

**DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER NO. ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES 4-2009**

**(Work First)**

**TO:** County Directors of Social Services  
**ATTENTION:** Work First Program Administrators, Managers, and Supervisors  
**DATE:** April 28, 2009  
**SUBJECT:** Work First Assessment of Strengths and Needs DSS-5298  
**EFFECTIVE DATE:** June 1, 2009

**I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

On September 1, 2008, the Division issued a new Section of the Work First Manual, Section 117, Ongoing Assessment and Services. In addition, a new assessment tool, DSS-5298, Work First Assessment of Strengths and Needs, was also issued. The Division made training available to all county departments of social services on the new policy section and the use of the new assessment tool between September 2008 and January 2009. As a result of feedback from county Work First staff that resulted from these training events, the Division has made some minor modifications to the review tool.

Because the new assessment policy and form were requiring significant adjustments for county Work First staff, the Division postponed requiring the use of the DSS-5298 for all cases and agreed that counties could gradually implement the use of the form over time. As of June 1, 2009, it is expected that all counties will have fully implemented the use of the DSS-5298 in all Work First employment cases. The Division also strongly encourages counties to use this tool in assessing the strengths and needs of families in child-only cases.

Beginning June 1, 2009, counties are expected to complete the assessment process in order to complete the DSS-5298 by the third month of the case being opened for employment services. The ongoing assessment process as outlined in Section 117 will continue throughout the life of the employment case, and the DSS-5298 form should be revised/updated at least every three months in coordination with the quarterly update to the Mutual Responsibility Agreement, Plan of Action.

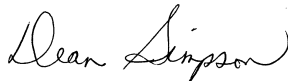
**II. IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES**

Apply this policy to the next review, application, or change in situation on or after June 1, 2009.

**III. EFFECTIVE DATE**

This policy is effective June 1, 2009. Should you need additional guidance, please contact your Work First Representative.

Sincerely,



Dean Simpson, Chief  
Economic and Family Services Section

DS:gbw

cc: Sherry S. Bradsher  
Jack Rogers  
Sarah Barham  
Hank Bowers  
Work First Local Support  
Local Business Liaisons