

CASS CONNECTIONS



NJ Department of Human Services

www.nj.gov/humanservices/cass.html

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Training for the Long Run

Question: How do you prepare about 7,300 social services professionals to use a new, comprehensive and cutting-edge information system that will consolidate and replace an array of antiquated data systems they use every day?

Answer: Very deliberately.

With New Jersey's Consolidated Assistance Support System, or CASS, beginning a phased roll out this coming October, a lot of thought has gone into developing a training program designed to get us in shape to handle a new system — while allowing us to continue providing services for our 1.5 million clients. It's no easy feat. But we've got a well-thought out plan, and working together, we can start to prepare for CASS.

Training is broken down into a four-part, incremental program, designed to move us logically from a crawl to a walk to a run:

Step 1 — is a Web-based familiarization course completed at your own pace on your computer. This familiarization course, which takes about two hours, must be completed before attending instructor-led training.

Step 2 — an instructor-led course. This classroom course is the core of the training. It provides hands-on experience with a live instructor that will familiarize you with the major components of CASS, including intake, case management and ongoing eligibility.

(Some staff members, i.e., those involved in administration, finance and fraud detection, will take additional instructor-led classes and Web-based training.)

Step 3 — available follow-up Web-based training. This training is designed to reinforce

knowledge learned in the classroom and to provide you with additional information to increase your knowledge of CASS. Since it is Web-based, it is, of course, available to you at any time.

Step 4 — a simulated CASS online environment. This simulated system will allow you to practice hands-on what you have learned before you use the new system in its "live" form. Built into CASS itself is a robust online help program that not only provides information about all aspects of the system but also helps answer questions for any specific screen you are on.

Training will begin with staff who work on Medicaid programs. As training moves

forward, you will be assigned to classes by your county director based on your work schedule, availability and the demands of maintaining coverage at your office. In any case, it won't be long before we're immersed in the new world of CASS.

CASS is a wonderful new system but there's no question that even positive change can be challenging — and change on the scale we are discussing will challenge us all. That's why we're committed to providing you with comprehensive training, and why it will be important that you take full advantage of it. We're committed to ensuring a smooth transition and getting us all up to speed before we begin running for real.



VOCAB - 101 Evidence and Rules

Evidence is the information or data collected about individuals to determine their eligibility for benefits or services — or both. Each piece of evidence is a separate unit of information that can change over time (e.g., income, household makeup, etc.). Sometimes evidence will require verification, in other words, proof that it is true. Rules are the requirements and program policies used to determine a person's eligibility. When necessary, the rules will also determine what verifications of evidence are required.

CASS has a built-in "rules engine" that weighs a person's evidence against the appropriate rules and verifications and produces a decision about whether he or she is eligible for benefits and/or services and, if so, at what levels. CASS completes this process across multiple programs all at one time.