

THE CULTURAGRAM (CD-14F) INSTRUCTIONS

The *culturagram (CD-14F)* is a one page, stand alone tool completed with the family within the first 30 days of the case opening. The culturagram should be updated when there is a change in family dynamics.

Purpose:

The purpose of the culturagram is to help staff recognize the cultural differences between families. Culture is defined as the thoughts, ideas, behavior patterns, customs, values, skills, language, and religion a person holds. Culture includes: institutions, language, values, religions, ideals, habits of thinking, artistic expressions, patterns of social and interpersonal relationships, community, roles, food, heritage, history, profession, job, hobbies, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation. By completing the culturagram, staff develop a better understanding of the family's needs and can begin to plan for appropriate interventions on an individual, family, and community basis. The use of the culturagram helps empower families by leading to a greater appreciation and celebration of their unique cultural backgrounds.

The culturagram focuses on ten aspects of culture, including time in the community, legal status, reasons for relocating, languages spoken at home and in the community, health benefits, holidays and special events, impact of crisis events, values about education, work and family, and cultural and religious institutions.

Time in the Community: How long have you been in the community? Each family member's time in the community may be different, especially in families that immigrate.

Legal Status: Different people inside the same family can have different legal statuses. There are illegal immigrants, people who have Green cards, there may be refugees, or people who have been given special status based on a fear of persecution based on religions/political opinions, race, nationality, or membership to certain groups. Legal status can contribute to people avoiding needed medical or social services because there is a lot of fear of having their immigration status known.

Immigration: Why did you choose to live here? You could be working with newly immigrated families, or families that have been your area for years or even decades. It is important to ask why they selected here. You may find that people came to be close to other family members, or for economic reasons, or for political/religious persecution.

Language Spoken: Does the family speak more than one language? What language(s) are they stronger in? Often families speak one language at home and another in the community.

Health Benefits: What do families seek treatment for? When do they go to the doctor? Many people have very different beliefs about diagnosis and treatment. In the United States, well-child clinics are available from the time children are born. But many other countries you only go to the doctor if you or your children are very sick. The same may be true for rural families or families struggling economically.

Holidays and Events: There may be holidays that the larger society celebrates but also holidays that are important to the family unit.

Impact of Crisis Events: What crises have the family experienced? Crisis families tend to go through two types of crises. First is the developmental crisis, where you can see every kind of new stage of life can lead to a developmental crisis. The other type of crisis a family experiences is the “Out of the Blue” crisis. These are usually unexpected events such as: accidents, sudden illness, violence, unemployment, and death. It is important to look at all of these traumatic and crisis events because they really affect a family.

Family, Education, & Work Values: What are the family’s thoughts on education and work? Is the family hierarchical or egalitarian? Each family is set up and organized differently and it is important to look at what are the family myths, rules, and what is unique for the family.

Cultural Institutions: Is the family involved with ethnic social clubs? Next, consider religion because many families are involved with church, temples, or mosques. Religion and spirituality is very important to understanding the culture of the family.

Other: Additional values that the family feels are important to their culture.

Number of Copies and Distribution:

The number of copies and distribution will depend on the circumstances in which the tool is used.

Instructions for Retention:

The Culturagram is to be retained in the assessment and services section of the case record.

Memorandum History: