK/DA response option should be selected).

Domain	1	2	3	4	5
Housing	Homeless or at risk of eviction. Incarcerated or committed to a facility.	In transitional, temporary or substandard housing; and/or current rent/mortgage payment is unaffordable (over 30% income).	In stable housing that is safe but only marginally adequate.	Household is in adequate, subsidized housing.	Household is in safe adequate, unsubsidized housing.

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: For this data element, **homeless** is defined as a person living outside, inside a shelter not intended for human habitation, or in an emergency shelter. **At Risk of eviction** refers to those who are at risk of losing their home, due to either financial or relational reasons. **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. **Temporary housing** is defined as (1) housing that is paid for by local service providers, or (2) any temporary living arrangement that an individual or his/her case manager or counselor may have arranged with family, friends, caregiver(s), etc. (those who have arranged to stay somewhere for an indefinite amount of time would be characterized as having stable housing). Clients who currently reside in a group home should also be classified as **2**. **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. Consistent with the HMIS guidelines developed for the ASSM, **stable housing** is defined as housing that is stable and likely to continue (please note that transitional living arrangements are not considered to be stable), and housing is considered to be **affordable** if the household spends no more than 30% of its gross income on housing-related expenses. 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); its affordability and habitability; the availability of services, materials, facilities, and infrastructure; its accessibility and location; and its cultural adequacy. **Subsidized housing** refers to government-supported housing for individuals with low to moderate income and can include direct housing subsidies, public housing, rent supplements, non-profit housing, and some forms of cooperative housing. **Unsubsidized housing** is defined as private housing wherein the client does not receive government or public assistance.

Employment

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 his or her recent period of unemployment.

Subjects: This domain should be completed for all clients who are in the job market. Clients with no interest in work should indicate N/A.

The DK/DA response option should be selected for clients who do not know their employment situation or who declined to discuss their employment situation.

Domain	1	2	3	4	5
Employment	No job.	Temporary, part-time, seasonal, OJT, or subsidized 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 employment with adequate income and benefits.

Response Options: For this data element, **in the job market** refers to any client who is currently employed, seeking work, or in need of work. **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 30 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, retail during the holidays etc.).

Inadequate pay refers to pay that is insufficient for meeting basic needs without public assistance. **Benefits** include, but are not necessarily limited to, healthcare, sick time, paid vacations, holidays, or contributions to a retirement plan. **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 part-time at multiple jobs but are working for over 30 hours a week altogether.

Adequate pay is defined as pay that allows an individual to meet his or her basic needs without the

need for public assistance. Living wages for Cumberland County Maine (as of 11/09/15 are estimated in the table below* :

Hourly Wages	1 Adult	1 Adult 1 Child	1 Adult 2 Children	1 Adult 3 Children	2 Adults (One Working)	2 Adults (One Working) 1 Child	2 Adults (One Working) 2 Children	2 Adults (One Working) 3 Children	2 Adults	2 Adults 1 Child	2 Adults 2 Children	2 Adults 3 Children
Living Wage	\$11.16	\$23.44	\$27.79	\$35.02	\$18.17	\$21.93	\$24.56	\$27.72	\$9.09	\$12.87	\$15.27	\$17.94
Poverty Wage	\$5.00	\$7.00	\$9.00	\$11.00	\$7.00	\$9.00	\$11.00	\$13.00	\$3.00	\$4.00	\$5.00	\$6.00
Minimum Wage	\$7.50	\$7.50	\$7.50	\$7.50	\$7.50	\$7.50	\$7.50	\$7.50	\$7.50	\$7.50	\$7.50	\$7.50

***Please use living wage numbers that reflect the county in which your client is being served.**

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). Please note that pay and benefits should figure more prominently into scoring than the type of employment—thus, in the rare event that a client is only employed part-time but has adequate pay and benefits, he or she should be classified as either **4** or **5** (depending on the length of employment).

Mental Health

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 his or her family of origin (but is currently not experiencing abuse) and still has presenting issues from his or her prior experiences, then these unresolved issues should be reflected in the client’s current mental health score.

The DK/DA response option should be selected for clients who don’t know or declined to discuss their mental health status.

Domain	1	2	3	4	5
Mental Health	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.

Response Options: Clients who are a **danger to themselves or others** have recently threatened or attempted suicide, homicide, or some serious bodily injury to either themselves or someone else should be scored as a **1**. 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). Clients who have **recurring suicidal ideation** have repeated thoughts about or preoccupation with committing suicide. They may

be planning to commit suicide (and these plans may range from passing thoughts to elaborate schemes), or they may have unsuccessfully attempted suicide should be scored as a **1**. Clients who have **issues, difficulty, or impairment** in functioning and completing their day-to-day activities in a less than optimal manner as a result of their presenting psychological issue(s) should be scored as a **2-4**. **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). Whether they are classified as **recurrent, transient, minimal, or rare** depends on how frequently the client struggles with these issues. If clients experience issues on a daily or near-daily basis (4 or more times per week), but are not a threat to themselves or others, they should be scored as **2**. If clients experience symptoms 2–3 times per week (and these transient symptoms are not extreme or unusually disruptive), then they should be classified as **3**. If mild symptoms manifest once a week (or more frequently but as a natural response to life stressors), then the client should be scored as **4**. If the client reports never experiencing any mental health issues or experiences mild symptoms less than once every two weeks, then the client should be scored as **5**.

Substance Use

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

Subjects: This domain should be completed for all clients with a history of illicit substance use/legal substance abuse. The N/A response option should be selected for clients who refrain from illicit substance use/legal substance abuse for reasons other than abuse/dependency.

The DK/DA response option should be selected for clients who don’t know or declined to discuss whether they are dealing with any substance abuse issues.

Domain	1	2	3	4	5
Substance Abuse	Meets criteria for severe abuse/dependence; problems so severe that institutionalized living or hospitalization may be necessary.	Meets criteria for dependence; preoccupation with use or obtaining drugs/alcohol; withdrawal or withdrawal avoidance behaviors evident; use results in avoidance or neglect of essential life activities.	Use within last 6 months; evidence of persistent or recurrent social, occupational, emotional or physical problems related to use (e.g., disruptive behavior or housing problems).	Client has used during the last 6 mo, but no evidence of persistent, or recurrent social, occupational, emotional, or physical problems related to use; no evidence of recurrent dangerous use.	No illicit drug use/alcohol abuse/legal drug abuse in the last six months.

Response Options: As outlined by the *DSM-V*, to meet the criteria for **severe abuse/dependence (1)**, clients must meet six or more of the following conditions to meet the

criteria for **dependence (2)**, they must meet four or five of the following conditions: (1) taking the substance in larger amounts and for longer than you meant to; (2) wanting to cut down or stop using the substance but not managing to; (3) spending a lot of time getting, using, or recovering from use of the substance; (4) cravings and urges to use the substance; (5) not managing to do what you should do at work, home, or school because of substance use; (6) continuing to use, even when it causes problems in relationships; (7) giving up important social, occupational, or recreational activities because of substance use; (8) using substances again and again, even when it puts you in danger; (9) 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; (10) needing more of the substance to get the effect you want (tolerance); and (11) development of withdrawal symptoms, which can be relieved by taking more of the substance. Individuals who show **preoccupation with use or obtaining drugs/alcohol** have an overwhelming urge or craving to obtain or use their drug of choice, often at the expense of their relationships or responsibilities; as a result, individuals may have difficulty concentrating or may seem agitated or irritable (please note that this is one of the criteria outlined above as well). **Withdrawal behaviors** or symptoms vary dramatically across individuals, the severity of the addiction, and the drug of choice, but often include cravings, depression, anxiety, agitation, headaches, and nausea, whereas **withdrawal avoidance behaviors** include any number of behaviors that are designed to alleviate the symptoms of withdrawal (please note that this is one of the criteria outline above as well). **Essential life activities** include, but are not limited to, meeting one's professional and social responsibilities (e.g., caring for children, attending work), paying bills, meeting one's nutritional needs, and maintaining one's hygiene (please note that neglecting essential life activities is captured by one of the criteria outlined above as well). Clients who do not meet the criteria for dependence but do show some disruption in their lives as a result of their drug use (even if it's relatively mild) should be scored as **3**. Please note that the highest score that clients can receive if they have used any illicit drugs (illegal drugs/those that they were not prescribed) within the last six months is **4**.

Legal

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

Subjects: This domain should be completed for all clients with a criminal history. Clients with no criminal history should indicate N/A.

The DK/DA response option should be selected for clients who don't know or declined to discuss whether they are dealing with any legal issues.

Domain	1	2	3	4	5
Legal	Current outstanding warrants. Facing incarceration/detention or currently incarcerated/detained.	Current charges/trial pending or 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 active criminal justice involvement in more than 12 mo, and prior arrests do not pose a problem to current self-sufficiency.

Response Options: A client should be scored as a **1** if the client failed to appear in court and has yet to pay the fine associated with a traffic violation, if the client currently has a warrant issued for his or her arrest, or if the client is currently incarcerated or housed at a juvenile detention center. A client should be scored as a **2** if the client was recently arrested (or issued a ticket) but has not yet been to court, is currently in the midst of a trial or court proceedings, or has failed to comply with the terms of his or her probation/parole. If the client's prior legal history (e.g., felony convictions, sex offender status, multiple arrests) is interfering with his or her ability to secure employment, obtain adequate housing, or otherwise be self-sufficient (please note that these legal issues could include immigration issues), then the client cannot be classified as 5 and the client's score should reflect his or her current involvement with the criminal justice system (e.g., if the client has a criminal background that is interfering with his or her current self-sufficiency, and the client is currently on probation with no charges pending, then he or she should be classified as **3**).

Physical Health & Disabilities

Definition: This domain assesses clients' disabilities (either physical, developmental, or learning), as well as their physical health (the degree to which clients' physical well-being makes them mechanically fit to carry out their day-to-day activities). Please note that this domain should still be completed for clients whose disabilities or physical health issues have not been formally diagnosed. Further, please note that mental health issues and substance abuse issues are assessed in separate domains.

Subjects: This domain should be completed for all clients.

The DK/DA response option should be selected for those who don't know or decline to discuss their disabilities or physical health.

The N/A response option should not be selected for any clients.

Domain	1	2	3	4	5
Disabilities & Physical Health	Acute or chronic symptoms 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.

Response Options: **Acute symptoms** refer to symptoms that appeared suddenly or are expected to be of short duration. **Chronic symptoms**, on the other hand, last for much longer and are generally associated with conditions of longer duration. If clients report that their disabilities or physical health are currently interfering with their housing arrangements, employment situation, or social interactions in a manner that jeopardizes their general well-being (e.g., could lead to eviction, termination, or conflict), then they should be scored as a **1**. If clients report that their disabilities or physical health have interfered with their housing arrangements, employment situation, or social interactions within the last six months, then they should be scored as a **2**. If client a reports that it has been more than six months but less than one year since their disabilities or physical health have interfered with their housing arrangements, employment situation, or social interactions within the last six months, then they should be scored as a **3**. Please note that, even if a client is receiving treatment for his or her 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. If clients report that it has been more than one year since their disabilities or physical health have interfered with their housing arrangements, employment situation, or social interactions or if their condition is effectively controlled by treatment or medication (that they are taking as prescribed) then they should be scored as **4**.

Financial

Definition: The purpose of this domain is to assess clients’ financial situation 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.

The DK/DA response option should be selected for clients who don’t know or declined to discuss their credit situation.

Domain	1	2	3	4	5
Financial	In financial crisis. Carries debt and has no knowledge of financial literacy/capacity.	Unstable financially. Carries some unpaid debt. No knowledge of financial literacy.	Stable but needs some financial assistance. Little or no savings.	Uses a budget or has knowledge of budgeting/ investments. Has some benefits and no credit problems. Little or no savings.	Has ability to obtain needed credit and has savings equal to one month's income.

Response Options: Clients should be scored as a **1** if they have filed for bankruptcy or experienced a foreclosure, eviction, or repossession at any point in the past 7 years. **Bankruptcy** refers to a legal status an individual or entity can apply when they are unable repay their outstanding debts that are owed to creditors. 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. Individuals who experienced an **eviction** have been removed from their rental property by their landlord. Finally, 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). Clients should be scored as a **2** if they currently have outstanding judgments or garnishments (i.e., debts that are in collection). **Judgments** refer to the court-approved right of creditors to use additional collection methods to receive payment on an outstanding debt. **Garnishments** are a specific form of judgments that allow a specific organization to collect funds in-route to a indebted individual without the individuals consent. Common examples are garnishment of wages for child support, or garnishment of tax refunds to pay down federal student loan debt. Clients whose wages are being garnished may be struggling to pay (1) child support, (2) taxes, (3) court fines, or (4) federal student loans. Clients should be scored as a **3** if they have an **unmanageable debt ratio** (that is, clients whose 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) *and* a **poor credit rating** (defined as a credit score that is below 600), but do not have any debts currently in collection and have not experienced any bankruptcies, foreclosures, evictions, or repossessions in the past 7 years. Clients should be classified as a **4** if they have either an unmanageable debt ratio or a poor credit score (but not both), do not have any debts currently in collection, and have not experienced any bankruptcies, foreclosures, evictions, or repossessions in the past 7 years. Clients who have a **manageable debt ratio** (that is, 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) and a **good credit** (defined as a credit score that is above 600) should be scored as a **5**.

Education

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

Subjects: This domain should be completed for all clients.

The N/A option should not be selected.

Consider *Further Education (FE)* for:

- Clients who are 19 years of age or older
- All clients who have obtained their high school diploma or GED

Consider *Primary Education (PE)* for:

- Clients who are 16 years of age (and more than four months from their 17th birthday) or younger
- All clients who are between 16 years of age (within four months of their 17th birthday) and 18 years of age, and have not obtained their high school diploma or GED

The DK/DA response option should be selected for clients who don't know or declined to discuss their education or vocational training.

Domain	1	2	3	4	5
Education Further Education (FE)	FE: No HS Diploma/GED/HiSet, not enrolled in education program, and a serious barrier to employment	FE: No HS Diploma/GED/HiSet, currently enrolled in High School/GED/HiSet program	FE: Client has HS Diploma/GED/HiSet, and is seeking further education or training	FE: Client has a HS Diploma/GED/HiSet and is enrolled in further education program	FE: Client has a HS Diploma/ GED/HiSet and successfully completed all additional training necessary to meet that individual's needs
Education Primary Education (PE)	PE: Not formally enrolled in school program	PE: Formally enrolled in school program, but enrollment is at risk	PE: Formally enrolled in school program, but struggling w/ material	PE: Formally enrolled in school program, requires some additional supports for success	PE: Formally enrolled in school program, no additional supports necessary

Response Options: HiSet includes any High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED) programs. For response options **3** and **4**, **further education or training and further education program** includes enrollment in a college, university, community college, graduate program, associate's program, trade school, or specialized training program (e.g., culinary school, cosmetology school). It could also include apprenticeships. For response option **5**, **successfully completed all additional necessary education to meet that individual's needs** means that the client has the necessary education/training

to secure reliable employment, but does not necessarily mean that the client has the emotional skills or maturity to maintain reliable employment. Please note that clients who were educated outside of the United States should be assessed based on how that education is generally recognized in the United States.

Child(rens) Education

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’ children 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
- Those whose children are under the age of 6 and are enrolled in kindergarten or elementary school (public/private/charter school or formal homeschooling classes)

The N/A option should be selected for:

- Clients who either do not serve as the caregiver of any children
- Clients who serve(d) as the caregiver of children who (a) are under the age of 6 and not enrolled in kindergarten or elementary school (public/private/charter school or homeschooling classes), (b) obtained their high school diplomas/GEDs, or (c) are over 18 years of age

The DK/DA response option should be selected for clients who don’t know or decline to discuss the quality of their child(ren)’s education.

Domain	1	2	3	4	5
Education of Client’s Child(ren)	School aged child(ren) not enrolled in school	School aged child(ren) enrolled in school, but not attending classes.	Enrolled in school, but the child(ren) not consistently classes.	Child(ren) enrolled in school and attending classes most of the time.	School aged child(ren) enrolled and attending on a regular basis.

Response Options: Children who attend classes 50% of the time or less are considered to be only **occasionally attending classes**. Those who attend classes between 50%–90% of the time are considered to be **attending classes most of the time**. Those who attend more than 90% of the time are considered to be **attending classes on a regular basis**. Clients whose children’s special educational needs are not being met or who are performing below grade level in all of their classes should be scored as **2**. Clients whose children are **struggling** (i.e., earning Ds or Fs) in at least three, but not all, of their classes should be scored as **3**. Clients whose children are struggling in one or two of their classes should be scored as **4**. 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 and there is a notable discrepancy in their level of engagement at school, the client’s score should be based on the child who is struggling the most.

Transportation

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

Subjects: This domain should be completed for all clients.

The DK/DA response option should be selected for clients who don’t know or declined to discuss their access to transportation.

Domain	1	2	3	4	5
Mobility	No access to transportation; may have a car that is inoperable.	Transportation is available, but unreliable, unpredictable, unaffordable; may have car but no insurance, license, etc.	Transportation is available and reliable, but inconvenient; drivers are licensed and minimally insured.	Transportation is generally accessible to meet basic travel needs.	Transportation is readily available and affordable; car is adequately insured.

Response Options: Clients should be scored as a **1** if they are unable to access any transportation whatsoever (according to the HMIS guidelines developed for the ASSM, a **lack of access** means that no transportation exists in or will come to the area in which the client lives). When clients can access transportation of some form, transportation is considered **available**. Transportation that is **unreliable** or **unpredictable** is not consistently available; if the client owns a vehicle, 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. Please note that the use of a bus pass that the client did not pay for personally should not impact the scoring of the client (i.e., he or she could potentially be scored as 5).

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). Clients who own a vehicle (and thus have reliable and convenient access to transportation) but who do not have insurance or a current driver’s license are classified as a **4**. Similarly, those who have reliable and convenient access to a form of transportation (e.g., a bus) but who would prefer to use a different form of transportation that they currently cannot access/afford (e.g., a car) should be classified as a **4**. Drivers who have a functioning, affordable vehicle, as well as a current license and insurance should be scored as a **5**, as should those who are satisfied using another form of transportation to which they have reliable and convenient access.

Community Involvement

Definition: The purpose of this domain is to assess the degree to which the client is active within the community.

Subjects: This domain should be completed for all clients.

The DK/DA response option should be selected for clients who don't know or declined to discuss their level of community involvement.

Domain	1	2	3	4	5
Community Involvement	In crisis situation or survival mode	Socially isolated, either voluntary or involuntary	Lacks knowledge of ways to become involved	Some community involvement (advisory group, support group, church volunteering, etc.), but has barriers such as transportation, childcare issues	Actively involved in community

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. Importantly, community involvement should reflect the client's participation in activities that are at least somewhat organized in nature. **Crisis situations (1)** 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. Clients who are **socially isolated** either (voluntarily or involuntarily) have a lack of contact with or are withdrawn from society should be marked as a **2**. A client that has expressed interest in joining a group or participating in some kind of organized, pro-social activity should be considered as demonstrating motivation or desire to become involved in the community. Those 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 should be marked as a **3**. Clients who **have barriers** to become involved in the community have barriers that are preventing any community involvement (e.g., transportation or childcare issues), but are still involved should be marked a **4**. Clients who are **actively involved in the community** are regularly and actively participating in at least one community based group or activity should be marked a **5**.

Language/Literacy

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

Subjects: This domain should be completed for all clients.

The DK/DA response option should be selected for clients who don't know or declined to discuss their language or literacy skills.

Domain	1	2	3	4	5
Language/ Literacy	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 sufficient command of English but is seeking additional education/training to resolve remaining language or literacy problems.	Client has sufficient command of English to where language or literacy is not a barrier to employment or accomplishing basic day-to-day tasks.	Client has no language or literacy problems.

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 his or her literacy skills, then the client's score should be based on his or her current level of literacy.

Response Options: In response option **1**, 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, making purchasing decisions, and engaging in casual conversation. In response option **4**, 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.

Parent-Child Relationship(s)

Definition: The purpose of this domain is to assess the quality of the client's relationship with his or her 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 should be assessed using the Family Relations domain.

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

The N/A response option should be selected for:

- Clients who do not have children (either biological or adopted)
- Clients who have not served as the primary caregiver for a child

The DK/DA response option should be selected for clients who don't know or decline to discuss the quality of their relationship with their child(ren).

Domain	1	2	3	4	5
Parent-Child Relations	There are safety concerns regarding parenting skills; abuse or neglect is present, or all relations have been severed.	Parenting skills are minimal; client and children do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse or neglect.	Parenting skills are apparent but not adequate; client and children acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support.	Parenting skills are adequate; client and children support each other's efforts.	Parenting skills are well-developed; parent-child relationship(s) is stable and communication is consistently open.

Special Issues: This domain should be completed for the client even if his or her child is not a minor or does not share a residence with the client. Please note that 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: Please note that the semicolons should be treated or read as and/or. **Safety concerns** may be the result of perceived negligence on the part of the client (or his or her 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 injury resulting in substantial harm or the genuine threat of substantial harm with respect to the individuals' growth, development, or psychological and/or physical functioning. It could also refer to (1) the failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent an action by another person that results in substantial harm, (2) the current use by a person of a controlled substance in a manner that the use results in physical, mental, or emotional injury to another person, (3) causing, expressly permitting, or encouraging another person to use a controlled substance, or (4) causing, permitting, encouraging, engaging in, or allowing unwanted or illegal sexual conduct. The client can be the recipient of abuse or the abuser for abuse to be considered present. **Neglect** refers to the placement of an individual in, or the failure to remove an individual from, a situation that a reasonable person would realize requires judgment or action beyond the victim's level of maturity, physical condition, or mental abilities that results in injury or substantial risk of immediate harm (without making arrangements for necessary care for the individual). This can include (1) the failure to seek, obtain, or follow through with medical care, or (2) the failure to provide the individual with food, clothing, or shelter necessary to sustain his or her life and/or health (excluding failure caused primarily by financial inability, unless relief services had been offered and refused). Again, the client may be the one who is being neglected or who is doing the neglecting. **Severed relations** means that the client, either voluntarily or involuntarily, has cut ties with his or her child(ren) and is no longer in contact with them (or only rarely communicates with them). If the client and his/her child(ren) **do not relate well**, it means that

their interactions are characterized by hostility, criticism, avoidance, or conflict. **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. Clients who have few, if any, parenting skills or whose relationships with their children are at risk of becoming abusive should be classified as a **2**. Clients should be classified as a **3** if (1) they possess some parenting skills, but said skills could use improvement, or if (2) they continue to have strained relations with their child(ren), but they are actively trying to improve their relationships with one another and are learning how to provide positive support to one another (i.e., they are attempting to behave in a caring, responsive manner toward one another). **4** should be selected if (1) the client has reasonable parenting skills that are not obviously lacking, or (2) the client and his/her child(ren) are generally supportive of one another but continue to experience occasional conflict or turmoil. Clients should be scored as a **5** if (1) they have above-average parenting skills, or (2) there is minimal conflict with their child(ren) and if the client and his or her child(ren) are able to communicate effectively with and positively support one another.

Family Relations

Definition: The purpose of this domain is to assess the quality of the client's relationship with his or her family of origin (i.e., the client's nuclear family, which can include 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

The N/A response option should be selected for:

- Those who currently have severed relations with their *entire* family of origin and who are uninterested in reconciling or establishing a relationship with their family
- Those whose members of their family of origin have all passed away

The DK/DA response option should be selected for clients who don't know or decline to discuss the quality of their relationship with their family of origin.

Domain	1	2	3	4	5
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Family Relations: Family of Origin	Abuse or neglect is present	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.
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Special Issues: If clients have positive relations with some members of their families of origin but strained relations with others, then the client's score should reflect the average relationship quality across all family members.

Response Options: **Abuse** refers to physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, or financial injury that results in substantial harm or the genuine threat of substantial harm with respect to the individuals' growth, development, or psychological and/or physical functioning. It could also refer to (1) the failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent an action by another person that results in substantial harm, (2) the current use by a person of a controlled substance in a manner that the use results in physical, mental, or emotional injury to another person, (3) causing, expressly permitting, or encouraging another person to use a controlled substance, or (4) causing, permitting, encouraging, engaging in, or allowing unwanted or illegal sexual conduct. The client can 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 the placement of an individual in, or the failure to remove an individual from, a situation that a reasonable person would realize requires judgment or action beyond the victim's level of maturity, physical condition, or mental abilities that results in injury or substantial risk of immediate harm (without making arrangements for necessary care for the individual). This can include (1) the failure to seek, obtain, or follow through with medical care, or (2) the failure to provide the individual with food, clothing, or shelter necessary to sustain his or her life and/or health (excluding failure caused primarily by financial inability, unless relief services had been offered and refused). Again, the client may be the one who is being neglected, who is doing the neglecting, or someone else in the family may be the one who is neglected. **Severed relations** means that the client, either voluntarily or involuntarily, has cut ties to his or her family members and is no longer in contact with them (or only rarely communicates with them). If the family members **do not relate well**, it means that their interactions are characterized by hostility, criticism, avoidance, or conflict. Clients should be classified as a **3** if their family members continue to have strained relations but are actively trying to improve their relationships with one another and are learning how to provide positive support to one another (i.e., they are attempting to behave in a caring, responsive manner toward one another). **4** should be selected if the family members are generally supportive of one another but continue to experience occasional conflict or turmoil. Clients should be scored as a **5** if there is minimal conflict in their family of origin and if family members are able to communicate effectively with and positively support one another.

Food Security

Food security for a household means access by all members at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. Food security includes at a minimum:

- The ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods.
- Assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (that is, without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies).

Food insecurity is the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways.

Definition: The purpose of this domain is to assess the degree to which the client/household has access to

adequate food.

Subjects: This domain should be completed for all clients.

The DK/DA response option should be selected for clients who don't know or declined to discuss.

Domain	1	2	3	4	5
Food Security	Hospitalization or death due to inadequate or disrupted food intake	Food intake reduced due to lack of money or access to food	Reduced quality, variety, or desirability of food items	Experienced difficulty accessing adequate food at times but had adequate intake	No problems or anxiety regarding accessing adequate food

Stability Calculator Scoring Guidelines

To gain the most accurate assessment of clients' self-sufficiency for each domain found in the Stability Calculator, please follow the guidelines provided below.

The "Does Not Know/Declined to Answer" Response Option

The Does Not Know/Declined to Answer (DK/DA) response option 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 he or she didn't know or declined to provide the information necessary for scoring purposes. The Does Not Know/Declined to Answer response option should never be selected because staff forgot to assess the domain or did not feel comfortable assessing the domain.

Identifying Goals

A specific domain should be marked as a **Goal** if the client identified that specific domain as an area on which he or she has been actively working and on which they would like to continue trying to improve through services and supports. A domain should not be marked as a Goal simply because the client scored as a **1** or a **2** 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.