



Adult Protective Services Assessment

Policy 8.07

Effective: September 15, 2025

Introduction

Adult Protective Services assessments shall be completed by the investigative specialist to continually evaluate the safety and progress of the client, based on Adult Protective Services intervention processes.

Scope

The purpose of this policy is to outline the necessary steps that must be followed by the investigative specialist when conducting an assessment. The assessment process provides a mechanism and tool to assist the investigative specialist in identifying and evaluating relevant safety information, strengths, risks, and underlying needs of clients.

Policy

A. When to Complete an Assessment

An assessment is completed by the investigative specialist (IS) on **every** case unless the case is closed without investigation or the client is deceased. The assessment process enables the IS to review all information obtained and make decisions regarding the need for services.

Types of assessments:

1. [Intake Assessment](#): At disposition of an intake report
2. [Safety Assessment](#): At initiation of the investigation
3. [Risk Assessment](#): Within forty-five (45) days of the date the report is accepted for investigation.
4. [Strengths and Needs \(SAN\)](#): When a case is moved to ongoing services (OGS).
5. [Periodic Assessment](#): Every six (6) months for OGS cases, to include custody cases
6. Any time an IS deems an assessment necessary

See [APS Assessment Procedures](#)

B. Structured Decision Making (SDM) Tool

Adult Protective Services (APS) utilizes an SDM tool to complete specialized assessments depending on the case status. The SDM tool has three (3) assessments:

1. Safety: Assesses the presence of immediate danger and determines appropriate interventions to ensure the client's protection.
2. Risk: Assesses the likelihood that the client may become involved with APS again in the future; also informs the decision to move the case to OGS.
3. SAN: Identifies the client's critical service needs and informs the development of the action plan. It is also used to complete the periodic assessment.

The conclusions made by the SDM tool must be supported by documentation entered in the CMS. For guidance on addressing inconsistency between documentation and assessment results, see [Assessment Procedures](#).

Note: Tennessee Code Annotated requires a written report of the initial findings and a recommendation for further action. The completed SDM tool and action plan will meet the requirements under the law in most cases. If a client cannot be located and a safety assessment cannot be completed, the electronic record should contain the report information, any client demographic information that is known, and the justification and supervisory approval for "closure without investigation."

Supporting Documents

[Adult Protective Services Assessment Procedures](#)

Definitions/Acronyms

Term	Definition
Action Plan	A detailed document outlining a client's specific needs, the services to address the needs, and the desired outcome for the client.
APS	Adult Protective Services
CMS	Case Management System
Formal Agency Supports	Professional services provided by insurance companies, government agencies, etc. Example: homemaker services, home health, adult day care, etc.
Informal Supports	Assistance from friends, neighbors, churches, that can range from meals, assisting with transportation for keeping appointments, etc.
IS	Investigative Specialist
OGS	Ongoing services

Term	Definition
SAN	Strengths and Needs (assessment)
SDM	Structured Decision Making

Supersedes

8.07 APS Assessment Policy, eff. date 04/19/2024

Authority

Tenn. Code Ann. § 71-6-103

Application

Adult Protective Services (APS) Investigative Specialists

Revision History

Date	Version	Location of Change	Description/Reason for Change
03/10/2026	09/15/2025	Section A (Minor Change)	Removed redundant sentence.
09/04/2025	09/15/2025	Throughout Definitions/Acronyms	Changed "service" plan to "action" plan. Added Action Plan and definition
02/28/2025	02/28/2025	Procedures	Minor change to correct acronym usage for investigative specialist (IS)
05/03/2024	04/19/2024	Supporting Documents	This policy was revised to remove an obsolete form.
04/17/2024	04/19/2024	Policy Section	Replaced descriptions for the previous types of assessments with the new SDM assessments. Added "IS" acronym for Investigative Specialists.
07/05/2023	08/01/2022	Review conducted	No revisions required
07/29/2022	08/01/2022	Policy Section	Updated staff titles. Cleaned up grammar. Added Note after section C.
12/05/2019	01/01/2020	N/A	New Policy

Approval History

Approved By	Approver Title	Approved Date	Effective Date
Clarence H. Carter	Commissioner	09/04/2025	09/15/2025
Clarence H. Carter	Commissioner	04/17/2024	04/19/2024
Clarence H. Carter	Commissioner	07/29/2022	08/01/2022
Danielle Barnes	Commissioner	12/05/2019	01/01/2020

Current Approver:

Clarence H. Carter