SOCIAL SECURITY

WISE

Work Incentives Seminar Event
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Talking: Suzie Smith

Questions Log

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Yes

Webinar Now
Webinar ID: 731-938-951

GoToWebinar™
1. Welcome and Introduction  
   Tom Gloss, Program Specialist, CESSI, A Division of Axiom
2. WISE Presentation  
   Olga Ivnitsky, NY/SI Works (WIPA) Program, New York
3. Employment Network Presentation  
   Bernice Poore, Community Services of Stark County, Inc., Ohio
4. Peer Benefits Advisement  
   Ryan Grundtisch, WNY Independent Living, Inc.’s Mental Health PEER Connection
5. Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS) Presentation, New York  
   Terri Uttermohlen, Project Officer, SSA
7. Federal Hiring Initiative, Tom Gloss
8. www.choosework.net
9. Questions and Answers
About WISE

✓ WISE stands for Work Incentive Seminar Event.

✓ WISE is a program of the Social Security Administration.

✓ The purpose of the WISE is to provide SSI/SSDI beneficiaries and their families the opportunity to learn how to take advantage of Work Incentives, including Ticket to Work.
What Can you Expect from this Seminar?
Reasons to Work

✓ More income
✓ Independence
✓ Learn New Skills
✓ Meet New People
Disability Benefit Programs

✓ Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
✓ Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
✓ Both SSDI and SSI = Concurrent benefits
How Social Security can help

✓ Work Incentives
✓ Ticket to Work
Typical Questions

✓ Will I lose my benefits?
  ✓ Cash payments
  ✓ Health care
✓ How do I get the skills and experience I need?
✓ What if I have to stop working?
Work Incentives
Work Incentive Advantages

✓ Provide the safety net so you can:
  ✓ Try different jobs
  ✓ Be trained
  ✓ Build skills
  ✓ Gain confidence
  ✓ Start a new career
SSDI Work Incentives
What happens if I go to work?

A 9-month Trial Work Period allows you to work and receive benefits.
What happens after I complete my Trial Work Period?

- Automatic reinstatement for the first 3 years
- Additional 5 years of reinstatement if work stops and there is no medical improvement.
Other work incentives can reduce the amount of your earnings that SSA counts.
What happens to Medicare if SSDI benefits stop?

- Continues for at least 93 months (7 years & 9 months) after the 9 month Trial Work Period
- After that you may be able to purchase Medicare coverage
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SSI Work Incentives
How earnings affect SSI payments

- SSA counts less than half of your earned income
  
  For example:
  - $885 in gross wages per month (before taxes)
  - $400 counts against SSI

- Certain impairment related work expenses can also be deducted from your gross wages.
What happens if my earnings are so high that my SSI stops

- Benefits can start again if you stop working or your earnings decrease
- If your earnings are so high that your SSI payments stop:
  - Medicaid continues until you earn above a threshold
  - People with high medical costs can earn even more
You may be eligible to do a Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS)

A PASS can help you reach your job goal
If you get both SSI & SSDI

- All of the work incentives apply to you
- Talk to a work incentives specialist!
What If my benefits Terminate, and I later need benefits

✓ Expedited Reinstatement is available for up to 5 years following the month of termination (not suspension).

✓ Over 16,000 beneficiaries nationwide have had their benefits reinstated or are receiving provisional benefits through this option (December 2008)
Other Incentives

- Over 40 states offer a “Medicaid Buy-In” which is available for qualified individuals who are working to purchase Medicaid
- Earned Income Disregard (EID) for public housing
- Individuals who work are eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit
Every state has a Work Incentive Planning Assistance (WIPA) Program.

These agencies have trained Community Work Incentive Coordinators who are available to provide individualized counseling to help you understand how work impacts benefits and what work incentives might be useful for your situation.
What should you expect from a WIPA?

✓ Accurate information based on your benefits and situation
✓ Scenario analysis based on your anticipate work goals and income
✓ A written “Benefits Analysis Summary”
✓ Follow up to see if you are making progress and need assistance with work incentives.
WIPA Programs do not

- Help someone qualify for SSA benefits
- Help someone appeal a denial or problem such as an overpayment with SSA
- Help someone get a job
- Serve as representative payee
- Charge beneficiaries for services
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Ticket to Work
What is a Ticket to Work?

A ticket is something you can use to get priority employment services.

Maximus 1-866-968-7842
Ticket Users

✓ Currently over 250,000 beneficiaries are participating in the Ticket to Work with Employment Networks and/or the State Vocational Rehabilitation Program (April 2010)
Your Social Security employment team

- Employment Network (EN)
- Work Incentive Planning & Assistance (WIPA)
- Operations Support Manager (Maximus)
- State Protection and Advocacy
- Social Security employees
Who will take my Ticket?

✔ Employment Networks:
  ✔ Private companies
  ✔ Public organizations
  ✔ State Vocational Rehabilitation agency
  ✔ Employment agencies, schools, etc.

✔ Under contract with Social Security
Why use your Ticket?

✓ No medical review while ticket is in use
✓ The program is voluntary
✓ You are in charge!
✓ You select the Employment Network
✓ Employment Network works for you
✓ Change your Employment Network if necessary
Selecting and Negotiating with an Employment Network (EN)
When you contact an Employment Network

✓ Discuss work goals as it relates to reaching your work goal
✓ Does the agency have a track record or an available success rate
✓ What will they do for you and what is expected of you?
Examples of Services

- Skills testing
- Interest testing
- Resume preparation
- Interviewing skills training
- Job search & placement services
- Work Incentives counseling
- Job Coaching or other ongoing services
Selecting an Employment Network to work for you

- Did you feel welcome and comfortable?
- How do they assign a counselor?
- Did you develop the plan together?
- Can you and your EN both follow through on the plan?
Process

- If you are interested in the Ticket to Work program, Maximus can provide you with a list of Employment Networks or you can find a list online in the EN Directory at [www.yourtickettowork.com](http://www.yourtickettowork.com)

- Call a few Employment Networks in your area to determine which one is a good fit for you
When choosing an Employment Network:

- Ask them how successful they have been at assisting their clients in obtaining employment.

- If they are a new EN with Ticket to Work, ask them about their prior experience in job services.

- Research their website.
When you call the EN office:

- The EN should explain how the Ticket program works and the services it provides
- The EN should discuss your work goals and intentions about work
- Ideally, the EN should talk with you about any fears you may have
When you call the EN office:

✓ If you are committed to working and earning up to your potential and perhaps be willing to eventually terminate from cash benefits, an EN will probably meet with you in person.

✓ If you are not sure how much you can work, the Ticket to Work is designed so that you can take small steps, including starting at part time work. EN agencies understand it may take time to adjust to working and build up your stamina and balance your daily life routine.
Face to Face Appointment

- Your signature on the Individual Work Plan assigns your ticket to the EN agency.
- The EN may have some other routine forms for you to sign allowing it to work with you on your case with Social Security and possibly other service providers on your behalf.
- You can unassign your ticket at any time if you change your mind or decide the EN is not a good match.
Job Readiness

- Develop a resume and provide advice on how to fill out a good application

- Interview skills and tips on how to explain long absences from work without disclosing your disability
Job Placement Assistance

- Job leads and information on employers who are hiring, job fairs, recruiting events, etc.
- Access to resource centers -- computers, internet, email, phones, and fax.
- Some ENs may conduct job development on your behalf.
After you start work:

- You will be expected to provide paystubs to the EN every month until you go off of cash benefits.
- The EN should report these earnings to SSA for you as well as your progress to the Ticket to Work program.
- Maintain a proactive follow up schedule with the EN.
Community Services of Stark County’s Supported Employment Program is designed to improve self esteem, self management skills, independent living skills and autonomy.

We incorporate the Evidenced Based Practice Supported Employment Model in our service delivery. http://www.ohioseccoecase.edu/

We are accredited by the Council on Accreditation and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. Both of the accreditations focus on our agency’s dedication in providing employment services that meet the need of Clients with Mental Disabilities.
OUR SERVICES

The following services are offered to all Clients participating in our Supported Employment Programs:

✓ Career Assessments
✓ Job Development (3 Phases)
✓ Intake
✓ Job Placement
✓ Job Retention
✓ Follow-Along Services if needed
✓ Travel Training
✓ More personalized training if needed (math, computer, social skills, etc.)
Peer Benefits Advisement

Employment as a vehicle to Independent Living and Mental Health Recovery
Independent Living Philosophy

☑ Everyone has a future.
☑ People with disabilities are the experts of their lives and of what they need to participate fully in society.
☑ “Nothing about us, without us.”
Mental Health Recovery

✓ Recovery is a process of “rediscovering meaning and purpose after a series of catastrophic events which mental illness is” (Deegan)

✓ We each must define the context of our recovery for ourselves, which cannot happen without hope, having others who believe in us, belief in ourselves, and the ability to put belief into action.
Peer Values

✓ We share our experience, strength and hope in order to motivate, inspire, support, advocate and role model for others with mental health disabilities.

✓ We utilize the principle of identification as a vehicle of empowerment.
Work and Self-Determination

✓ Employment is a fundamental human right. (Article 26 UDHR)
✓ Without work, and other meaningful activity, we cannot develop our capabilities and reach our full potential as human beings.
In order to return to work after psychiatric disability, we have to overcome disempowering social ideas and self-conceptions about what it means to be psychiatrically disabled, and we have to do so while negotiating an often disempowering social welfare system that materially reinforces those misconceptions.
Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS)
Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS)

- PABSS services are located throughout the states and all U. S. territories.
- Designed to help Social Security and SSI beneficiaries with disabilities go to work.
PABSS services are... (cont)

✓ Free to everyone that receives a Social Security benefit or Medicare based on his or her own disability
✓ Free to anyone that receives SSI or SSI Medicaid based on his or her own disability
PABSS Services

Assist Beneficiaries to

✓ Advocate for workplace accommodation
✓ Advocate for vocational services from Employment Networks or state Vocational Rehabilitation
✓ Provide information, referral and advocacy around benefits
✓ Otherwise assist beneficiaries to remove barriers to work.
Do I need to be using my Ticket to Work?

✓ Do I need to be using my Ticket to Work?
✓ PABSS services are designed to help eliminate barriers to work. You are eligible, however, even if you do not have a Ticket to Work, or your Ticket to Work is not assigned.
✓ To find your local PABSS provider, check the provider list on the socialsecurity.gov/work website
Federal Hiring Initiative

- During 2009, SSA placed an emphasis on hiring people with disabilities
- We used the Ticket program, State VR agencies, Employment Networks and WIPA to publicize this opportunity
- More than 600 people with disabilities were hired by SSA
- In 2010 many other Federal agencies are interested in hiring people with disabilities
- We are creating a “Gateway to Federal Employment” website as an easy way to access information and links to Federal jobs
- Please visit www.cessi.net/ttw and click on “Ticket Federal Jobs Gateway” in the lower right corner for more information.
Other Resources

- www.choosework.net
- www.yourtickettowork.com
Other Resources (continued)

Work Incentive Information and Referral Center

✓ (866) 968-7842 (voice)
✓ (866) 833-2967 (TDD)
Questions and Answers

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