

Participant Name:

New Mexico Assets Consortium

Self-Advocacy Portfolio

Every day we all are exposed to opportunities that will help us advocate for our rights, as well as learn our responsibilities in each situation. The financial education course that is required to earn match funds from your IDA savings is an opportunity to learn a great deal about financial management in the context of our country's current economic behavior. Regardless of your age, life is changing every day, and our relationship with money is no exception.

This Portfolio is a tool for you to make decisions to take steps toward standing up for yourself as related to finances. Credit is a great example: our credit report should be an overview of how we have handled our finances in the past. It should not be full of errors and misrepresentations. We all need to take responsibility for how we have managed our bills, but we should not have to take responsibility for miss-information. We have the right to advocate for ourselves and have our reports correctly reflect our money management.

Throughout your financial management course you will complete sections of this portfolio, making decisions for your present and your future. This portfolio needs to be completed and submitted to your IDA Coach in order to receive a Certification of Completion for your financial training. The Certificate of Completion is required before IDA match funds will be released.

Session	Self-Advocacy Steps/Questions	Exercise
Ideals	<p>Reflect on what is right for you as related to money. There is a balance in all things and in order to move forward with how we spend our money, we need to have a way to make decisions and to prioritize our spending.</p> <p>Completing the exercise for this session, consider what things are most important to you – what do you value and what motivates you?</p> <p>Ask yourself – If a miracle happened and you woke up tomorrow and your problems were solved, what would be different?</p>	<p>How do I make decisions? Below, are the top three things that bring me happiness:</p> <p>☉ -</p> <p>What are two things that sometimes block this happiness:</p> <p>☉ -</p> <p>What is one question I can ask myself before I spend money, that will help me understand if I will be supporting, or blocking, my happiness:</p> <p>☉ -</p> <p>_____</p>
Budget-ing	<p>By creating a personal budget and understanding how that budget fits into the household, I begin to gain control of my money, rather</p>	<p>(1) By thinking through how much I spend each month, I can complete an estimated budget. <u>I will keep the budget with me throughout the course.</u> (A completed budget must be attached to this</p>

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	<p>than it controlling me. I am setting up healthy boundaries for myself and beginning to take the fear out of finances.</p> <p>If there is more than one person in my house who brings home an income, it is important for me to know what changes will take place if the other income is lost – where do I fit in with the budget?</p> <p>I have a right to know where my money goes. I have a right to receive a receipt for every penny I spend. I have a right to track my spending and learn where the spending leaks are hitting hardest.</p>	<p><i>portfolio at the completion of the course)</i></p> <p>(2) Tracking. Over the next six weeks, I will take the steps below to track how I spend my money?</p> <p>☞ _</p> <p>(3) (<i>To be completed <u>after</u> several weeks of tracking spending</i>). The two areas below are my greatest areas of over-spending.</p> <p>☞ _</p> <p>(3a) (<i>To be completed <u>after</u> several weeks of tracking spending</i>). I have made the following decision for myself to help me stop spending so much money in these two areas:</p> <p>☞ _</p> <hr/>
<p>Debt Reduc-tion</p>	<p>Bringing down the amount of money that I owe will actually free up money to spend toward a personal or family goal, as well as things that I enjoy.</p> <p>Even if I do not owe a lot of money, do I have a savings account for when things go wrong?</p> <p>How much does it cost me when I borrow money? What other personal happiness could I gain if I had that money to put somewhere else?</p>	<p>I will accomplish the two steps below to help reduce my debt, or begin saving money, before next week.</p> <p>☞ _</p> <p>In looking at my decision-making filter from the first session, how do these steps fit into what brings me happiness?</p> <p>☞ _</p> <hr/>
<p>Financial Products and Services</p> <p>Consumer Protections</p>	<p>Do I know what financial services can best protect me and my family?</p> <p>Do I know how to protect myself from someone stealing my identity?</p> <p>I have a right to be treated fairly by financial institutions as well as financial products (credit cards, etc.). When I have been mistreated, do I know how to get a</p>	<p>Below is one time where I have faced an unfair situation and asked for it to be corrected:___</p> <hr/> <p>Attached is my draft of a complaint letter asking for a situation to be resolved.</p> <p>What steps can I take to find a person who will be able to address my complaint? How do I get past</p>

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	<p>solution that is fair?</p> <p>How do I find who I need to find in order to get a reasonable answer?</p>	<p>the person who has not helped me as of yet?</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Life Happens</p>	<p>What will I do if an emergency happens? Is my family prepared to find each other if we are separated?</p> <p>Disaster can happen financially, physically, or mentally – each area has a significant impact on my ability to function.</p> <p>Do I understand how my thinking and my reactions to things relate to my original family – parents, siblings, relatives? Is there a way that I can behave the way I choose rather than how my family expects me to behave?</p> <p>Some of the most exciting events in life are also the most costly – wedding, children, graduation, life ceremonies – what are steps I can take to celebrate these events without spending money?</p>	<p>Below are two steps I will take this week to be better prepared at my home for when a disaster may strike:</p> <p>☞ - _____</p> <p>Below are two ways I can respond to situations that are not ways I was taught by my family:</p> <p>☞ - _____</p> <p>☞ - _____</p> <p>Below is one event that is coming up this year that will cost me money. I've listed two ideas of how to cut the costs.</p> <p><u>Event:</u> _____</p> <p>☞ - _____</p> <p>☞ - _____</p>
<p>Building Good Credit</p> <p>Using Credit Wisely</p>	<p>Do I know my credit score and what that means for me? Do I know whether or not my car insurance is costing me more because of my credit score?</p> <p>Do I know how to request lower rates on finance fees?</p> <p>What questions can I ask myself before financing my lunch or dinner on a credit card?</p> <p>I have the right to be fairly</p>	<p>Thinking back to my decision-making filter, the following two ideas are ways that I can stay away from taking on debt that is not positive for me at this time:</p> <p>☞ - _____</p> <p>I have received, read, and understand my credit report. Below is 1 reason to improve my credit score:</p> <p>☞ - _____</p>

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	<p>represented on my credit report and through my credit score – how will I ensure that right? I have a right to be a smart and savvy consumer and to stay away from debt that I don't need or want. I have a right to receive a free credit report (without the score) each year. Do I know how to claim that report?</p>	<hr/> <p>I will take the following two steps this week to improve my credit score:</p> <p>☞ _</p> <hr/> <p>☞ _</p> <hr/>
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In looking back over the entire portfolio, my most immediate three needs for the next month are:

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Two steps that I will take to tackle these needs are:

☞ _

☞ _

Other notes:
