# VR-SFP Chapter 4: Employment Assessments

The following sections of the VR Standards for Providers have been revised. These requirements will take effect July 1, 2021.

## 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://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) for Vocational Assessments form, before the change is implemented. The approved VR3472 must be maintained in the provider’s customer case file. For more information, refer to [VR-SFP 3.6.4.2 Evaluation of Service Delivery](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-03" \l "s3-6-4).

## 4.2 Staff Qualifications

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### 4.2.3 Environmental Work Assessment Evaluator

The environmental work assessment evaluator must have a current autism endorsement from the University of North Texas Workplace Inclusion and Sustainable Employment (UNTWISE).

Information on the UNTWISE Texas credentials and endorsements can be found at <http://wise.unt.edu/crptraining>.

No waiver or exceptions can be used to waive the autism endorsement requirement.

## 4.3 Vocational Evaluation

### 4.3.1 Vocational Evaluation 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 are done in-person cannot be conducted remotely.

When the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or the federal, state, or local government issues health and safety protocols, such as social distancing, follow VR-SFP 3.3.10 Contractor Required Policy and Procedures.

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) for Vocational Evaluation form, before the change is implemented. The approved VR3472 must be maintained in the provider’s customer case file. For more information, refer to [VR-SFP 3.6.4.2 Evaluation of Service Delivery](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-03" \l "s3-6-4).

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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## 4.4 Vocational Evaluation - Situational Assessments and Work Samples

### 4.4.1 Vocational Evaluation - Situational Assessments and Work Samples 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 are provided in person and cannot be conducted remotely.

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) for Vocational Assessments form, before the change is implemented. The approved VR3472 must be maintained in the provider’s customer case file. For more information, refer to [VR-SFP 3.6.4.2 Evaluation of Service Delivery](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-03" \l "s3-6-4).

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## 4.5 Environmental Work Assessment

### 4.5.1 Environmental Work Assessment 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 is provided in-person and cannot be conducted remotely.

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) for Vocational Assessments form, before the change is implemented. The approved VR3472 must be maintained in the provider’s customer case file. For more information, refer to [VR-SFP 3.6.4.2 Evaluation of Service Delivery](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-03" \l "s3-6-4).

The 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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## 4.7 Employment Assessments Fee Schedule

A provider cannot collect money from a VR customer or the customer's family for any service charged in excess of VR service fees. If VR services and another resource are paying for a service for a customer, the total payment must not exceed the fee specified in the VR Standards for Providers manual.

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| **Employment Assessments** | **Unit Rate** | **Comment** |
| Vocational Evaluation | $235 per day | * Minimum hours per day is two with no more than six hours * Maximum payment allowed is $1,175 * Incomplete assessments with the report are paid at $39 per hour, when [VR3472, Contracted Service Modification Request](https://www.twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html) for Vocational Assessments is approved by the VR division director |
| Vocational Evaluation - Situational Assessments and Work Samples | $705 | * Paid only on receipt of a complete report, with all deliverables addressed |
| Environmental Work Assessment | $990 | * Paid only on receipt of a complete report, with all deliverables addressed |

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