

FAQs – Competency Skills Checklist for Employment

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A1: What is the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment?

Rather than a traditional lesson and exam format that RELIAS courses usually follow, Competency Skills Checklists are listings of basic skills needed to successfully complete day-to-day activities and maintain proper care of those who need care. In this case, this is in relation to those delivering employment-related services and supports.

A2: What is the difference between a Competency Review Tool and a Competency Skills Checklist tool?

The Competency Review module is not a standard RELIAS feature; therefore, the option to create a Competency Review will not be visible within your RELIAS account unless your agency has purchased it as an upgrade. Only *Administrators* and *Instructors* can create a Competency Review. This feature is not necessary at this time for the components of the employment-related modules.

A3: Where can I find AHCCCS contractual requirements related to the provision of employment services for AHCCCS-eligible members, including information about the four employment competencies?

The AHCCCS employment policy is called AHCCCS Contractor Operations Manual 447 (*ACOM 447*) and can be found [HERE](#).

A4: Who do I speak with if I have questions related to the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment content?

Please reach out to one of your contracted health plan's Employment Administrators.

Also, the following resources are available electronically on the AzAHP website under the "Provider Information" tab within the "Resource Station" section (<https://azahp.org/azahp/azahp-accrhba-awfda/resources-2/>).

- The Competency Skills Checklist for Employment
- The Employment Job-Aid for Supervisors
- This FAQ document

A5: Who do I speak with if I have questions related to navigating RELIAS?

You may find what you're looking for in the [RELIAS Connect How-to-Manual](#). You may also reach out to one of your contracted health plan's Workforce Development Administrators or RELIAS support at 1-800-381-2321.

A6: What do you mean by "employment staff" and "non-employment staff"?

Employment staff is defined as clinical staff providing direct services whose primary duties are employment and rehabilitation related. There are different titles for employment staff, such as Employment Specialists, Rehabilitation Specialists, and Vocational Coordinators, and these are staff that provide employment and rehabilitation services and supports as their primary role. This does not include employment staff from specialty employment agencies with staff like Job Developers or Job Coaches (see Question and Answer #15 for more details).

Non-employment staff is defined as clinical staff providing direct services whose primary duties are not employment and rehabilitation related. Examples may include, but are not limited to: Case Managers,

Support Coordinators, Peer or Family Support Specialists, Counselors, Clinicians, Housing Specialists, and Benefits Specialists.

A7: When I am in RELIAS, how do I find the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment modules?

From the RELIAS homepage, click on the “Learning” drop-down icon on the left-side of the screen, then click on the “Modules” drop-down icon. Select “Module List”. In the search field, type in “447” (this is in reference to AHCCCS ACOM Policy 447). Once you do that, you will see all eight of the Competency Skills Checklists related to ACOM 447 (two for each, one labelled “initial” and one labelled “annual”). You will also see the two training courses related to employment, which are “AHCCCS – NEO – Employment Rehabilitation” and “Employment Competency Skills Checklist Training for Supervisors”.

A8: How often do these Competency Skills Checklists for Employment need to be updated and completed within RELIAS?

Existing employment and non-employment staff, at a minimum, shall have their Competency Skills Checklist for Employment completed annually after initial evaluation. Within RELIAS and for each identified employment competency, there are two modules, one labeled “Initial” and the other labeled “Annual”. When completing the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment with your existing staff for the first time, utilize the appropriate “Initial” module. These competency skills checklists need to be completed and updated on an annual basis. For annual evaluations, utilize the appropriate “Annual” module.

Newly hired employment and non-employment staff, at a minimum, shall have their Competency Skills Checklist for Employment completed within 90-days of hire, then annually thereafter. This does not mean that staff need to be considered “competent” in each employment competency within the 90-days, but rather have their competencies evaluated. Supervisors should utilize this tool to not only measure staff competencies, but to build upon their own professional development.

A9: With evaluating employment competencies through RELIAS being a new requirement, will I be penalized for mistakes when trying to fulfill the requirement?

No. For those agencies who are mandated to complete the Competency Skills Checklists for Employment in RELIAS for their staff, there will not be any penalties for mistakes made during the process (doing the actual observations and attestations). We would rather agencies attempt to complete the requirement and make mistakes than not try at all.

A10: If a staff person does not “meet” their respective competency level within the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment, what is the next step?

Refer to page 6 of the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment in the table titled, “*Evaluation of Employee Competencies*” to assess competency level development needs and recommended actions. Recommended actions steps are determined by the supervisor evaluating that staff.

A11: Will this be added to the Arizona Association of Health Plans (AzAHP) core training list?

The Competency Skills Checklist for Employment is not currently a part of the AzAHP's core training plan list. The health plans’ Workforce Development Administrators will communicate to Providers if, and when, the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment is added to the core training list.

A12: Are Providers allowed to create one comprehensive checklist that includes all four competencies? Right now, there are eight different checklists, and it is very time consuming.

The expectation at this time is that Providers use the eight checklists created by AHCCCS and the health plans' Employment Administrators. Auto-enrolling can be used to potentially reduce the time burden. If you have further questions about this process, you may contact any of your contracted health plans' Workforce Development Administrator or RELIAS helpdesk. Please refer to Question and Answer #5 in this document about questions related to navigating RELIAS.

A13: In RELIAS, I found the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment modules. Do we have to manually assign these modules for each applicable staff person?

We suggest setting up two Training Plans for these staff, one "90-day" (non-recurring) and one "annual" (recurring). Put the Checklists titled "Initial" into the 90-day plan and the Checklists titled "Annual" into the annual re-occurring plan. You will then want to enroll the staff with whom these checklists pertain to into those training plans. You can do it manually or you can set up auto enrollment. For assistance with this process, please contact RELIAS at 1-800-381-2321.

A14: Within RELIAS, what are the different roles that are able to perform competency skills checklist evaluations and who can be assigned to the different roles?

The roles are *Administrator, Instructor, Supervisor, Competency Tracker Reporter, Observer, Data Entry, and Learner*. The agency can decide which staff can be assigned each role. To find more information about managing the user roles and permissions, view the [RELIAS Connect How-to-Manual](#).

A15: Do Community Service Agency (CSA) specialty employment agencies need to complete the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment in RELIAS?

No. When answering this question, consider the relevance of the specific employment competencies (Member Engagement, Billing, Disability Benefits 101, and Rehabilitation Services Administration/ Vocational Rehabilitation) to the types of employment staff employed through either the referring agency or the specialty employment agency. The Competency Skills Checklist for Employment is designed to develop staff competencies at the Provider Type 77 and IC referring agency level and not those agencies who, for the most part, solely provide employment services.

Provider type 77 and IC referring agencies have member-facing staff such as Case Managers, Peer Support Specialists, Rehabilitation Specialists, Employment Specialists, and Vocational Coordinators, whereas specialty employment agencies have member-facing staff such as Job Developers and Job Coaches. The staff at each of these entities have different roles and expectations when working with members as it pertains to the four employment competencies in AHCCCS Contractor Operations Manual 447 (ACOM 447). For example, with Member Engagement, the hope is that the member had already been "engaged" with the referring agency staff prior to being referred over to one of these specialty employment agencies, so it would not be the responsibility of a specialty employment agency to initially "engage" members who are not interested in employment. Although there may be any number of different scenarios, here are a couple of examples and whether they would have to complete the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment in RELIAS.

- Specialty employment agency with employment staff only, like Job Developers and Job Coaches: No, they do not have to complete the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment in RELIAS.

- Agencies who have a dual-Provider role (e.g., Employment agency and Behavioral Outpatient Clinic) might have different employment staff, even at the same Provider site. They may have a Rehabilitation Specialist, Employment Specialist, or Vocational Coordinator-type of position and a Job Developer/Job Coach-type of position, but they are different people doing different jobs. The supervisor would have to complete the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment in RELIAS process with, for instance, the Rehabilitation Specialists, but not the Job Developers.
- Outpatient Provider agencies with employment staff titled Employment Specialists, Rehabilitation Specialists, and Vocational Coordinators are the types of Providers these Employment competencies were targeted for, therefore they will have to complete the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment in RELIAS.

For health plan staff answering any questions related to whether an agency will need to complete the Competency Skills Checklists for Employment, we know that every Provider is different, and possibly set up differently, so use your best judgment when answering specific questions on this topic by taking into consideration the type of Provider they are and the type of employment staff they employ.

A16: Can I have one of my employment staff's peers conduct the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment evaluation in RELIAS?

No. It is the responsibility of the supervisor, or someone in a supervisory role, to perform the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment evaluations within RELIAS for all areas of employment competencies. However, for the Disability Benefits 101 (DB101) and Rehabilitation Services Administration/Vocational Rehabilitation (RSA/VR) competencies, a supervisor may:

- Utilize the *"Employment Job-Aid for Supervisors"*.
 - An *"Employment Job-Aid for Supervisors"* has been created to assist supervisors with evaluating their staff and can be located/downloaded from the *"Employment Competency Skills Checklist Training for Supervisors"* in RELIAS (see Question and Answer #21). This Job-Aid can also be found on the AzAHP website under the *"Provider Information"* tab within the *"Resource Station"* section (<https://azahp.org/azahp/azahp-accrhba-awfda/resources-2/>).
- Identify Provider staff that have achieved competency in the identified area at a Level 4 or higher to provide technical assistance.
 - This is especially true with the DB101 level 3 competency of completing DB101 estimator sessions with members and accurately interpreting and analyzing the results, as this is a different skill set designed for employment staff that most supervisors are unfamiliar with. If you are employed at an agency with multiple employment staff and one of the staff is assisting the other with reaching their DB101 competency, you may have the skilled employment staff sit in during the evaluation to help with the assessment.
- Reach out to a contracted health plan Employment Administrator for technical assistance.

A17: Is it true that if my staff is not deemed competent in any of the four employment workforce competencies, they cannot provide services in that area until deemed competent?

This is true, however, if the supervisor, or another competent employee in these areas, provides immediate and direct supervision of the worker while they are performing tasks associated with a specific competency, then it would be permissible to allow the employee to perform the service. For more information about the supervision and oversight of behavioral health paraprofessionals and behavioral health technicians, please review [Arizona Administrative Code § 9-10-115](#).

A18: My agency serves children and does not have any employment services. Are we required to take the *Employment Competency Skills Checklist Training for Supervisors* and complete the Competency Skills Checklists for Employment?

The two main questions that need to be answered first is whether or not your agency 1) serves transition-age youth ages 16 and over and 2) provides behavioral health services. The behavioral health service benefit package, as outlined in AHCCCS policy (AMPM 310-B) includes employment services. If the answer to both questions is yes, then yes, supervisors at your agency should take the training and complete the Competency Skills Checklists for Employment for your staff.

A19: My agency serves members under the age of 18 years old. Will staff working with these members require these Competency Skills Checklists for Employment?

Any supervisors of staff (from Provider Type 77 and IC referring agencies) working with members aged 16 and above that provide behavioral health services will be required to complete the checklists.

A20: My agency is considered a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC). Am I required to complete the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment?

For an FQHC that has non-Behavioral Health staff providing direct service to members, the requirement does not apply. However, if you submit claims for Behavioral Health services, then you are required to comply, as employment services are part of the Behavioral Health benefit package. If you have any further questions, please reach out to your contracted health plan Employment Administrators.

A21: What types of trainings within RELIAS will be helpful for me to complete these Competency Skills Checklist for Employment evaluations?

There are two main trainings within RELIAS that will assist you in completing the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment in RELIAS. The first is called "*Employment Competency Skills Checklist Training for Supervisors*", which is designed to educate supervisors on how to assess and develop their staff's competency levels as it pertains to the provision of employment-related services and supports. In this course, you will gain an understanding of the employment competencies; apply and interpret the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment table; assess the competency of clinical staff providing direct services; and become familiar with the process in RELIAS through the embedded video demonstration.

The second training that will enhance your understanding of the Competency Skills Checklist for Employment evaluations is the employment-related new employee orientation called "*AHCCCS-NEO-Employment Rehabilitation*", which is designed to provide staff with knowledge about AHCCCS's employment philosophy; AHCCCS-covered employment services; key components of the Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) and Collaborative Protocols; Rehabilitation Services Administration/Vocational Rehabilitation (RSA/VR); SAMHSA's Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) of Supported Employment (SE); and Arizona Disability Benefits 101 (DB101). This will provide an overview of the employment-related information that all of your staff will need to know, at a minimum.

A22: Are there any plans to do any types of training or webinars, or provide additional job aids for the Competency Skills Checklists for Employment?

There is currently nothing scheduled, however there have been ongoing conversations about various options. Further communications about training and/or webinar opportunities will be made to Providers if and when AHCCCS, the health plan Employment Administrators, and the health plan Workforce Development Administrators deem necessary based on feedback from the Provider community.