

Ohio Risk Assessment System: Community Supervision Tool (ORAS – CST) Interview Guide

Conducting the Interview

The interview guide is designed to assist the assessor in gathering the information necessary to accurately assess the offender. It is important to establish rapport with the offender. While it is recommended that the interview guide be closely followed, the wording of the questions may vary. Here are some tips for conducting the interview:

- Conduct the interview in a relaxed and private environment
- Explain the purpose of the interview and stress the need for honesty and complete answers to questions
- Do not hesitate to use follow-up questions and probe. Examples of follow-up questions:
 - Tell me more. I want to be certain that I understand you.
 - What happened next?
 - Could you explain that further?
 - What do you mean?
 - Can you describe some examples?
 - How did that make you feel?
- Remember what information you are trying to obtain. Develop clear examples and remember there are sometimes differences in perception.
- Remember that the interviewer sets the tone. Be patient and try not to correct or teach
- Whenever possible use open-ended questions where the respondent provides his or her opinion and is able to elaborate. For example, “Tell me more about your relationship with....”
- Avoid double-barreled questions where the respondent is asked a combination of questions:
 - “How is your relationship with your mother and father?”
- Avoid biased questions where the respondent is led in a certain direction:
 - “Your relationship with your mother isn’t bad, is it?”

Also remember that the interview is only one source of information. Official records, the self-report questionnaire, and collateral sources such as family members or other professionals should also be consulted. It is important that to corroborate the offenders’ responses whenever possible.

SECTION 1: GENERAL RISK/NEED DOMAINS

1.0 Criminal History

The first section of the interview is designed to gather information necessary to score the Criminal History domain of the tool. While some of this information can be obtained from official records, it is still recommended that the assessor ask the offender about the current offense and past criminal behavior. This information will help score other areas of the assessment, particularly the Peers and Criminal Thinking and Behavioral Patterns sections. It is important to corroborate self-report information in this area with official records.

The following items are scored in this area:

1.1 Most Serious Arrest Under Age 18:

0=None

1=Yes, Misdemeanor

2=Yes, Felony

1.2 Number of Prior Adult Felony Convictions:

0=None

1=One or Two

2=Three or more

1.3 Prior Sentence as an Adult to a Jail or Secure Correctional Facility:

0=No

1=Yes

1.4 Received Official Misconduct while Incarcerated:

0=No

1=Yes

1.5 Prior Sentence to Probation as an Adult:

0=No

1=Yes

1.6 Community Supervision Ever Been Revoked for Technical Violation as an Adult:

0=No

1=Yes

Questions for Criminal History Domain:

1a. Tell me about the first time you were ever arrested? _____

1b. How old were you when you were first arrested? _____

1c. What was it for? _____

I want to now ask you about your criminal record as an adult.

1d. Tell me about what happened the day you were arrested. _____

1e. Why did you decide to commit the offense? _____

1f. What part did others play in the offense? _____

1g. What part did drugs or alcohol play? _____

1h. Did you threaten or hurt anyone? _____

1i. How many times have you been convicted of a felony? _____

1j. Have you ever gotten in trouble for fighting or assaultive type behavior? __ No __ Yes

1k. How many times? _____

1l. What happened? _____

1m. Have you ever been sentenced to jail? __ No __ Yes How many times? _____

1n. Have you ever been sentenced to prison? ☐ No ☐ Yes How many times? _____

1o. Have you ever been sentenced to another type of secure correctional facility like a CBCF?

☐ No ☐ Yes

How many times? _____

1p. While you were incarcerated did you ever get written up or punished for misconduct?

☐ No ☐ Yes. How many times? _____

What was it for? (Probe to see if any misconducts were for violence)

1q. What was the result of the misconduct? _____

1r. How did you feel about the sanction you received? _____

1s. Have you ever been on probation? ☐ No ☐ Yes How many times? _____

1t. What were you on probation for? _____

1u. Did you complete probation supervision? ☐ No ☐ Yes

1v. Have you ever been on parole? ☐ No ☐ Yes

1w. Did you complete parole supervision? ☐ No ☐ Yes

1x. What was the hardest part of being on supervision? _____

1y. Have you ever had probation or parole supervision revoked for a technical violation?

☐ No ☐ Yes How many times? _____

2.0 Education, Employment, and Financial Situation

This domain is designed to gather information about the offender's educational attainment, employment, and current financial situation. It is fairly straightforward and most respondents will be forthcoming.

The following items are scored in this area:

2.1 Highest Education:

0=High School Grad or Higher

1=Less than High School or GED

2.2 Ever Suspended or Expelled From School:

0=No

1=Yes

2.3. Employed at the Time of Arrest:

0=Yes

1=No

2.4 Currently Employed:

0=Yes, Full-time, Disabled, or Retired

1=Not Employed or Employed Part-time

2.5 Better Use of Time:

0=No, Most Time Structured

1=Yes, Lots of Free Time

2.6 Current Financial Situation:

0=Good

1=Poor

Questions for Education, Employment, and Financial Situation Domain:

I would now like to talk with you about your education, employment and financial situation:

2a. What is the highest grade you completed? _____ Did you graduate? __ No __ Yes

Did you get a GED? __ No __ Yes

2b. Were you ever in any special education classes? __ No __ Yes

2c. Tell me about problems you might have had in school? _____

2d. Were you ever suspended or expelled from school? ☐ No ☐ Yes

What happened? _____

2e. Were you working at the time of your arrest? ☐ No ☐ Yes

What were you doing? _____

2f. Are you currently employed? ☐ Yes ☐ Full time ☐ Part Time ☐ Seasonal ☐ No

If no, why not: _____

Where do you work? _____

How long have you had this job? _____

2g. If no, how do you support yourself while not working? _____

2h. How many hours a week do you work? ☐ Year around or seasonal? ☐ Yearly ☐ Seasonal

If not employed, find out why. _____

2i. How do you get along with your co-workers? _____

2j. How do you get along with your boss? _____

2k. Walk me through a typical day for you? _____

Do you have a lot of free time? _____

How much free time would you estimate you have each week? _____

(Probe to make sure structured time is prosocial and not just hanging out.)

2l. What percentage of your week would you say is free time: _____%

2m. Tell me about your current financial status. _____

2n. What are your sources of income? _____

2o. Are you behind in your debts or court ordered obligations? _____

2p. How do you think your financial status is as far as meeting your monthly needs? _____

2q. Are you able to get by or are you struggling to make ends meet? _____

2r. Do you worry about finances and meeting your basic needs? _____

How would you rate your current financial situation?

Cannot pay bills

1

2

3

4

Can pay bills and have extra \$

5

3.0 Family and Social Support

The family and social support section examines the familial and social support of the offender. Research has shown that an individual's family and social support can influence the probability of future criminal behavior. Individuals with family and social support systems who are supportive or tolerant of criminal behavior are more likely to engage in criminal behavior. Alternatively, individuals who have a strong family or social support network which condemns criminal activities reduce the likelihood that an individual will engage in future criminal behavior.

The following items are scored in this area:

3.1 Parents have Criminal Record:

0=No

1=Yes

3.2 Currently Satisfied with Current Marital or Equivalent Situation:

0=Yes

1=No

3.3 Emotional and Personal Support Available from Family or Others:

0=Very Strong Support

1=None to Strong Support

3.4 Level of Satisfaction with Current Level of Support from Family or Others:

0=Very Satisfied

1=Not Satisfied

3.5 Stability of Residence:

0=Stable

1=Not Stable

Questions for Family and Social Support Domain:

I now want to talk with you about your family and the support you get from them.

3a. Describe your relationship with your family? (Probe to determine if parents (both biological and step parents are still alive and how much contact they have with them). _____

3b. Who raised you? _____

3c. How often do you get together with them? _____

3d. How do they feel about you getting in trouble with the law? _____

3e. Has your trouble with the law changed your relationship with your family? _____

Explain? _____

3f. Does anyone in your family have a criminal record? __ No __ Yes

Who? _____

What was it for? _____

When was the last time you saw them? _____

3g. Now let me ask you about your current marital situation. Are you married? __ No __ Yes

Are you involved with anyone? Probe to determine if it is a casual relationship or a significant other. _____

3h. Describe your relationship with your partner? _____

How do you get along? _____

How do you resolve disagreements? _____

3i. In this relationship, have you experienced physical, psychological, or sexual abuse? _____

Whether involved or single, ask how satisfied the offender is with his/her current situation. _____

3j. Do you have a supportive relationship with your family? _____

Close friends? _____

3k. In terms of your family, spouse, and close friends, how would you rate the emotional and personal support you received from them:

__ Very Strong Support __ Strong Support __ Ok Support __ Weak Support __ No Support

3l. How satisfied are you with current level of support you have received from your family or close friends?

__ Very Satisfied __ Satisfied __ Somewhat Satisfied __ Not Satisfied

3m. If the offender is not living with family or significant other, ask them who they currently live with. _____

4.0 Neighborhood Problems

This next domain is very short and asks about the neighborhood that the offender lives in. High crime neighborhoods and places where drugs are readily available often increase the opportunity for an offender to engage in criminal behavior.

The following items are scored in this area:

4.1 High Crime Area:

0=No

1=Yes

4.2 Drugs Readily Available in Neighborhood:

0=No, Generally Not Available

1=Yes, Somewhat Available

2=Yes, Easily Available

Questions for Neighborhood Problems Domain:

I would now like to talk with you about where you live.

4a. How long have you lived at your current address? _____

4b. How many times have you moved in the past year (do not count incarcerations)? _____

What were the reasons for the moves? (Probe to determine stability of current living situation.) _____

4c. Tell me about the neighborhood you live in. _____

4d. Tell me about the kinds of crimes happening in your neighborhood. _____

Are police there frequently? _____

Do you feel safe? _____

How would you rate your neighborhood?

__High Crime __Moderate Crime __Some but no more than most __Little crime

Are drugs readily available in your neighborhood?

___ Generally not available ___ Somewhat available ___ Easily available

5.0 Substance Use

The substance use section examines the occurrence of substance use in the offender's life and the extent to which its use has caused problems across varying aspects of the offender's life. Substance use can be pervasive in its ability to influence multiple aspects of a person's life including involvement with the legal system, issues with loved ones and friends, health and social service problems, and its interaction with seeking or maintaining employment. For this domain alcohol and drug use are separated.

The following items are scored in this area:

5.1 Age First Began Regularly Using Alcohol:

0=17 or older

1=Under Age 17

5.2 Longest Period of Abstinence from Alcohol:

0= Six Months or Longer

1=Less than Six Months

5.3 Ever Used Illegal Drugs:

0 = No

1 = Yes

5.4 Drug Use Caused Problems:

0=Never

1=Past

2= Current

5.5 Drug Use Caused Problems with Employment:

0=No

1=Yes

Questions for Substance Abuse Domain:

Let's talk about your substance use.

5a. Have you ever had a problem with alcohol? ___ No ___ Yes

5b. When did you first start to regularly drink? _____

5c. Describe your drinking habits. _____

What is the longest period you have abstained from drinking? _____

How long has it been since you last drank? _____

5d. Have you ever been in treatment for alcohol use? _____

5e. Have you ever had a problem with drugs other than alcohol? ___ No ___ Yes

5f. Describe your drug use in the past. _____

5g. How often did you use? _____

What drugs? _____

Did you use alone or with others? _____

5h. Have you ever had any problems due to your drug use (Social, family, legal, employment, family, etc.)? _____

How many times? _____

5i. Has your drug use ever caused you problems with a job? ___ No ___ Yes
What happened? _____

5j. Have you ever been in treatment for drug use? ___ No ___ Yes

If yes, please explain: _____

5k. If drugs or alcohol are a problem ask the offender if they are willing to consider going to a program. _____

6.0 Peer Associations

This domain is designed to examine the peer association of the offender, how much contact they have, and how much the offender engages in criminal activities. Friends can have a strong influence over offenders, and it is important to determine the degree to which their friends are involved in criminal behavior.

The Following Items are Scored in this Domain:

6.1 Criminal Friends:

0=None

1=Some

2=Majority

6.2 Contact with Criminal Peers:

0=No Contact with Criminal Peers

1=At Risk of Contacting Criminal Peers

2=Contact or Actively Seeks out Criminal Peers

6.3 Gang Membership:

0=No, Never

1=Yes, but Not Current

2=Yes, Current

6.4 Criminal Activities:

0=Strong Identification with Prosocial Activities

1=Mixture of Pro- and Antisocial Activities

2=Strong Identification with Criminal Activities

Question for the Peers Domain:

I now want to ask you about your friends.

6a. How many close friends would you say you have? _____

How often do you see them? _____

6b. Was anyone else involved in the current offense? ___ No ___ Yes

If yes explain: _____

What is your current relationship with them? _____

6c. Have any of your close friends been involved in criminal behavior? _____

What percentage of your close friends have been in trouble with the law? _____ %

What kind of things have they been involved in? _____

6d. What are some the activities you like to do with your family and friends? _____

Now I want you to think of other friends, not necessarily close ones, but more like acquaintances. These are people you see and hang out with occasionally.

6e. How many of your acquaintances have been in trouble with the law? _____

What kind of activities have they been involved in? _____

How often do you have contact with them? _____

6f. Have you ever been in a gang? _____ No _____ Yes

When? _____

Are you in one now? _____ No _____ Yes

If yes probe for more information: _____

6g. Do you have any hobbies or interests? _____

Do you belong to any groups or clubs? _____

Do you go to church? _____
(Probe to find out degree to which the offender is involved in prosocial activities.)

7.0 Criminal Attitudes And Behavioral Patterns

This domain addresses the criminal attitudes of the offender as well as some behavioral patterns that can often lead to criminal behavior. In addition to the specific questions for this item, the interviewer should score this item from the totality of the responses in the interview. Listen for rationalizations, minimizations, and justifications of behavior throughout the interview.

The Following Items are Scored for this Domain:

7.1 Criminal Pride:

- 0=No Pride in Criminal Behavior
- 1=Some Pride
- 2=A Lot of Pride

7.2 Expresses Concern about Others:

- 0=Concerned About Others
- 1=Limited Concern
- 2=No real Concern for Others

7.3 Feels Lack of Control Over Events:

- 0=Controls Events
- 1=Sometimes Lacks Control
- 2=Generally Lacks Control

7.4 Sees No Problem in Telling Lies:

- 0=No
- 1=Yes

7.5 Engages in Risk Taking Behavior:

- 0=Rarely Takes Risks
- 1=Sometimes Takes Risks
- 2=Generally Takes Risks

7.6 Walks Away from a Fight:

- 0=Yes
- 1=Sometimes
- 2=Rarely

7.7 Believes in "Do Unto Others Before They Do Unto You":

0=Disagree

1=Sometimes

2=Agrees

Questions for the Criminal Attitudes and Behavioral Patterns Domain:

Let's talk again about the trouble you got in.

7a. How do you feel about what happened? _____

What do you think about crime? _____

Tell me about the victims? _____

How do you think they feel about what you did? _____

____ No pride in criminal behavior ____ Some pride ____ A lot of pride

7b. As a general rule do you worry about other people's problems? _____

____ Concerned about others ____ Some concern ____ No real concern for others

Now I want you to think about how things have been going for you recently.

7c. Do you sometimes feel that you have lost control over events in your life? _____

____ Feels in Control over Events ____ Sometimes lacks control ____ Generally lacks control

Why? _____

Now let me ask you about honesty.

7d. Do you think it is sometimes ok to tell a lie? _____

Under what circumstances? _____

___ Never ___ only small white lies ___ Yes it is ok

7e. A lot of people like to take chances and risks. Do you consider yourself to be a risk taker?

How about when you committed your offense? _____

How did it make you feel? _____

If I asked you to rate yourself as a risk taker on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being not at all, and 5 being often how would you rate yourself? _____

7f. Would you describe yourself as someone who "Walks Away from a fight", or "Tries to avoid it but it seems to find you" or, "first one in"? _____

If I asked you to rate yourself on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being "walks away", and 5 being "first one in" how would you rate yourself? _____

7g. Have you ever heard the saying, "Do Unto Others Before They Do Unto You"? In general do you:

___ Disagree with statement, ___ depends on the situation, or ___ Agree with statement

7h. How do you feel about getting some help or participating in programs? _____

SECTION 2: RESPONSIVITY ASSESSMENT

Considering the entire interview as well as official records, the next section is designed to identify special considerations or responsivity factors that might affect the offender's engagement in supervision or programming. For each of the following areas check the boxes that best describes the offender for each of these items.

___ Low Intelligence*

___ Physical Handicap (describe) _____

___ Reading or Writing significantly below normal*

___ Mental Health Issues (list diagnoses* _____

___ Motivation is a Problem* (No Desire to Change/Participate in Programs)

Note, some offenders will be motivated to obtain help in some areas but not others. For example, they may want assistance in getting a job, but are not willing to go to substance abuse treatment. This can be important for case planning. Please provide information:

___ Transportation is a problem

___ Child Care is a problem

___ Language is a problem. List offender's native language: _____

___ Ethnicity or cultural barriers. Describe: _____

___ History of Abuse/Neglect poses a barrier for offender. Explain: _____

___ Interpersonal Anxiousness (offender is very nervous and may require program with little confrontation)

___ Other, Please explain: _____

**If these items are checked it is strongly recommended that further assessment be conducted to determine level or severity.*

SELF-REPORT SURVEY – COMMUNITY SUPERVISION ASSESSMENT TOOL

Name: _____

Today's Date: _____

The following questions ask about several things in your life, such as education, employment, family, friends, and your beliefs. Please answer the following questions the best you can. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Some questions will be simple yes/no questions, and others will ask you to circle a number which corresponds to how much that statement reflects your beliefs or is "true" for you.

1. Highest Education

- ☐ Less than 12th Grade
- ☐ High School Graduate
- ☐ GED
- ☐ College

2. In school were you ever suspended or expelled? Yes _____ No _____

3. How long have you lived at your current address? _____

4. How many address changes have you had in the past 12 months (do not count incarceration)? _____

5. What is the age that you first began regularly using alcohol? _____

6. How long has it been since you last drank alcohol? _____

7. What is the longest period of time you have abstained from drinking? _____

8. What percent of your close friends have been in trouble with the law? _____%

9. Would you say that you live in a "high crime" neighborhood? Yes _____ No _____

10. Were you employed at the time of your arrest? Yes _____ No _____

11. If yes, how many hours per week did you work? _____

12. Are you currently employed?

- ☐ Full-time
- ☐ Part-time
- ☐ No, I am on disability
- ☐ No, I am retired
- ☐ No, not currently employed

13. In your opinion, do you have a lot of free time? Yes _____ No _____

14. On average, approximately what percent of your week is considered free time? _____%

For the following statements circle the answer that best describes how you feel

- | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|---|---|-------------------------------|
| 15. How easy would you say it is to acquire drugs in your neighborhood? | Very Easy | | | | Very Difficult |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | | 4 |
| 16. Are you satisfied with your current marital situation? (If single, how satisfied are you with being single?) | Not Satisfied | | | | Very Satisfied |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | | 4 |
| 17. How would you rate your current financial stability? | Cannot pay bills | | | | Can pay bills & have extra \$ |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | | 4 |
| 18. Are you satisfied with your current housing situation? | Not Satisfied | | | | Very Satisfied |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. Please rate the level of emotional and personal support you receive from family and friends. | No Support | | | | Great Deal of Support |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. Please rate how satisfied you are with the level of support you receive from family and friends. | Not Satisfied | | | | Very Satisfied |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. I'm often upset when I hear about other people's problems. | Strongly Agree | | | | Strongly Disagree |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. Do you think it is ever ok to lie? | Never or only white lies | | | | It is ok to lie |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. Lately, I have felt a lack of control over events in my life. | Strongly Agree | | | | Strongly Disagree |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. I sometimes find it exciting to do things for which I might get into trouble. | Strongly Agree | | | | Strongly Disagree |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25. Would others describe you as someone who walks away from a fight or the first to get into it? | Walks Away | | | | First one in |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 26. How much do you agree with the statement: "do unto others before they do unto you"? | Strongly Agree | | | | Strongly Disagree |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

THANK YOU.