

ND Department of Human Services – Division of Developmental Disabilities  
**Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) and Inventory for Client and Agency Planning (ICAP)  
Return to In-Person Assessment Protocol**

In April 2020, the DD Division issued guidance for completion of Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) and Inventory for Client and Agency Planning (ICAP) assessments (collectively referred to as assessments) virtually as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This guidance temporarily waived the best practice of completing assessments face-to-face during the COVID-19 pandemic. The DD Division has determined the waiver to the best practice shall cease and assessments will resume face-to-face.

**Why are face-to-face assessments resuming?**

The decision is based on the prevalence of COVID-19, the rolling average positivity rate decreasing and active cases continuing to decline. In addition to these factors, vaccination efforts are underway to provide the vaccine to staff and persons living in congregate settings.

**When will face-to-face assessments resume?**

The DD Division, together with The Rushmore Group, LLC. (Rushmore), have determined face-to-face assessments will resume March 1, 2021. All requirements outlined in the current SIS and ICAP Assessment Policy, will continue to be in effect. ND Administrative Code 75-04-05-09.1 designates timelines for when initial or reassessments must be completed. Extenuating circumstances preventing timely scheduling of an initial or reassessment will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

**Are there exceptions to completing an assessment face-to-face?**

Yes, considerations for completion of virtual assessments will be discussed on a case-by-case basis to assure the health and safety of the person supported and their team.

- If the person supported, guardian, or provider, have concerns with health and safety of a face-to-face assessment, this information will be relayed to Rushmore. Rushmore will work with the provider to implement CDC prevention guidelines, complete assessments virtually, or reschedule the assessments for a later date when face-to-face is feasible.
  - **Guardian agreement to the virtual assessment must be obtained and documented by the provider.**
- If Rushmore determines face-to-face assessments will compromise the health and safety of their assessors, they will work with the provider to complete the assessments virtually, reschedule the assessments or potentially assign a new assessor to conduct the assessments.

If assessments will be conducted virtually, the requirements of the COVID-19 Protocol will be in effect.

**What are the expectations to assure health and safety?**

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines will be followed for face-to-face assessments. Everyone participating in the assessment will wear a mask if they are able and maintain the recommended six feet of separation for social distancing.

**How will documentation submission change?**

The provider shall complete the SIS Notification Letter and complete the SFN 1802, Assessment Provider Checklist, for any scheduled assessment. As with previous practice, a qualified responder will give this form to the Rushmore Assessor. Providers will no longer electronically submit this form to Rushmore.

The Rushmore Assessor will give each respondent an Assessment Experience Survey at the conclusion of the meeting. The survey can be completed and returned to the assessor or completed online utilizing the link provided at the top of the survey form.

The assessment spreadsheet is still required to be completed by the provider and returned to Rushmore. The provider is also expected to submit a copy of the Overall Service Plan (OSP) to Rushmore for each scheduled assessment prior to the assessment being completed. These documents assist the assessor with assessment preparation activities.

**Are there any changes to the scheduling process?**

No, there are no anticipated changes to the scheduling process. Providers are reminded that resumption of face-to-face assessments means Rushmore's assessors will need to make travel arrangements. Providers shall respond to Rushmore's scheduling requests as soon as possible allowing adequate time to arrange travel.

**Are there any changes to the qualified responders?**

No, the requirements for qualified responders have not changed:

- There must be at least two qualified responders present for the entire assessment who have known the client for at least 90-days and are able to speak to the client's support needs to be successful.
- Qualified responders must know the individual well in one or more environments and provide accurate answers that do not under or over-estimate abilities and support needs.
- All qualified responders must be present at the beginning of the assessment **and** remain for the entirety of the assessment.

**Is there a potential that virtual assessments will resume?**

Yes, it is possible assessments may return to a virtual format. The DD Division will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation in North Dakota. If the DD Division determines resumption of virtual assessments is necessary to protect people's health and safety, providers will be notified and previous COVID-19 protocols will be re-implemented.