

Case Note Training Q&A

WIOA Webinar on 4/27/2022

1. Living arrangements/criminal history/disability are part of eligibility at times. How do we address?

A: Information that is gathered as part of the intake process is fine as it pertains to eligibility. When referencing this list, I am talking about subsequent case note entries in which there may be a risk of breaching confidentiality if you overexplain a situation(which occurs quite frequently).

For example, if you have a participant who reveals to you that she is having marital problems and is separating from her husband, thinking about divorce, how depressed she is feeling, etc., these are very intimate details that don't belong in a case note.

Another example may be one of your participants was arrested the week before for drunk driving and was in jail for a few days. He called to tell you all of these details because he missed his classes for a week. It is not necessary to write these private details in a case note. You can simply state something like "John reports he had legal issues that prevented him from attending training last week. He will meet with his instructors to obtain homework that he missed."

Protecting the privacy of your participants is of utmost importance, so documenting these types of circumstances using minimal wording is the best approach.

2. What happens when you go back and edit case notes for clarity upon exit, or during a review-that would reset the time stamp and make it look like your case notes were out of compliance?

A: Once the original case note is entered, it is locked in for the date/time stamp. If you need to go back in and edit the case note, this is perfectly fine as it will not change the original time/date stamp.

3. Also-case notes do not need to be written in the third person?

A: I am not aware of any State policy that requires case notes be written in third person. We see case notes written in both first and third person. Either way is acceptable to us; however, you may have a local policy or guideline that requires you to write case notes in third person, so follow your local policy on this.

4. If a participant contacts me via a phone message or email, to inform me of his progress with the training, is it listed as a "General" case note?

A: The key is to determine if you are providing a *service*. If you are discussing progress, reviewing the IEP/ISS and perhaps making changes (maybe the End date for training needs to be extended due to a class not being available, for example), receiving updates on progress in school with details of current grades, identifying concerns that need worked through the get to a resolution, etc., it would be appropriate to enter this as a Same Day Service. You would be providing Case Management services in order to assist your participant and it is considered to be a "meaningful" and productive two-way conversation.

On the other hand, if you just have a brief conversation with your participant and ask how school is going and your participant simply responds, "Everything's good" and that's the extent of your conversation; based on a recent DOL monitoring visit, the type of verification that "Everything's good", with no further conversation is not considered a "meaningful" two-way contact and should not be recorded under the Career Planning (Case Management) service via the same day service case note, but just recorded as a General case note.

5. What kind of verbiage is appropriate when addressing the change of availability due to pregnancy/delivery?

A: In answering this, I am assuming you mean the participant is not available to attend training due to a pregnancy or delivery? It is fine to state this in a case note as you will have to indicate a reason for non-participation. Just be mindful to not add details that may breach confidentiality. For a participant that will be out an indefinite amount of time for a medical reason, you may want to consider entering a "HOLD" service in the Service screen to explain why the participant is unable to attend training. As long as the HOLD does not go over 180 days, it is acceptable to enter this for medical reasons, especially with pregnancy complications that may prevent a participant from going to school.

6. Regarding the example of Stan: "not further services are planned at this time." Does that mean not opening a follow up line of service?

A: As I explained during the presentation, there was a lot of information about Stan that was not revealed in the sample case note. He had not contacted the career planner in over 4 months and had not responded to phone calls and emails. When he finally did call back he explained personal problems were preventing him from going to school and he was failing all of his classes due to non-participation. He was given a deadline to let the career planner know if he would remain in school. He failed to do this, so the career planner had no choice but to move forward and exit him as he was no longer participating. Stan actually obtained full-time employment during the months he was not attending school, so was exited as "Entered Unsubsidized Employment" and was enrolled into follow-up as he was employed at the time of Exit.

7. Does it matter whether you refer to yourself (the Career Planner) in the 1st or 3rd person?

A: See above answer. Please follow local guidelines as to how your area would prefer you write case notes.

8. Are we required to use he or she pronouns or can we revert to gender neutral pronouns like they/them?

A: I have not seen this addressed during monitoring reviews yet. We continue to observe "he/she, his/her" in case note documentation. If you are aware the participant has a preference for a gender-neutral pronoun of "they/them", it would be acceptable to document in that format.

9. Trade participants are not bound by the ETPL list. Are Trade career planners still required to provide this list to participants and document in intake/eligibility case notes?

A: No, per Susan Boggs.

10. I request more examples from the state.

A: LWIA Directors/Supervisors can request additional samples through your Regional Manager. Be specific as to what types of samples you would like to see created. The Regional Manager will forward your message on to Robin Kralman and she will work with you to fulfill requests.

11. What if you obtain another career specialists case load and review previous case notes/add miss case notes they did not enter. Do you enter on current date and put in case note that neglected to enter on date prior longer than 10 days....to correct?

A: If there is a lapse in case note entries with no services being provided, and the prior career planner was responsible for this, it is not recommended to add case notes for services that you did not provide. From this day forward, start your own good habits of entering case notes in a timely manner. Unfortunately, sometimes career planners inherit troublesome files and then have the responsibility for the complete file once it has been assigned to him/her.

12. How long do we keep someone on Follow Up if they refuse to answer calls, texts, emails, etc.?

A. As a reminder, follow-up begins at the Last Date of Service. For the first quarter of follow-up, policy requires the career planner have contact with the participant every month. For subsequent quarters, the career planner is only required make contact quarterly for the remainder of the follow-up time-period. If contact is not successful with the participant, document your attempts to contact in a general case note.

Follow-up Policy Chapter 4 Section 3.1, Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs, under paragraph 7 states, "After ninety (90) days following exit, if a participant is not responsive, cannot be located, or refuses to provide information, the career planner may close out follow-up service. The case notes and the IEP must document the reason for the discontinuation.

Under the Youth Follow-up Policy Chapter 4 Section 3.2 – the guidance is a bit different under paragraph 6.a., which provides guidance for "Unable to Locate (Youth Only)" – The LWIA has determined that in the event a participant cannot be located, attempts to locate and contact the participant must be made or a minimum of the first two (2) quarters following exit. All attempts and efforts to contact the youth must be clearly documented in case notes.