

Sample Desk Cards

Three of the ten job aids staff keep at their desk after the training.

WHO THIS IS FOR	READ TIME	EDITION
Directors and supervisors	10 minutes, 4 pages	August 2026

IN BRIEF

- Desk cards are not training materials. They are the tools staff use on a Tuesday, after the training is over.
- Each card is one page and opens by naming the moment it is for, so staff do not have to decide which card applies.
- Staff receive all ten at the close of Day Two. Three are reproduced here: the two scoring cards and the Arizona instruments card.
- Card 6 carries a standing instruction to verify every figure with a person before quoting it. That standard is yours to hold staff to.

The ten cards, and when staff open each one

	CARD	STAFF OPEN IT WHEN
1	Navigation Capacity	A young person is eligible for something and does not have it
2	Anchor Properties	They are deciding who in a young person's life can actually do what
3	The Four Activation States	They are diagnosing a case, or explaining flat numbers to a funder
4	Pillar to Tuesday	They need the obligation argument to change a staff behavior
5	The Register Check	They are writing a mission line, a grant narrative, or an intake script
6	Arizona Transition Instruments	They are naming what a young person is entitled to
7	The Escalation Card	A young person has been denied something
8	The Renewal Watch	A benefit is already in place and has to stay in place
9	The Intake Barrier Screen	They are reviewing how a young person gets into your program
10	What We Claim and What We Do Not	They are describing the frameworks or the tools to anyone outside the room

Cards 1, 2, and 6 follow. Print single sided so they can be posted, or double sided and stapled as a booklet.

Navigation Capacity

Open this card when a young person is eligible for something and does not have it. Four components. Score them separately, circle the failure you are actually looking at, and take the first move in the last column. Never add the four scores together, because the total tells you nothing about what to do next.

COMPONENT	WHAT IT IS	WHAT ITS FAILURE LOOKS LIKE	YOUR FIRST MOVE
1. Benefits literacy	Knowing which rights, programs, and protections exist, the eligibility criteria, and the approximate value.	They cannot name what they are entitled to, or name it without criteria.	Supply the list and the criteria. To the young person and to the adult beside them.
2. Procedural competence	Executing multi step administrative processes: documents, forms, a usable address, responding to requests, tracking a case through a queue.	The application is started and not submitted. A request for more information goes unanswered.	Sit with them and complete it. Information is not assistance.
3. Adaptive agency	Responding to an obstacle with persistence rather than disengagement.	One denial ends the effort. No appeal, no escalation, no second ask.	Card 7. Make the second attempt with them, not for them.
4. Temporal awareness	The timing: application windows, disbursement timelines, renewal deadlines, verification cycles, and the dependencies among them.	Everything works for one cycle and then quietly stops.	Card 8. Put the twelve month map somewhere other than their head.

The two profiles worth recognizing on sight

- **High literacy, low procedural competence.** They can tell you exactly what they are entitled to and have applied for none of it.
- **High on the first three, low temporal awareness.** Successful first access, then renewal failure. Everything works once.

Neither is a motivation finding. They are different failures and they call for different interventions.

THE LINE TO REMEMBER

The model specifies functions, not personnel. Capacity supplied on a young person's behalf counts fully. You do not have to wait for a young person to become a better navigator to raise navigation capacity in their environment. Independence is not the goal. Capacity present in the environment is the goal.

Anchor Properties

Open this card when you are deciding who in a young person's life can actually do what. Four properties, all four needed. Score each property on its own with A for absent, P for partial, or X for present, exactly as on the Appendix B map. Score the properties, never the relationship as a whole, and never let duration stand in for a property.

PROPERTY	WHAT IT DOES	THE QUESTION THAT TESTS IT	IF IT IS ABSENT
Consistency	Keeps someone present through disruption, crisis, placement change, and case closure. Renewal is where activation is lost.	Will this adult still be reachable ninety days after the case closes?	Nobody is present at the renewal.
Trust	Decides whether an obstacle becomes a shared problem or a private one, and therefore whether the anchor can intervene at all.	Has the young person told this adult about the thing that is currently going wrong?	You find out after the deadline.
Competence	Separates an anchor from a supportive adult who advises confidently and incorrectly. A wrong answer about order of operations costs a full cycle.	Can this adult state the eligibility criteria for the benefit in question?	Confident wrong advice, at your cost.
Reach	Turns a relationship into infrastructure: calls the aid office, reaches an administrator, accesses an emergency fund, escalates to decision authority.	If this adult calls the financial aid office, will anyone take the call?	Warmth without traction.

What you will find, nearly every time

Consistency and trust covered. Reach uncovered. The missing thing is almost never a caring adult. It is an adult with standing to make a phone call on behalf of the young person. Standing can be conferred in an afternoon: a release of information, a named role, a letter, a phone number the institution will answer.

Three rules for using this card

- Score each property separately. Do not score the relationship as a whole. Duration does not substitute for a property.
- Measure duration relative to the exit date, not in absolute months. A relationship that ends at case closure does not count, whatever its prior length or quality.
- Build for distributed coverage with explicit coordination. One funded role on an org chart does not produce all four properties.

THE SENTENCE THAT MAKES THIS A DIAGNOSTIC RATHER THAN A JUDGMENT

A person who loves this young person and cannot get a financial aid officer on the phone is a good thing in their life, and is not an anchor. Naming that is not an insult to the relationship. It is how we figure out what is still missing.

Arizona Transition Instruments

Open this card when you are naming what a young person is entitled to. What already exists, and what each one does not reach.

VERIFY BEFORE EVERY USE

Verify with a person rather than with a memory. Amounts, eligibility rules, and appropriations change, and the DCS semi annual figures are replaced twice a year. Before you quote a figure to a young person, a funder, or a board, confirm it against the current statute, the current DCS policy manual, or the administrator who runs the instrument. This card tells you what to ask about. It is not the answer.

INSTRUMENT	WHAT IT IS	WHAT IT DOES NOT REACH
Extended foster care	Available through age 21. The largest structural investment in this population in two decades.	Requires active participation in school or work, which is a barrier for exactly the young person experiencing the housing instability the program exists to prevent.
Foster care tuition waiver	At public universities and community colleges, under A.R.S. 15-1809.01. Eligibility requires foster care involvement at age 14 or older, total personal assets below \$10,000, and enrollment in an accredited program.	A last dollar award, reduced by other federal aid, scholarships, or public grants received through the institution, with an exception for Education and Training Voucher funds. It reaches tuition and mandatory fees. It does not reach housing, meals, books, or transportation.
Chafee Education and Training Voucher	Up to \$5,000 annually, subject to federal appropriation and state allocation.	The amount available is not fixed year to year. Confirm the current allocation before quoting a figure.
Federal housing vouchers	Foster youth housing vouchers available through the federal program.	Administered outside your agency, so the timing is not yours to control. Map it on Card 8 before you rely on it.
Campus support programs	Present at every major public institution of higher education in the state. They place navigation capacity and candidate anchors inside the institution that administers the resources.	Participation is not automatic. Someone has to make the connection before the first term, not after the first problem.

The point of this card

Every instrument here is real, funded, and legally available. The question was never scarcity. It is the distance between existence and receipt, and that distance is what the four navigation components and the four anchor properties are for.

THE STANDARD FOR YOUR OWN PROGRAM

Every staff member should be able to state, from memory, what a nineteen year old alum is eligible for, the eligibility criteria, and the approximate value. Benefits literacy is a program property, not a personal failing, and it is fixable this quarter.