ATTACHMENT D

DISCUSSION GUIDES FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

D1. PROGRAM DIRECTOR/MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION GUIDE
D2. PROGRAM FRONTLINE STAFF DISCUSSION GUIDE
D3. PROGRAM SUPERVISOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.

D1. PROGRAM DIRECTOR/MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION GUIDE

PROGRAM DIRECTOR/MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION GUIDE

Note to site visitors: This guide is intended for individuals identified as directors and/or other senior/program managers in the coaching interventions selected for site visits. Respondents will be familiar at a high level with the lead agency or program administrative structure, services, mission and goals, as well as the rationale, development, design, implementation history, structure and performance of the coaching intervention.

Date of Interview:
Interviewer(s):
Site:
Respondent Name(s):
Title(s):
Respondent Affiliation:
E-Mail:
Phone:
Address:
Fax:

Introductory Statement and Consent

As you may know, [PROGRAM NAME or AGENCY] is participating in the Evaluation of Employment Coaching for TANF and Other Low-Income Populations, a national study being conducted by Mathematica Policy Research and its partner Abt Associates for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The study will help us learn more about whether providing people with a coach to assist them with setting and meeting goals helps them get and keep a job. It will also help us learn whether there are ways to make the [coaching/program] work better.

As part of the evaluation, we are interviewing program administrators, staff, and others who work with clients, in order to help us better understand the types of services provided as part of [PROGRAM NAME/AGENCY] and your experience with providing services. The length of the interview is about 90 minutes. Your participation in this study is important and will help us understand more about the coaching services provided to low-income individuals and, as part of the broader evaluation, which services are most effective.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. During our conversation, anything you say will be kept private and we won't use your name or any other identifying information when we report the results of our study. No identified information from the interviews will be shared by the researchers with anybody from [PROGRAM NAME or AGENCY]. Your responses will be combined with the responses of other staff and no individual names will be reported. You may also choose not to answer any question you do not want to answer. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number for this information collection is 0970-XXXX and the expiration date is XX/XX/XXXX.

I. Current Position and Responsibilities

I would like to begin by asking a little about your position at your [agency/organization]. [*Note to interviewer: Probe the following responsibilities, as appropriate to the respondent(s)*]

Please briefly describe your roles and responsibilities at *[agency/organization]*.

- Agency administration/planning/policy and procedure development
- Responsible for administrative oversight and/or policies and procedures for:
  - Eligibility and intake
  - Case management
  - Social work
  - Counseling
  - Coaching
  - Employment services
  - Referrals to other programs and services
  - Performance management
  - Other oversight responsibilities
- Other organizational responsibilities, such as:
  - Community involvement and outreach
  - Hiring
  - Budget planning
  - Fundraising
  - Other organizational responsibilities

II. Local Economic, Policy, and Program Context

I would like to focus now on the local economic and policy environment in which [agency/organization] operates.

Socio-Economic Context

1. How would you describe your service community/catchment area? For example:

    How large is it and is it primarily urban, suburban, or rural?

What are the demographics of your target service population? Would you describe them as living in a primarily low-income, middle-income, high-income, or mixed-income community? Is the cost of living low, high, or average, especially for housing?

How healthy is the local economy? What are the major industries? What part of the local economy is growing? How about for entry-level jobs?

What are the most common jobs your clients obtain? Are most of those jobs local or at a commuting distance? If many clients commute, do they need to have a car, or is the public transportation system adequate for most people?

Organizational background and administrative structure

1. Please describe the programs and services your organization provides (not just specific to employment services or coaching). Does it provide the service directly or by referral? *[Probe for the following services]*:

   Coaching
   Case management
   Assessments
   Job search/job-readiness training
   Education
   Vocational training
   Work experience/subsidized jobs
   Child care/child care assistance
   Transportation assistance
   Clothes, uniforms, tools
   Tuition assistance
   Stable housing assistance
   Financial counseling
   Legal advice, record expungement
   Substance abuse treatment
   Mental health services
   Physical health services
   Stress reduction
   Domestic violence remediation
   Family relationships counseling
   Addressing child behavioral issues

   Other?

2. Are similar services readily available (or available at all) elsewhere in the community? If so, at which organizations?

   [Ask items 3-6 for TANF agencies or other agency or contractor that administers TANF]:

3. How would you describe your agency's overall mission and policy goals?

4. How has the coaching intervention fit into this mission? Are there any conflicts between the philosophy and methods of coaching and other agency rules, goals, or policies, such as meeting work participation rates or imposing sanctions on uncooperative clients? If so, have any conflicts affected the implementation or success of coaching?

5. How much discretion do you have in implementing TANF policy and procedures in the context of state [or county] administrative and policy guidelines?

6. What is the administrative structure of your agency? [*Note to interviewer: ask for an organizational chart*]. What is the overall staffing pattern? How many coaches are there? What is the average caseload for coaches? *[Note: ask if relevant]* Is the caseload for coaching different than it is/was for case management?

   [Ask items 7 - 10 for other public, private/non-profit organizations]:

7. Our understanding is that *[organization name]* is a *[FILL-IN AS APPROPRIATE PRIOR TO VISIT (e.g., public, private non-profit, or for-profit organization)]* – is this correct?

8. How would you describe its mission and goals?

9. How do coaching services fit within the overall mission and services of your organization? Are there any conflicts between coaching philosophy and methods and other organizational goals or policies? If so, have any conflicts affected the implementation or success of coaching?

10. What is the administrative structure of your agency? [*Note to interviewer: ask for an organizational chart*]. What is the overall staffing pattern? How many coaches are there? What is the average caseload for coaches? *[Note: ask if relevant]* Is the caseload for coaching different than it is/was for case management?

III. Coaching Program Design and Structure

We are especially interested in the major logistical and practical details of how your organization has developed and structured its coaching services in the [name of program] program and their relationship to other services intended to achieve [agency/organization] goals.

Coaching Program Development and Design

1. When did your agency develop and implement your coaching program? Did it replace a comparable service or activity? If so, which activity or service?

2. Were you involved in the decision to adopt a coaching approach?

[If "Yes," ask] Why did your organization adopt a coaching approach? What activities or outcomes were you hoping to improve or problems were you hoping to solve?

[If "No," ask] Do you know why your organization adopted a coaching approach? Do you know what activities or outcomes were they hoping to improve or problems were they hoping to solve?

3. How did your agency go about developing your coaching intervention? For example, did you review available coaching models and approaches and choose one to adopt? Did you hire a consultant? Did you develop your own model or adapt others to your own needs and purposes?

4. Does your coaching intervention have a Theory of Change? That is, do you have an idea of what the coaching program is supposed to achieve and how it works to do that? If so, what is the Theory of Change? Do you have a written description or picture?

5. What are the core elements/components of your coaching model and practice? For example:

    What coaching strategies are used by coaches? *[Probe]* For example do they use motivational interviewing, "mindfulness" training, cognitive therapy, other techniques? Is coaching one-on-one or in groups? On average, how often do coaches meet with clients and for how long of a period do they work with a client?

    Does your coaching model intend to address cognitive and behavioral challenges for clients? If so, what are the major challenges it is intended to address?

    What client capabilities is your coaching model intended to improve or develop? How do coaches assess client progress in these areas?

    What tools do coaches have at their disposal? Why were these tools chosen for use in your program?

    How are coaches trained? How often and by whom? Why was this approach chosen?

    How are coaches supervised, monitored, and rated for performance?

    What associated training is used to support client change? For example, are clients trained in life skills, workplace skills, financial planning, in other skill areas?

6. When and how is coaching first presented to clients? How are clients assigned to coaches?

7. *[For TANF agencies]*: Are all TANF recipients coached? If not, which clients are coached and why? Is coaching mandatory or voluntary?

8. *[For non-TANF agencies or programs]*: Are all clients coached? If not, which clients are coached and why?

9. When did you first implement your coaching intervention? Was it piloted first at a smaller scale? If so, how was it phased in at scale? What were the early experiences like? About how long was it operating before it reached a stable state?

10. Has the program evolved over time? For example, have there been changes in: major coaching components or strategies, approaches to training coaches, client assessment tools, coaching tools, client exercises and "homework," or other important changes?

    For each change:

    - Why was it made?
    - What problem was it meant to solve?
    - Was it successful? If not, why?

Monitoring Performance

1. What specific goals do you have for [*name of program*]? For example, do you have goals for:

   Client program participation and attendance at coaching sessions?

   [*If relevant*]: Work participation rates?

   Specific client outcomes? If so, which outcomes? How and when do you measure those outcomes?

2. Do you use data and data systems to monitor overall goals? What kinds of data and data systems? What data are available to coaches and other staff?

3. Has *[program name]* been evaluated previously? If so, when and by whom? What kind of evaluation? What were the major findings? Is there a report we could have?

Challenges and Solutions

1. In your view, what are the strengths of the coaching program, particularly in relation to what was done before? What, if any, are its weak points in relation to what was done before?
2. Which elements or components of the coaching program are most important to its success? Why?
3. If you were to advise another agency or organization wanting to develop and implement a coaching strategy, what advice would you have about how to go about developing and implementing coaching? What challenges are most likely? What solutions have you found to work in addressing these challenges?

4. From your perspective, how well do you think the coaching strategy your organization has implemented meets families' needs? Do you regularly elicit feedback about the coaching services? Have you heard feedback about coaching from the individuals and families you serve?
5. From your perspective, how well do you think the support services you offer, other than coaching, meet families' needs?
   a. Are the services helpful?
   b. What do you think families need more or less of?
   c. What are the most common services that families take up?
   d. Have you heard any feedback from families regarding the services offered? If so, what was it? Do you regularly elicit feedback from individuals or families you serve?

IV. Wrap-Up – Take-Aways from this Study

Thank you so much for sharing this information with us. As we mentioned at the beginning, we expect this study to result in a report and there may be other opportunities to share selected results. We sincerely hope that this study can be useful to you. So, before we finish, we would like to hear what you would most like others to know about your experiences running a coaching program, and what you might like to learn from our study when it is completed.

1. In your view, what would you most want stakeholders – for example, the public, federal policymakers, other *[state/non-profit]* administrators, or others – to know about your [*agency's/organization's*] experiences with serving low-income individuals and, in particular, coaching them for employment success?
2. Is there anything you can think of that you would most like to learn from our study when it is finished?
3. Is there anything else you would like to share with us?
4. If we have any follow-up questions as we write our report, may we contact you again?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

D2. PROGRAM FRONTLINE STAFF DISCUSSION GUIDE

PROGRAM FRONTLINE STAFF DISCUSSION GUIDE

[Note to site visitors: This guide is intended for individuals identified as coaches, case managers, or other frontline program staff in the offices in the programs selected for site visits. Respondents will be familiar with how coaching or case management is delivered to clients, as well as with the content and delivery of employment, family, and other services, as applicable.]

Date of Interview:
Interviewer(s):
Site:
Respondent Name(s):
Title(s):
Respondent Affiliation:
E-Mail:
Phone:
Address:
Fax:

Introductory Statement and Consent

As you may know, [PROGRAM NAME or AGENCY] is participating in the Evaluation of Employment Coaching for TANF and Other Low-Income Populations, a national study being conducted by Mathematica Policy Research and its partner Abt Associates for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The study will help us learn more about whether providing people with a coach to assist them with setting and meeting goals helps them get and keep a job. It will also help us learn whether there are ways to make the [coaching/program] work better.

As part of this evaluation, we are interviewing program administrators, staff, and others who work with clients, in order to help us better understand the types of services provided as part of [PROGRAM NAME/AGENCY] and your experience with providing services. The length of the interview is about 90 minutes. Your participation in this study is important and will help us understand more about the coaching services provided to low-income individuals and, as part of the broader evaluation, which services are most effective.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. During our conversation, anything you say will be kept private and we won't use your name or any other identifying information when we report the results of our study. No identified information from the interviews will be shared by the researchers with anybody from [PROGRAM NAME or AGENCY]. Your responses will be combined with the responses of other staff and no individual names will be reported. You may also choose not to answer any question you do not want to answer. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number for this information collection is 0970-XXXX and the expiration date is XX/XX/XXXX.

[<u>*NOTE TO INTERVIEWER*</u>*: If this site is a TANF agency that uses more traditional case managers to serve control group sample members, or uses both case managers and coaches to serve treatment group members, and you are conducting small group discussions, please ensure that members of each* *discussion group are either all coaches or all case managers. Also be aware of guidance in the discussion guide about specific questions or groups of questions to ask of all workers, just case managers, or just coaches.*

I. Current Position and Responsibilities

[Note to interviewer: use for all frontline staff]

Respondent Background

I would like to begin by asking a little about your position and your [agency/organization]. [Note to interviewers: Probe for the following responsibilities, as appropriate to the respondents]

Please briefly describe your roles and responsibilities at *[agency/organization]*.

- Program enrollment/intake
- Client assessment
- Coaching
- Case management
- Social work
- Counseling
- Delivering employment services
- Arranging enrollment in other programs [*Ask respondent to name other programs]*
- Making referrals/navigation of other services
- Other responsibilities

Organizational Background and Work Structure

1. Have *[agency/organization's]* mission and its major goals and principles for providing benefits/services been communicated to you?

   [If yes, probe the following]:

   What would you say those are?

   How are goals communicated to you? How do you integrate them into your work?

   Do you communicate those goals to clients? If so, how?

   How does coaching/case management fit with the overall [*agency/organization*] mission and goals? In your view which approach (coaching or case management) is most successful?

2. How is your work organized on a daily/weekly basis? Summarize a typical work day for you.

3. What other staff members do you work with most? In what ways?

4. In the course of your everyday job, do you work with any other organizations?

   [Probe: formal vs. informal relationship; referral process]

II. Local Economic and Policy Context

[Note to interviewer: use for all frontline staff]

1. What types of jobs are typically available for the clients you work with? Are there enough jobs for those who want to work?

[Ask items 2-3 for TANF agencies or other agency or contractor that administers TANF]:

2. Can you summarize the current work requirements for the TANF recipients you work with? *(Probe: hours requirements, allowable activities, exemptions/good cause for nonparticipation, sanctioning)*

3. Do you face challenges in applying current TANF work requirement policies? If so, what are they?

III. Client Challenges

[Note to interviewer: use for all frontline staff]

a. In your experience, what individual characteristics or family circumstances make it challenging for the clients you work with to find employment, leave TANF, and become more self-sufficient?

[Probe these areas if not explicitly mentioned]

Employment history and skills

Educational attainment and skill level, including English fluency

Unstable housing or homelessness

Lack of transportation or child care

Psychological and emotional skills (such as executive functioning, social skills, persistence, etc.)

Mental illness

Physical health

Substance abuse

Criminal record

Other

IV. Case Management Implementation and Practice

[Note to interviewer: use this section only for case managers.]

1. How do you approach working with clients? For example, what do you try to accomplish in the first meeting?
2. What are your overall goals in your casework? How do you monitor client progress towards those goals?
3. What types of assessments do you use to help tailor client services?

   [Probe for responses if not mentioned]:

   a. Barriers to self-sufficiency

   b. Cognitive skills

   c. Academic skills

   d. Executive functioning skills

   e. Employment history

   f. Employability/basic skills

   g. Psychological (e.g., personality tests)

   h. Job knowledge/career aptitude and preference

   i. Others
4. Which specific assessment tools do you use?
5. Approximately how often do you meet or communicate with clients and by what means? About how long are typical meetings? Are meetings one-on-one or in groups or both?
6. Briefly describe what happens in a "typical" case management session.
7. What do you try to accomplish in client meetings?
8. Do you monitor client compliance? If so, how?
9. What tools do you use in your case management practice? Do you have a manual?
10. What training did you receive for case management?
11. What ongoing support and supervision are available? How is your performance rated?
12. Do you have an assigned caseload? If so, how large is it? If not assigned, approximately how many clients do you typically work with on a monthly basis?
13. What are the participation and other behavioral requirements for clients? What are the consequences for noncompliance? Are there any less formal mechanisms than sanctioning through which clients are held accountable? About what percentage of clients are noncompliant?

14. What is the process for sanctions? About how often (percentage of cases) do you begin sanctioning procedures?
15. How would you describe "successful" case management?
16. Overall, do you think the case management practices you employ and the procedures and guidelines used in this agency are effective in accomplishing client and agency goals? What works well? What could be improved?

V. Coaching Implementation and Practice

[Note to interviewer: use this section only for coaches.]

1. How do you approach working with clients? For example, what do you try to accomplish in the first meeting? What types and frequency of interactions do you typically have with clients?
2. What are your overall goals in coaching? How do you monitor client progress towards those goals?
3. What types of assessments, do you use to help tailor client services?

   [Probe for responses if not mentioned:]

   a. Barriers to self-sufficiency

   b. Cognitive skills

   c. Academic skills

   d. Executive functioning skills

   e. Employment history

   f. Employability/basic skills

   g. Psychological (e.g., personality tests)

   h. Job knowledge/career aptitude and preference

   i. Others
4. Which specific assessment tools do you use?
5. What client skills, knowledge, attitudes, or values are expected to change as a result of the coaching? How do you assess client change?
6. What do you try to accomplish in each client meeting? Is there an agenda for each meeting? How do you organize the meetings?
7. Briefly describe what happens in a "typical" coaching session.
8. Approximately how often do you meet in person with clients?

9. About how long are typical coaching sessions? Over what time period is coaching delivered? Is it for a prescribed period? Until specific milestones are reached, or for some other period?

10. How frequently are you in touch with clients between formally scheduled meetings?

    [Probe: what are some common reasons why coaches would be in touch with clients between meetings? What method of contact do they use – phone, email, text message?]

11. What are the participation and other behavioral requirements for clients in the coaching program? What are the consequences for missed coaching sessions? About how often does someone with a coach leave the program before completing the entire coaching process or achieving a desired outcome? *[For workers in TANF agencies only]* Are there any less formal mechanisms than sanctioning through which clients are held accountable? About what percentage of clients do not comply with participation requirements?

12. What is the process for sanctions? About how often (percentage of cases) do you begin sanctioning procedures?

13. If a particular coach-client match is not working, are clients reassigned to new coaches? Who initiates this?

14. What are common challenges or barriers to client progress? How are they addressed?

15. What tools do you use in your coaching practice? What activities are clients asked to do between sessions?

16. What training did you receive for coaching?

17. What ongoing support and supervision are available to you? How is your performance rated?

18. Do you have an assigned caseload for coaching? If so, how large is it? If not assigned, approximately how many clients do you typically work with on a monthly basis?

19. How would you describe “successful” coaching?

20. Is coaching appropriate for every client? If not, what types of clients are ready for coaching and which are not? What services are available for clients not ready for coaching?

21. What are the strengths of coaching? What are its weaknesses?

22. Overall, do you think the coaching practices you employ and the procedures and guidelines used in this agency are effective in accomplishing client and agency goals? What works well? What could be improved?

VI. Wrap-Up: Desired Take-Aways from this Study

[Note to interviewer: use this section for coaches, only.]

Thank you so much for sharing this information with us. As we mentioned at the beginning, we expect this study to result in a report and there may be other opportunities to share selected results. We sincerely hope that this study can be useful to you. So, before we finish, we would like to hear what you *would most like others to know about your experiences running a coaching program, and what you might like to learn from our study when it is completed.*

1. In your view, what would you most want stakeholders – for example, the public, federal policymakers, *[state/non-profit]* administrators, front-line social service workers, or others – to know about your [*agency's/organization's*] experiences with serving low-income individuals, and, in particular, coaching them for success?
2. Is there anything you can think of that you would most like to learn from our study when it is finished?
3. Is there anything else you would like to share with us?
4. If we have any follow-up questions as we write our report, may we contact you again?

THANK YOU

[Note to interviewer: use this section for case managers, only]

Thank you so much for sharing this information with us. As we mentioned at the beginning, we expect this study to result in a report and there may be other opportunities to share selected results. We sincerely hope that this study can be useful to you. So, before we finish, we would like to hear what you would most like others to know about your experiences conducting case management, and what you might like to learn from our study when it is completed.

1. In your view, what would you most want stakeholders – for example, the public, federal policymakers, *[state/non-profit]* administrators, front-line social service workers, or others – to know about your [*agency's/organization's*] experiences with serving low-income individuals and, in particular, preparing them for employment?
2. Is there anything you can think of that you would most like to learn from our study when it is finished?
3. Is there anything else you would like to share with us?
4. If we have any follow-up questions as we write our report, may we contact you again?

THANK YOU

D3. PROGRAM SUPERVISOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

PROGRAM SUPERVISOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

[Note to site visitors: This guide is intended for individuals identified as supervisors of coaches, case managers, or other frontline program staff in the offices/programs selected for site visits. Respondents will be familiar with how coaching or case management is delivered to clients, as well as with the content and delivery of employment, family, and other services, as applicable.]

Date of Interview:
Interviewer (s):
Site:
Respondent Name(s):
Title(s):
Respondent Affiliation:
E-Mail:
Phone:
Address:
Fax:

Introductory Statement and Consent

As you may know, [PROGRAM NAME or AGENCY] is participating in the Evaluation of Employment Coaching for TANF and Other Low-Income Populations, a national study being conducted by Mathematica Policy Research and its partner Abt Associates for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The study will help us learn more about whether providing people with a coach to assist them with setting and meeting goals helps them get and keep a job. It will also help us learn whether there are ways to make the [coaching/program] work better.

As part of the evaluation, we are interviewing program administrators, staff, and others who work with clients, in order to help us better understand the types of services provided as part of [PROGRAM NAME/AGENCY] and your experience with providing services. The length of the interview is about 90 minutes. Your participation in this study is important and will help us understand more about the coaching services provided to low-income individuals and, as part of the broader evaluation, which services are most effective.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. During our conversation, anything you say will be kept private and we won't use your name or any other identifying information when we report the results of our study. No identified information from the interviews will be shared by the researchers with anybody from [PROGRAM NAME or AGENCY]. Your responses will be combined with the responses of other staff and no individual names will be reported. You may also choose not to answer any question you do not want to answer. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number for this information collection is 0970-XXXX and the expiration date is XX/XX/XXXX.

[*<u>NOTE TO INTERVIEWER</u>: If this site is a TANF agency that uses more traditional case managers to serve control group sample members, or uses both case managers and coaches to serve treatment group members, please ensure that all members of each discussion group are supervisors of either only coaches or only case managers. If supervisors are normally responsible for both coaches and case* *managers, any group of supervisors may be interviewed as a group. Also be aware of guidance in the discussion guide about specific questions or groups of questions to ask of all supervisors, just supervisors of case managers, or just supervisors of coaches.]*

I. Current Position and Responsibilities

[Note to interviewer: use for all supervisors]

Respondent Background

I would like to begin by asking a little about your position and your [agency/organization]. [Note to interviewers: Probe for the following responsibilities, as appropriate to the respondents]

1. Please briefly describe your roles and responsibilities at *[agency/organization]*.

Do you supervise and/or conduct directly:

- Recruitment/public information sessions
- Program enrollment/intake
- Client assessment
- Coaching
- Case management
- Social work
- Counseling
- Delivering employment services
- Arranging enrollment in other programs [*Ask respondent to name other programs]*
- Making referrals/navigation of other services
- Other supervisory or direct staffing responsibilities, including
    - Coach or case manager performance review and assessment
    - Other oversight responsibilities
- Other organizational responsibilities, such as:
    - Community involvement and outreach
    - Hiring
    - Other organizational responsibilities

2. What training have you received in your general role as a supervisor of coaches/case managers?

Organizational Background and Work Structure

1. Has your *[agency's/organization's]* mission and its major goals and principles for providing benefits/services been communicated to you?

   [If yes, probe the following]:

   What would you say those are?

   How are goals communicated to you and how do you integrate them into your work?

   Do you communicate those goals to the workers you supervise? If so, how?

   [If relevant]: Do you communicate those goals to the clients you work with directly? If so, how?

   How does coaching/case management fit with the overall [*agency/organization*] mission and goals?

   [If relevant]: In your view which approach (coaching or case management) is most successful?

2. How is your work organized on a daily/weekly basis? Summarize a typical work day for you.

3. What other staff members do you work with most? In what ways?

4. How are you supervised? To whom do you turn most often with work issues or problems?

5. In the course of your everyday job, do you work with any other organizations?

   [Probe: formal vs. informal relationship; referral process]

II. Local Economic and Policy Context

[Note to interviewer: use for all supervisors]

1. What types of jobs are typically available for the clients you and your coaches/case managers work with? Are there enough jobs for those who are looking for work?

   [Note: ask next three questions only for a TANF agency or contractor that administers TANF]

2. Can you summarize the current work requirements for the TANF recipients your agency serves? *(Probe: hours requirements, allowable activities, exemptions/good cause for nonparticipation, sanctioning)*

3. Do the workers you supervise face challenges in applying current TANF work requirement policies? If so, what are they?

4. Do you perceive any conflicts between coaching strategies and philosophy and TANF work requirements? If so, what are they, and how do you and the coaches resolve them?

III. Client Challenges

[Note to interviewer: use for all supervisors]

1. In your experience, what individual characteristics or family circumstances make it challenging for the clients your coaches/case managers work with to be self-sufficient?

   [Probe these areas if not explicitly mentioned]

   Employment history and skills

   Educational attainment and skill level, including English fluency

   Unstable housing or homelessness

   Lack of transportation or child care

   Psychological and emotional skills (such as executive functioning, social skills, persistence, etc.)

   Mental illness

   Physical health

   Substance abuse

   Criminal record

   Other

2. Do you have any particularly effective strategies that you share with your coaches/case managers in dealing with the clients facing the most challenges? What are they?

IV. Supervising Case Management Implementation and Practice

[Note to interviewer: use this section only for supervisors of case managers, or supervisors of both case managers and coaches. If interviewees supervise both coaches and case managers, ask them to respond to the following questions for supervising case managers only.]

1. How many case managers do you supervise?

2. How are clients assigned to case managers?

3. How do case managers approach working with clients? For example, what do they try to accomplish in the first meeting? What types and frequency of interactions do they typically have with clients? What guidance do you give them?

4. What are the overall goals for casework with your clients? How do you monitor your case managers' clients' progress towards those goals?

5. How often do you meet with the workers you supervise and for what purposes? What do you do in these meetings?

6. How do you assess the performance of case managers? How do you help case managers improve in their practice?

7. What types of assessments do case managers use to help tailor client services?

   [Probe for responses if not mentioned]:

   a. Barriers to self-sufficiency
   b. Cognitive skills
   c. Academic skills
   d. Executive functioning skills
   e. Employment history
   f. Employability/basic skills
   g. Psychological (e.g., personality tests)
   h. Job knowledge/career aptitude and preference
   i. Others

8. Which specific assessment tools do they use?

9. Approximately how often do case managers meet or communicate with clients and by what means? About how long are typical meetings? Are meetings one-on-one or in groups or both? Do you ever monitor or sit in on client/case manager meetings?

10. Briefly describe what happens in a “typical” case management session.

11. What do case managers try to accomplish through client meetings?

12. Do case managers monitor client compliance? If so, how? How do you interact with case managers about client compliance? Do you also monitor client compliance? If so, how?

13. In general, what tools do case managers use? Do they have a manual? Is it adequate?

14. How are clients assigned to case managers? If a particular case manager-client match is not working, are clients reassigned to new case managers? Who initiates this? How are you involved? Does this happen very often?

15. What training do case managers receive? What training do you receive?

16. What ongoing support and supervision are available to you? How is your performance rated?

17. Do case managers have an assigned caseload? If so, how large is it? If not assigned, approximately how many clients do case managers typically work with on a monthly basis?

18. *[Ask supervisors in TANF agencies]* What are the participation and other behavioral requirements for clients? What are the consequences for noncompliance? Are there any less formal mechanisms than sanctioning through which clients are held accountable? About what percentage of clients are noncompliant?

19. *[Ask supervisors in TANF agencies]* What is the process for sanctions? About how often (percentage of cases) do case managers begin sanctioning procedures? Are you involved in sanctioning? If so, in what ways?

20. How would you describe “successful” case management? How do you work with case managers to help them be successful?

21. Overall, do you think the case management practices workers employ and the procedures and guidelines used in this agency are effective in accomplishing client and agency goals? What works well? What could be improved?

V. Supervising Coaching Implementation and Practice

[Note to interviewer: use this section only for supervisors of TANF coaches, or supervisors of both case managers and coaches. If interviewees supervise both coaches and case managers, ask them to respond to the following questions for supervising coaches only.]

A. What coaches do

1. How are clients assigned to coaches?

2. How do coaches approach working with clients? For example, what do they try to accomplish in the first meeting? What types and frequency of interactions do they typically have with clients? What guidance do you give them?

3. What are the overall goals in coaching TANF clients? Other low-income individuals? How do you monitor your coaches’ clients’ progress towards those goals?

4. What types of assessments do coaches use?

   [Probe for responses if not mentioned:]

   j. Barriers to self-sufficiency

   k. Cognitive skills

   l. Academic skills

- **m.** Executive functioning skills
- **n.** Employment history
- **o.** Employability/basic skills
- **p.** Psychological (e.g., personality tests)
- **q.** Job knowledge/career aptitude and preference
- **r.** Others

5. Which specific assessment tools do coaches use?
6. What client skills, knowledge, attitudes, or values are expected to change as a result of the coaching? How do coaches assess client change?
7. What do coaches generally try to accomplish in each client meeting? How individualized are the meeting goals?
8. How are the meetings organized? Are they usually one-on-one or group formats?
9. Briefly describe what happens in a “typical” coaching session.
10. Approximately how often do coaches meet in person with clients?
11. About how long are typical coaching sessions?
12. Over what time period is coaching delivered? Is it for a prescribed period? Until specific milestones are reached, or for some other period?
13. How frequently are coaches in touch with clients between formally scheduled meetings? What are some reasons why coaches would be in touch with clients between meetings? What method(s) of contact do they use – e.g., phone, email, text message?
14. What are the participation and other behavioral requirements for clients who have a coach? What are the consequences for missed coaching sessions? About how often does someone with a coach leave the program before completing the entire coaching process or achieving a desired outcome? *[For supervisors in TANF agencies only]* Are there any less formal mechanisms than sanctioning through which clients are held accountable? About what percentage of clients do not comply with participation requirements?
15. What is the process for sanctions? About how often (percentage of cases) do coaches begin sanctioning procedures? Are you involved in sanctioning? If so, in what ways?
16. If a particular coach-client match is not working, are clients reassigned to new coaches? Who initiates this? How are you involved? Does this happen very often?
17. What are common challenges or barriers to client progress? How do coaches address them?

18. What tools do coaches use in their coaching practice? What activities are clients asked to do between sessions?

19. What training do coaches receive? What training did you receive?

20. Do coaches have an assigned caseload for coaching? If so, how large is it? If not assigned, approximately how many clients do coaches typically work with on a monthly basis?

B. Supervising coaches

1. How many coaches do you supervise?

2. Do you ever sit in on a coach/client meeting? Do you give coaches feedback on their coaching?

3. How often do you meet with the coaches you supervise and for what purposes?

4. How do you assess the performance of coaches? How do you help coaches improve in their practice? Do you use coaching techniques or strategies when working with coaches? If so, describe what techniques you use and what you try to accomplish in meetings with coaches.

5. What ongoing support and supervision are available to you? How is your performance rated?

C. Opinions of coaching

1. How would you describe “successful” coaching?

2. Is coaching appropriate for every client? If not, what types of clients are ready for coaching and which are not? What services are available for clients not ready for coaching?

3. What are the strengths of coaching? What are its weaknesses? What challenges are there in successfully implementing coaching?

4. Overall, do you think the practices coaches employ and the procedures and guidelines used in this agency are effective in accomplishing client and agency goals? What works well? What could be improved? If applicable, how does it compare with regular case management approaches?

VI. Wrap-Up: Desired Take-Aways from this Study

Thank you so much for sharing this information with us. As we mentioned at the beginning, we expect this study to result in a report and there may be other opportunities to share selected results. We sincerely hope that this study can be useful to you. So, before we finish, we would like to hear what you would most like others to know about your experiences, and what you might like to learn from our study when it is completed.

2. In your view, what would you most want stakeholders – for example, the public, federal policymakers, *[state/non-profit]* administrators, front-line social service workers, or others – to know about your [*agency's/organization's*] experiences with serving low-income individuals, and, in particular, coaching them for employment success?
3. Is there anything you can think of that you would most like to learn from our study when it is finished?
4. Is there anything else you would like to share with us? If we have any follow-up questions as we write our report, may we contact you again?

THANK YOU