



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ): SIS-A 2nd Edition and for Maine Section 21 and 29 Community Case Managers

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Office of Aging and Disability Services, (OADS) Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Maximus, and AAIDD.

Q: Who do I reach out to regarding scheduling a SIS-A assessment in Maine?

A: For now, while we are in Phase 1 of the SIS-A implementation and are collecting data to understand the population, to support the Person-Centered Plan, and to help design the Lifespan waiver, OADS has a prioritized list of individuals that Maximus is using to conduct assessments. However, OADS is open to other individuals on Section 21 or 29 waitlists or currently receiving these waiver services.

Contact Maximus:

Email: Maine-SIS@maximus.com

Phone: (833) 771-4639

Business Hours: 8:00am - 5:00pm EST, M-F

Once we complete Phase 1, and the assessment is tied to a waiver, there will be a formal referral process that OADS will manage and will need to approve all referrals for assessments to Maximus. Information on that process will be shared closer to when it will be used.

Q: How should case managers and case management supervisors reach out to Maximus regarding the assessment follow-up or additional questions?

A: Please reach out to Lisa Horan, Operations Manager- LisaHoran@Maximus.com or Julie Long, Program Director- JulieLong@Maximus.com

Q: Is OADS using the SIS-A for any waivers right now? When will OADS use the SIS-A to identify needs for services on a waiver? When will the SIS-A be required?

A: The SIS-A is not used in association with any waivers/Sections right now. We are designing the Lifespan waiver now, with Stakeholder input, and there will be a Concept Paper on the Lifespan in the late spring of 2023. Public comment will occur for several

months and OADS will take and integrate the comment into the design. The goal as of Spring 2023 is to implement the Lifespan Waiver by Jan 1, 2025. At that time or some clearly defined period before, the SIS-A will be required for everyone who wants to participate in Lifespan.

OADS thinks that the SIS-A is valuable data for everyone who is helping a member plan, and so we would like CCM community to strongly encourage members and families to participate.

Q: Is the SIS-A conducted in-person or virtually?

A: ‘Valid’ assessments – OADS and Maximus follows the best practices of AAIDD which calls for in-person assessments. Much better information is gathered with everyone in the room and visible to each other. However, if there is a strong preference for a remote assessment, then this is possible. It is requested that the assessor have an opportunity to meet the person prior to the assessment even if virtual.

Q: Can the waiver member participate in an assessment if they do not use words to communicate?

A: Absolutely! We would like the opportunity to meet each person who is receiving a SIS assessment and would like them to participate as much or as little as they prefer. We understand that this looks different for each person, and we will accommodate their preferences.

Q: Once the SIS-A interview session happens, what is the process? And when and how will the CCM get a copy of the assessment report?

A: Once the SIS-A is approved in SISOnline, it will be assigned to the identified contact(s) at the CCM Agency. That person can go into SISOnline to access the report and will share it with the Member, Guardian, and others who need access to the SIS-A Report.

Q: Do I need a Release of Information (ROI) for the SIS-A?

A: OADS does not require it for the SIS-A as Maximus has a strict contract regarding confidentiality in how it conducts business and should be considered the same as communicating with OADS regarding member information requirements. If a provider agency has different rules, then the CCMs should follow agency practices.

Q: How can I use information from the SIS assessment in PCP development?

A: The SIS-A report provides detailed information about support needs, including what is “important to” and “important for” a person. Coupled with ongoing conversations, information from the SIS-A report can contribute towards development of Section 3 of the PCP, “Getting the Life I Want.” “Maine’s Person-Centered Planning Process: Instruction

Guide” describes the eight Life Domains developed by Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC), which appear in Section 3 of the PCP. Resources are available to organize information from the SIS-A report into the CtLC Life Domains in the PCP:

- Maine’s Person-Centered Planning Process: Instruction Guide, available via [Person Centered Planning | Department of Health and Human Services \(maine.gov\)](#)
- [Sample SIS-A Summary Report](#)
- [Crosswalk of SIS-A to “Getting the Life I want” Charting the Lifecourse](#)

Q: How will SIS scores reflect an individual’s more complex needs such as episodic mental health crises?

A: The SIS-A Second Edition asks respondents at the interview to consider the overall needs of a person in the year prior to the interview, and to attempt to estimate the needs in the year following the interview. Notes are added at the interview to add context regarding episodic situations where more supports may be needed. The Person-Centered Plan then takes all data into account and the planning team decides on services that meet overall needs and also creates a plan for episodic needs.

It is intended that the Lifespan waiver will include recognition of exceptional needs for those with complex needs, but because the Lifespan waiver is in the design phases only, this process will be included in policy when policy is created.

Additional information about the SIS-A can be found in the [General FAQ for the SIS-A](#) at the OADS website, which will be periodically updated.

Q: Will there be additional training resources or sessions on the SIS-A?

A: Yes – the SIS-A Learning Resource Center has been added to the College of Direct Support, the training platform that OADS uses for service provider training. If you do not have access to this learning management platform, please visit the following WWW Form to request access: <https://forms.office.com/g/vjeQKvUVzs>

Also, Maximus and OADS will use other CCM and provider meetings to share information and allow for Q and A sessions about the SIS.

Q: What resources exists for members or families interested in learning more about the SIS-A?

A: Maine is making the SIS-A Learning Resource Center available to Members and Families that request more information and will relate to the content. Please share the following link: <https://forms.office.com/g/vjeQKvUVzs> to request access. Please point families and members to these resources if they want some in-depth knowledge about the SIS-A.

In addition, there is information for respondents (those participating in the assessment) in several languages in the AAIDD Handbook for respondents found on the web here: [SIS-A Respondent Resources \(aaid.org\)](https://www.aaid.org/Handbook/Handbook-for-respondents)

Q: How is the SIS-A different from information in EIS about people's needs?

A: There are significant differences.

- The assessment is delivered in a fully conflict-free manner. Maximus has no investment in services in the State of Maine, and is an independent, objective entity.
- The SIS-A is conducted by trained and qualified assessors, who receive continuing education, to ensure high levels of consistency in the results, resulting in highly reliable, valid scoring regarding needs. The EIS data collection is a subjective collection of psychosocial data on limited numbers of data points. The BMS-99 looks narrowly at particular types of needs and is used for Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) Level of Care. Nothing currently exists in Maine that is as thorough about needs as the SIS-A.
- The SIS-A collects specific metrics regarding the weekly frequency and intensity of supports needed.
- The process of collecting data about a person with the SIS-A involves several people who know the person well. With multiple points of view going into an assessment, a more accurate picture can be gathered.

Q: How can I learn more about the SIS-A?

A: Please visit the [AAIDD website](https://www.aaid.org/Handbook/Handbook-for-respondents) to learn more about the SIS-A.

Q: How can I learn more about the SIS-A and Lifespan in Maine?

A: The best way is to visit the webpages for these projects, here:

Learn more about the Lifespan Project in Maine:

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/about-us/initiatives/hcbs-lifespan-project>

Learn more about the SIS-A in Maine:

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/about-us/initiatives/needs-assessment-implementation-project>

Learn more about many of our new projects at OADS:

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/about-us/initiatives>