

What is Considered a Significant Life Change

Assessments like the VI-SPDAT and SPDAT should only be administered in the case of a Significant Life Change. A new assessment may be administered for a Significant Life Change if there is reason to believe that the change will significantly change the score and outcome.

A New Episode of Homelessness

A new episode of homelessness after a period of being housed. The period of housing should be two weeks or more and the assessment should not be readministered until two weeks after reentry.

Examples:

- A new incident of homelessness after several months of being housed.
- Leaving a jail, hospital or institution after 90 days.

Changes in the Family Unit

Changes to the structure of a family can introduce new elements to the household's needs or situation and significantly change scores. This could also require a switch between the individual and family assessments.

Examples:

- The death of a family member or divorce or separation.
- The birth of a child or return of another child.
- Son or daughter leaving or returning to jail, school, or other institution.
- A child being permanently removed from a parent.

Significant Changes in Health

Most health changes, new diagnosis, or medication changes will not effect a person's score. The change would have to be disabling and effect their ability to maintain housing or live independently to substantially alter the score.

Examples:

- A brain injury impacting ones ability to live alone.
- An incident causing disability, **not a disability status change**.
- An individual or family member develops a original and severe substance use issue not present during first assessment.

Things to Consider

- Review the most recent version of the assessment to ensure that all questions have been completed. If they have not, the assessment can be re-administered to the client.
- Sections of the SPDAT can be administered or updated rather than administering the full SPDAT. Administering a section of the SPDAT will only provide additional information for discussion at case conferencing, and does not impact the VI-SPDAT score.
- Previous SPDATs can be used when re-administering. *This is not true for other tools.*
- The birth of a first child or change of custody to an individual would require assessing again with the tool for families rather than individuals. A permanent removal of a child could also lead to reassessment as an individual.

For example, a woman who was assessed with the VI-SPDAT and later has her first child would need to be assessed with the Family VI-SPDAT.

- Youth under the age of 24 who were assessed with the VI-SPDAT or SPDAT can be reassessed with the Next Step Tool or Youth SPDAT. If the youth is parenting, they should be assessed with the family tools.
- **Disagreeing with a score isn't a reason to re-administer.**

Assessments are tools, not decision makers. Utilize housing placement meetings and coordinate with you CAN for the needs of your client.

Available Tools

Be aware of all of the tools and their appropriate application.

Individual Adult
VI-SPDAT
SPDAT

Family
(at least one minor)
Family VI-SPDAT
Family SPDAT

Youth
(24 and under)
Next Step Tool
Youth SPDAT

Tools can be found on www.orgcode.com and additional resources can be found at www.cceh.org in the resource library