SOCIAL SECURITY

WISE
Work Incentive Seminar Event
Audio Mode: Use Telephone

Talking: Suzie Smith

Questions Log

Q: Is there a volume discount?
A: Yes! We will send you more info after the event.

Yes
Webinar Accessibility
Agenda

1. Welcome and Introduction
   David Dubay, Community Work Incentive Coordinator
   Department of Vocational Services, Maine Medical Center
2. WISE Presentation
   David Dubay
3. Employment Network Presentation
   Debbie Gilmer, Assistant Director for Project Development & Director of the Center for Self Determination, Health & Policy, Syntiro
4. Vocational Rehabilitation Presentation
   Allison Trussell, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
5. Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS) Presentation
   Mel Clarrage, PABSS Advocate, Disability Rights Center
6. Other Resources
7. 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
Your 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?
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

Reminder: Please type any questions you may have in the question box on your webinar browser.
Will I lose my Benefits?

SSDI Work Incentives

- 9 month Trial Work Period allows you to work and receive benefits
- Automatic reinstatement for the first 3 years
- Additional 5 years of reinstatement if work stops and there is no medical improvement

Will I lose my Benefits?

SSI work Incentives

✓ SSA c counts *less than half* of your earned income

   For example:
   $885 in wages
   $400 counts against SSI

✓ Certain impairment related work expenses can also be deducted from your gross wages.
SSI Continued

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

*Contact your local WIPA for more information

http://www.ssa.gov/work/WIPA.html
How do I get the skills and experience I need?
Your Social Security employment team

- Employment Network (EN)
- Work Incentive Planning & Assistance (WIPA)
- Beneficiary Access and Support Services (BASS)
- State Protection and Advocacy
- Social Security employees

Choose Work
Ticket to Work
What is a Ticket to Work?

A ticket you can use to get free employment services
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)
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
When you contact an Employment Network

- Discuss work goals & disability as it relates to reaching your work goal
- Ask about their success rate
- What will they do for you and what is expected of you?
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?
Vocational Rehabilitation Services & Ticket to Work
Role of Ticket for Vocational Rehabilitation Consumers

- Presumptive Eligibility for Social Security consumers
- Consumer and counselor develop an employment plan with Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Ticket will be “in-use” with VR when employment plan is signed.
Ticket incentives while in Plan with VR

✓ Continuing Disability Reviews are exempted while consumer is making timely progress towards employment

✓ Referral is made to Community Work Incentives Coordinator (CWIC)
When Employment begins

- Consumer and counselor discuss the opportunity to have an Employment Network provide employment supports when VR services end.

- Consumer and counselor will decide on an Employment Network – such as community rehabilitation providers, one-stop agencies, employers, etc.

- Partnership Plus referral is made to Employment Network for warm handoff from VR when employment is stable.
VR Program Closure

☐ Consumer can now assign the ticket to an Employment Network for follow along employment supports.
Post Employment Services

✓ Consumer may come back to VR for services if necessary. Ticket stays assigned to Employment Network.

* Contact your states Division of Vocational Services Office: http://www.ssa.gov/work/envr.html
Employment Network Presentations
Process

✓ If you are interested in the Ticket to Work program, BASS can provide you with a list of Employment Networks or you can find a list online in the EN Directory at www.yourtickettowork.com

✓ Call a few Employment Networks in your area to determine which one is a good fit for you.
When you call the EN office:

- If you are committed to working up to your potential and perhaps 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.

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.
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.
Example of EN Services

- 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 accommodation information and resources
- Tax incentive information
- Automatic referral to your local WIPA
More EN service examples

- Job leads and information on employers who are hiring, job fairs, recruiting events, etc.
- Access to resource centers -- computers, internet, email, phones, and fax.
- Job development on your behalf.
- Referral to agency partners and continuity of your Ticket assignment with state VR office.
After you start work:

✓ You will be expected to provide paystubs to the EN every month until you go off of cash benefits.
✓ As always, you will need to report earnings to SSA. Some EN’s offer to 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.

*To find a list of Ens that serve your area: http://www.yourtickettowork.com/endir
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 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?

✓ 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:
http://www.ssa.gov/work/PandA.html
Other Resources

✓ www.chooseworkttw.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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