# VR-SFP Chapter 4: Employment Assessments

Revisions effective September 1, 2020

## 4.1 Overview of Employment Assessments

Employment assessments are tools that evaluate a customer's work and training background, general functional capacities, and social behavior. Employment assessments are designed to determine a customer's present and future vocational potential and to evaluate the customer's employment-related strengths and limitations.

This chapter includes information on the following employment-related assessment services:

* Vocational Evaluation;
* Situational Assessments and Work Samples;
* Environmental Work Assessment; and
* Supported Employment Assessment.

Premium payments may be available for some Employment Assessment Services. Premium payments are paid after all deliverables for the service have been achieved. For more information about premiums, refer to [Chapter 20: Premiums](https://www.twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-20).

Any request to change a Service Definition, Process and Procedure, or Outcomes Required for Payment must be documented and approved by the VR director, using the [VR3472, Contracted Service Modification Request](https://twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html) form, before the change is implemented.

## 4.2 Staff Qualifications

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## 4.3 Vocational Evaluation

### 4.3.1 Service Description

Vocational evaluation is an assessment of an individual's work and training background, general functional capacities, and social and/or behavioral characteristics. The vocational evaluation must contain a detailed description of the customer's behaviors and must describe any implications for the workplace. The evaluation must be designed to determine the customer's present and future vocational potential. The evaluation also must include an assessment of the customer's employment-related strengths and limitations. Vocational evaluations cannot be conducted remotely. When the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), federal, state, and/or local governments issue health and safety protocols, such as social distancing, Vocational Evaluation services may be provided using alternate methods only with a VR director approved [VR3472, Contracted Service Modification Request.](http://www.texasworkforce.org/forms/VR3472.docx%22%20%5Co%20%22https%3A//twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

The VR3472 must include:

* how the service will be delivered:
	+ in person;
	+ following health and safety protocols; and
	+ meeting the customers individual needs,
* justification for need of the service; and
* verification the customer has agreed to participate in the services as described above.

The evaluation must:

* be conducted by the vocational evaluator;
* document up to six hours of assessment per day; and
* result in a vocational objective or alternative vocational objectives being identified by the vocational evaluator.

The following techniques are generally used to establish and measure a customer's work characteristics.

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### 4.3.3 Outcomes Required for Payment

Vocational evaluation reports must be submitted using a [VR1837, Report for Vocational Evaluation](https://www.twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html), or a typed report containing all required elements outlined in the service description and noted in the VR1837. The cumulative findings of a vocational evaluation must be submitted no later than 10 working days from the last day of the evaluation.

The report must describe the customer's behavior and must stress the vocational implications of the following factors:

* results of the evaluator's findings and observations specified in the service description;
* potential for competitive integrated employment, or the reasons that competitive integrated employment is not appropriate, when applicable;
* job recommendations related to the current job market using the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes for the customer's geographic area
* specific training options that match the customer's capabilities; and
* specific job modifications and/or accommodations necessary to achieve the employment goal.

The VR1837, Report for Vocational Evaluation, or the typed report must contain the signature of the vocational evaluator who conducted the evaluation. For more information, refer to 3.11.1 Documentation and Signatures.

When requested on [VR1836, Vocational Evaluation Referral](https://www.twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html), or on the service authorization, the vocational evaluator must complete a feedback session with the customer, the customer's representative, if any, and the VR counselor, to review the evaluator's recommendations and the customer's vocational interests, strengths, and challenges.

To request partial payment for work that has not been completed in its entirety, a [VR3472, Contracted Service Modification Request](https://www.twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html), can be submitted. Justification for why the vocational evaluation cannot be completed in its entirety must be included on VR3472, Contracted Service Modification Request.

### A partial work product, such as a report and documentation of the time spent completing the deliverables, must be submitted with the VR3472, Contracted Service Modification Request, and must be approved by the TWC-VR director before any partial work is invoiced. The achievement of required deliverables and the hours spent is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. For more information, refer to 3.6.4.2 Evaluation of Service Delivery. 4.3.4 Fees

For more information, refer to [4.7 Employment Assessments Fee Schedule](https://www.twc.state.tx.us/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-04#s47).

## 4.4 Vocational Evaluation - Situational Assessments and Work Samples

### 4.4.1 Service Description

A Vocational Evaluation must be completed before the Situational Assessment and Work Samples are administered.

The Situational Assessment and Work Samples are tools to help the customer and VR counselor determine long-term goals related to finding competitive integrated employment. The Situational Assessments and Work Samples service must consist of the three situational assessments and at least four work samples. The work samples cannot be the same as the ones used in the vocational evaluation.

The evaluator's observations and the customer's career goal, interests, preferences, and experiences are used to determine the type of job and support services necessary for the customer to find competitive integrated employment.

Vocational Evaluations-Situational Assessments and Work Samples cannot be conducted remotely.

When the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), federal, state, and/or local governments issue health and safety protocols, such as social distancing, Vocational Evaluations-Situational Assessments and Work Samples services may be provided using alternate methods only with a VR director approved [VR3472, Contracted Service Modification Request.](http://www.texasworkforce.org/forms/VR3472.docx%22%20%5Co%20%22https%3A//twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

The VR3472 must include:

* how the service will be delivered:
	+ in person;
	+ following health and safety protocols; and
	+ meeting the customers individual needs,
* justification for need of the service; and
* verification the customer has agreed to participate in the services as described above.

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### 4.4.3 Outcomes Required for Payment

The situational assessment and work sample reports must be submitted using a [VR1838, Situational Assessment and Work Sample Report](https://www.twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html), and this must be submitted no later than 10 working days from the last day of the assessment.

The report must describe the customer's behavior and must stress the vocational implications of the relevant factors outlined below:

* The results of the evaluator's findings and observations specified in the service description
* The potential for competitive integrated employment or the reasons that competitive integrated employment is not appropriate, when applicable
* The job recommendations related to the current job market using the SOC codes for the customer's geographic area
* The specific training options that match the customer's capabilities
* Any specific job modifications and/or accommodations necessary

The VR1838, Situational Assessment and Work Sample Report, must contain the signature of the vocational evaluator who conducted the assessment. For more information, refer to 3.11.1 Documentation and Signatures.

When requested on [VR1836, Vocational Evaluation Referral](https://www.twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html), or on the service authorization, the vocational evaluator must complete a feedback session with the customer, the customer's representative, if any, and the VR counselor, to review the evaluator's recommendations and the customer's vocational interests, strengths, and challenges.

To request partial payment for work that has not been completed in its entirety, a [VR3472, Contracted Service Modification Request](https://www.twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html), is submitted. Justification for why the vocational assessment cannot be completed in its entirety must be included on the VR3472, Contracted Service Modification Request form.

A partial work product, such as a report and documentation of time spent in completing the deliverables, must be submitted with the VR3472, Contracted Service Modification Request form. The form must be approved by the VR director before any partial work is invoiced. The achievement of required deliverables and hours spent is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. For more information, refer to 3.6.4.2 Evaluation of Service Delivery.

### 4.4.4 Fees

For more information, refer to [4.7 Employment Assessments Fee Schedule](https://www.twc.state.tx.us/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-04#s47).

## 4.5 Environmental Work Assessment

### 4.5.1 Service Description

The Environmental Work Assessment (EWA) is a diagnostic tool that assesses how the customer responds to variables in a work environment. The EWA is an accurate assessment of the correlations between a customer's performance and environmental variables and is critical to the customer's ability to find and maintain employment. Results of the assessment identify the variables in a work environment that affect the customer's ability to function at his or her full potential. The EWA cannot be conducted remotely.

When the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), federal, state, and/or local governments issue health and safety protocols, such as social distancing, Environmental Work Assessment services may be provided using alternate methods only with a VR director approved [VR3472, Contracted Service Modification Request.](http://www.texasworkforce.org/forms/VR3472.docx%22%20%5Co%20%22https%3A//twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

The VR3472 must include:

* how the service will be delivered:
	+ in person;
	+ following health and safety protocols; and
	+ meeting the customers individual needs,
* justification for need of the service; and
* verification the customer has agreed to participate in the services as described above.

EWA is most appropriate for a customer who:

* has a neurodevelopmental disorder that significantly affects him or her;
* has a history of behavior that varies depending on the environment; and
* may benefit from an evaluation that assesses how his or her neurodevelopmental disorder may manifest in a work setting.

The EWA evaluator assesses the customer's skills in at least three work (business) environments that align with his or her interests and the employment goal in the customer's individualized plan for employment (IPE), when known. Each environment is assessed for a minimum of two hours.

**Exceptions**

The following exceptions are allowed when conducting an EWA:

* Conducting an EWA in another environment—Environments that accurately mimic the intended work environment are acceptable, when an intended work environment is not available or when another environment is in the best interest of the customer. For example, if the intended work environment is loud, busy, and bright, then the alternate environment in which the assessment is conducted must mimic those same variables in order for the assessment to be valid.
* Assessing three environments during an EWA—One environment can be used twice, if changing the day or time would significantly alter the environmental variables. For example, the environment in a grocery store on a Saturday at 1:00 p.m. is significantly different from the environment at the same grocery store on a Sunday at 11:00 p.m. The assessment must be conducted in an environment that accurately mimics the intended work environment.
* Spending at least two hours per environment—If appropriate, assessments in the same location can occur over time. For example, a customer can go to an environment for one hour on one day and go to the same environment for the second hour on another day.
* Reviewing the results of the EWA with the customer in person—If an in-person meeting with the customer is not possible, the VR counselor may approve a teleconference to review the EWA results. The written approval must be kept in the evaluator's and the customer's case files.

The EWA can be conducted in any phase of the VR process, but it is typically conducted during the development of the IPE or as Trial Work Experience for assessing a customer's capacity to achieve an employment outcome. The EWA is not a Vocational Evaluation or a replacement for the Supported Employment Assessment (SEA).

However, if after an EWA is conducted and Supported Employment is deemed the most appropriate employment service, an abridged version of the SEA is permitted. See [Chapter 18: Supported Employment, 18.1.12.1 Supported Employment Assessment](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-18#s18112).

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### 4.5.3 Outcomes Required for Payment

The EWA evaluator documents in descriptive terms all the information required in the service description on VR1877, Environmental Work Assessment, parts A, B, and C, and VR1878, Environmental Work Assessment Time Log, demonstrating evidence that the customer's:

* interests, assets, and abilities in work and nonwork areas were explored, identified, and summarized;
* personal, social, school, and medical histories were collected;
* self-assessment includes the customer's score of the 40 basic skills;
* skills were assessed in three environments related to the following four domains, after the environmental demands were identified and rated:
	+ Basic and social communication
	+ Problem solving and executive functioning
	+ Advanced social and communication
	+ Self-regulation and emotional intelligence

The EWA evaluator documents in descriptive terms all the information required in the service description on the VR1878, Environmental Work Assessment (EWA) Time Log, recording:

* each session held with the customer;
* locations at which the sessions were held; and
* whether the time spent was direct or indirect, as well as whether:
	+ no more than eight hours were spent on indirect services; and
	+ no fewer than 12 hours were spent on direct services.

Payment is authorized when the EWA evaluator submits a complete, accurate, signed and dated:

* [VR1877A, Environmental Work Assessment (EWA) Report, Part A (Summary)](https://www.twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html);
* [VR1877B, Environmental Work Assessment (EWA) Report, Part B (Results)](https://www.twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html);
* [VR1877C, Environmental Work Assessment (EWA) Report, Part C (Signature Page)](https://www.twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html);
* [VR1878, Environmental Work Assessment (EWA) Time Log](https://www.twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html); and
* invoice.

This is an outcome-based service; therefore, VR will not pay unless all topics in the service description and service authorization are addressed. For more information, refer to 3.11.1 Documentation and Signatures.

### 4.5.4 Fees

For more information, refer to [4.7 Employment Assessments Fee Schedule](https://www.twc.state.tx.us/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-04#s47).