New Assessments Required for Adult Autism Waiver (AAW) Participants
ODP Announcement 25-044 UPDATE

AUDIENCE:

Individuals and Families

All Office of Developmental Programs' (ODP) AAW Supports Coordination Organizations (SCOs) and Providers

PURPOSE:

To inform all interested stakeholders about the new assessment protocol that is replacing most of the previous assessments required for participants in the AAW effective July 1, 2025, and to announce a mandatory training for AAW Supports Coordinators (SCs) and SC Supervisors. This communication is being reissued to provide a link to the assessment protocol training now posted on MyODP and to ensure SCOs are using the correct assessment links. Updates are in red.

DISCUSSION:

Assessment plays a critical role in AAW service delivery through the development of a comprehensive initial and annual Individual Support Plan (ISP) by evaluating the participant's needs, strengths, and challenges across different aspects of their life. The assessments help the planning team gain an understanding of the participant's needs within their natural environment

Supporting Pennsylvanians with developmental disabilities and their families to achieve greater independence, choice, and opportunity in their lives.

and allow the SC and the team to design the ISP with a clear focus on the participant's individualized needs. Information will be gathered through direct observation and questions asked of the participant and representative/family/informal care network.

Beginning with assessments conducted on July 1, 2025, participants in the AAW will no longer be assessed using the SIB-R, Quality of Life Questionnaire, Baseline Outcomes, or Parental Stress Scale. All participant ISPs with plan effective dates beginning October 1, 2025, are subject to the new assessments.

All AAW participants will be assessed using the following five assessment tools, all of which are completed via QuestionPro:

- **Autism Supports Assessment Protocol** (ASAP)

- **Periodic Risk Evaluation (PRE)**

- **Waisman Activities of Daily Living Scale (W-ADL)**

- **Social Responsiveness Scale, 2nd Edition (SRS-2)**

- **Online Readiness Checklist**

For more information on each of these assessments, refer to the "Overview of New Assessment Tools for the AAW" and "Bureau of Services for Autism and Special Populations' (BSASP) Assessment Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)" which are linked at the end of this communication.

The SC is responsible for ensuring completion of all five assessment tools regardless of who completes the tools. The assessments will be required at initial ISP development and at least annually thereafter for all AAW participants. All the assessments must be completed

no earlier than 90 days prior to the effective date of the participant's plan. Assessments should be completed prior to, and not during the initial or annual ISP meetings.

Note: The requirements for the completion of the Health Risk Screening Tool (HRST) for participants receiving Residential Habilitation: Community Home or Life Sharing remain the same.

Instructions for Dissemination, Completion and Review of Assessments:

AAW SCOs must ensure they are using the AAW assessment links. These assessments are also being used for the Adult Community Autism Program (ACAP) and the assessment links are similar if searched online. It is highly recommended SCs use the links found in this announcement or the links in the participants' ARP email to ensure the correct assessments are being used.

Dissemination of Assessments:

The SC must first review the "Overview of New Assessment Tools for the AAW" and identify the appropriate person to complete each assessment, based on specific requirements as outlined in the overview document and then go to MyODP to access the assessments:

- **ASAP**: Email the QuestionPro survey link to the AAW participant (for self-report) or a designated proxy (e.g. family member, caregiver, paid support person) for proxy report. Use "SC Script for ASAP" to determine the best method for completion prior to sending the survey link.

- **PRE**: SC completes the assessment or coordinates with the Behavioral Specialist if the participant receives Behavioral Support Services (BSS) services.

Supporting Pennsylvanians with developmental disabilities and their families to achieve greater independence, choice, and opportunity in their lives.

- **W-ADL, SRS-2, and Online Readiness Checklist**: Email the QuestionPro survey link to a family member, natural support, or other paid support, or the SC may complete these with identified members of the ISP team. Email the corresponding QuestionPro survey link to the identified person, including the following information:

  - Links to the assessment(s)

  - Participant's MCI number

  - SC's name and email address

  - Instructions for the person completing the survey to enter the SCs email address in the survey (this ensures the SC receives a copy of the results via automated email from QuestionPro)

  - Timeframe for completion

See "AAW SC Email Templates," linked at the end of this communication, for suggested content.

Completion of Assessments:

All assessments must be fully completed in QuestionPro before submission. Partial or incomplete submissions cannot be submitted in QuestionPro, as the platform requires all fields to be filled out to finalize the survey.

Assessments must be completed prior to the submission of the initial ISP and annually, no earlier than 90 days prior to the participant's plan effective date. Assessments should be completed prior to, and not during the initial or annual ISP meetings.

Supporting Pennsylvanians with developmental disabilities and their families to achieve greater independence, choice, and opportunity in their lives.

Managing Uncompleted or Late Assessments

- o If any of the assessments are not yet completed prior to the ISP meeting, the SC should reach out to the person who is responsible for completing the assessment and remind them of the timelines and importance of completing the assessment(s) by the deadline.

- o For the ASAP - SCs should do everything they can to complete the ASAP with the participant, based on the participant's preferences. (see "SC Script for ASAP", linked at the end of this communication)

- o If a participant or anyone else responsible for completing the assessment(s) is refusing, and the SC feels they have done everything they can to encourage completion, as a final option, the SC may complete the assessment(s).

  If a participant refuses to complete the ASAP, the SC is encouraged to understand the reason and must document the refusal, along with the reason, in a service note.

Review and Documentation of Finalized Assessments

Once the SC has the results of the five completed assessments for a participant, the results of each assessment should then be entered into the corresponding sections of the ISP, as appropriate:

- o ASAP, W-ADL, SR-2, and Online Readiness Checklist – see "Assessment Service Guidance document"

- o PRE - follow previously defined instructions for entering the PRE in the ISP Information gathered from the assessments should drive the discussion about what is important to and for the individual during their ISP meeting.

MANDATORY TRAINING FOR AAW SCs AND SC SUPERVISORS ON NEW ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL

SCs and SC Supervisors are required to take the **BSASP Assessment Protocol Training** now available on MyODP.

SCs and SC Supervisors who attended one of the live training sessions offered in June 2025, do not need to complete the training posted on MyODP.

RESOURCES TO BE MADE AVAILABLE ON THE **BSASP ASSESSMENTS RESOURCE PAGE** ON MYODP.

- o Overview of New Assessment Tools for the Adult Autism Waiver (AAW)

- o Assessment Service Guidance Document

- o SC Script for ASAP

- o BSASP Assessment Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- o AAW SC Email Templates

CONTACT:

Questions about this communication should be sent to the Provider Support mailbox at **ra-basprovidersupprt@pa.gov**. Please add the phrase "New BSASP Assessments" in the subject line.

Supporting Pennsylvanians with developmental disabilities and their families to achieve greater independence, choice, and opportunity in their lives.