



Harvesting Information Using Effective Interviewing Tools!

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VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES

LTD Local Training
and Development

Learning Goal:

In this workshop, you will learn how to interview customers effectively for SNAP and TANF. We'll share the *Why*, *When*, and *How* of interviewing, along with best-practice techniques for interview preparation, building rapport, and gathering the information you need from the customer.



Why



When



How

Interview Waivers End June 1, 2024

- ▶ Some agencies opted to make use of the Post-PHE Interview Waiver in effect beginning June 1, 2023.
- ▶ This included a waiver of SNAP interviews and TANF renewal interviews. See the April 18, 2023 Broadcast on Fusion.
- ▶ These waivers are ending June 1, 2024 for all localities.
- ▶ The VaCMS Interview screen will return to the former functionality beginning June 1, 2024. Auto-denials will be restored according to SNAP and TANF guidance.



The Why: Purpose

COLLECT INFORMATION TO DETERMINE
ELIGIBILITY

CUSTOMER CAN EXPRESS USING THEIR WORDS

RESOLVES QUESTIONS

CLARIFICATION

OPPORTUNITY TO EDUCATE CLIENT ABOUT THE
PROCESS AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Interview? YES! When?

List sometimes an interview is conducted?



A photograph of a person's hands holding a small green seedling over a field of soil at sunset. The image is split into a dark blue overlay on the left and a bright, golden sunset on the right. The hands are positioned in the center, holding the seedling. The background shows a field of soil with some small plants growing. The sunset is visible in the upper right corner, creating a warm, golden glow.

5 Steps to Harvest the Seeds

Interviewing Tools

5 Steps

1. Preparation
2. Opening
3. Conducting
4. Concluding
5. Follow-up





1. Preparation: to get the Harvest

Harvesting

Know your
program
guidance.

Review
Information
Provided by
the
customer.



Harvesting:

Craft the questions about what you need for eligibility.

Have the documents ready to discuss and or send.

Signature

Date

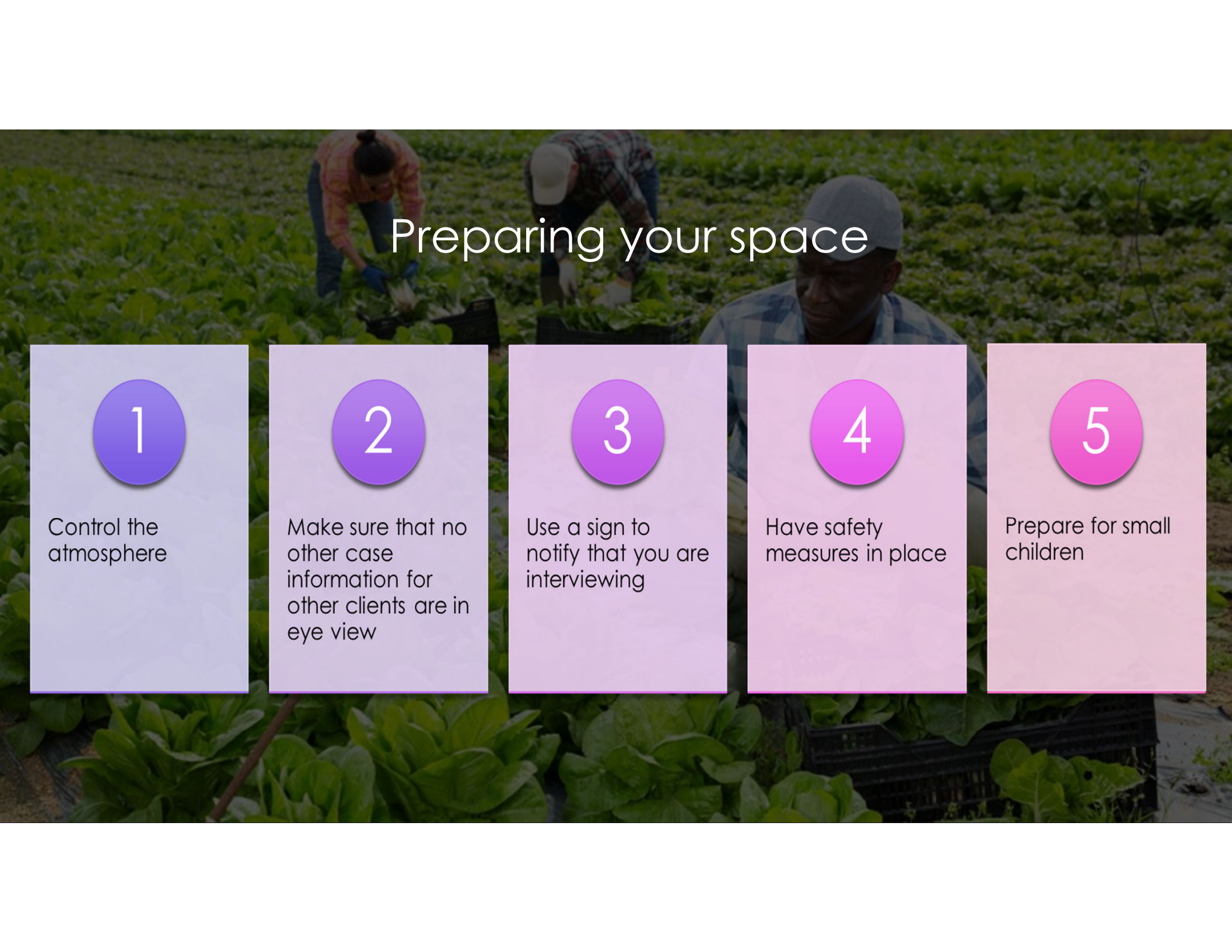


Prepare

Prepare to give your undivided attention

Prepare your interview space

Consider possible outcomes



Preparing your space

1

Control the atmosphere

2

Make sure that no other case information for other clients are in eye view

3

Use a sign to notify that you are interviewing

4

Have safety measures in place

5

Prepare for small children

The Grand opening :

➡ Going in to get my harvest



Build Rapport as you
Conduct:
(getting the harvest)

- **Greet with a smile**
(Yes, on the phone too!)
- **Make the customer feel comfortable talking to you**
- **Introduce yourself and call them by name**
- **Engage in a bit of small talk**



Conducting

The art of removing the harvest

Ask

Ask the customer open ended questions (Tell me about your situation)

Maintain

Maintain eye contact to let the customer know you are actively listening

Lean

Lean slightly forward, take brief notes and nod your head when appropriate

Ask

Ask needed close ended questions with a calm tone (Can I clarify anything for you)

Address

Address any concerns and clarify answers

You have some explaining to do

Pruning the harvest

Explain

- Explain that whatever you discuss will be confidential

Explain

- Explain their rights , responsibilities and requirements

Let

- Let them know you intend to work in their best interests

Treat

- Treat them with respect and that you will be typing or writing to keep notes of the discussion

Use sensitivity and tact

Gently remove the harvest

Use

- Use the Golden rule: Treat people like you want to be treated

Recognize and eliminate

- Recognize and eliminate barriers

Acknowledge

- Acknowledge that attitudes toward authority can influence interactions

Give

- Give verbal as well as written instructions

Don't rush

- Don't rush the process



Concluding the Interview process

Pulling the harvest



Give the customer a summary of the information you have gathered



Offer customer an opportunity to ask questions and provide additional information



Reinforce and remind customers of their responsibilities and time frames



Explain the next steps and give a checklist if necessary and your contact info



Provide time frame to client for a decision (don't make promises)



* End with a smile and a thank you!



Follow up

Preparing the harvest for the table

Evaluate

Evaluate information for completion

Document

Document the case narrative

Use

Use your agency tools for matches and data entry accuracy

Evaluate

Evaluate the effectiveness of the Interview

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a large quantity of small, light blue, spherical fertilizer pellets. The hand is positioned above a small, young green seedling with two leaves that is growing out of dark, rich soil. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting. The overall lighting is natural and soft.

Thank You!

► Happy Interviewing...