CHOOSE WORK
MAKING WORK INCENTIVES WORK FOR YOU

Work Incentive Seminar Event (WISE)

Date: April 27, 2011
Time: 3:00 p.m. EST
Adjusting Audio Mode

Audio Mode:
- Use Telephone
- Use Mic & Speakers

Audio Setup

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Access Code: [access code]
Audio PIN: [PIN]

If you're already on the call, press # # now. (and additional numbers ..)
Webinar Accessibility
1. **Welcome and Introduction**  
   Ray Cebula, Employment & Disability Institute, Cornell University

2. **Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Projects**  
   Sally Atwell, Shepherd Center

3. **Ticket to Work and Work Incentives**  
   Sally Atwell, Shepherd Center

4. **Employment Network**  
   Mary Lou Harding, Briggs & Associates

5. **Vocational Rehabilitation**  
   Janice Lawrence, Georgia Rehabilitation Services

6. **Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS)**  
   Crystal Beelner, PABSS

7. **Other Resources**

8. **Questions and Answers**
What can you expect from this seminar?

• Information on the Ticket to Work program and Work Incentives
What can you expect from this seminar?

- Information on the Ticket to Work program and Work Incentives
- Answers to Frequently Asked Questions
What can you expect from this seminar?

- Information on the Ticket to Work program and Work Incentives
- Answers to Frequently Asked Questions
- Where to Find More Information
Why should you work? • Earn more income
Why should you work?

- Earn more income
- Gain independence
Why should you work?

- Earn more income
- Gain independence
- Learn new skills
Why should you work?

- Earn more income
- Gain independence
- Learn new skills
- Meet new people
Common Concerns

Will I lose my benefits?

How do I get the skills and experience I need?

What if I have to stop working?
Work Incentives Planning & Assistance (WIPA) Projects
Work Incentives Planning & Assistance Projects (WIPA)

• WIPAs are SSA-approved organizations that assist beneficiaries in making informed choices about work AND their services are FREE!

• WIPA staff:
  ✓ *Are trained to provide information* about Ticket to Work and Work Incentives
  ✓ *Can answer questions* about how work will affect your benefits
  ✓ *Can help you* find the resources or services to achieve your work goals
  ✓ *Host Work Incentives Seminar Events* (WISE)
You’re Ready to Explore the Idea of Returning to Work: Where Do You Go from Here?

- Learn more about all the **Work Incentives** that apply to you
You’re Ready to Explore the Idea of *Returning to Work*: Where Do You Go from Here?

- Learn more about all the Work Incentives that apply to you
- **Build your employment team**
You’re Ready to Explore the Idea of **Returning to Work**: Where Do You Go from Here?

- Learn more about all the Work Incentives that apply to you
- Build your employment team
- **Stay positive and look for opportunities**
Social Security Disability Benefit Programs

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
Social Security Disability Benefit Programs

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
Social Security Disability Benefit Programs

- Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Both SSDI and SSI = Concurrent Benefits
Common Concerns

- What risks am I taking by starting a new job training program or going back to school?
- I’m concerned about my SSI checks being reduced, or jeopardizing my SSDI entitlement by getting a paying job.
- What happens if I get into an overpayment situation? How can I prevent that from happening?

Change can be scary, but a lot less scary when you know some basic program rules!
The Ticket to Work Program
What is Ticket to Work?

- A FREE and VOLUNTARY program to assist SSA beneficiaries with disabilities who want to work
- Most people with disabilities ages 18 through 64 who are receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits can participate in the program
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Helping You Today

*So You Succeed Tomorrow*
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<td>…overwhelmed. Who can help me get started and stay with me through the entire process?</td>
<td>…connect you with the people, resources and services you need to develop a work plan.</td>
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How does the Ticket to Work program work?

- A paper Ticket is mailed to you when you are determined to be eligible for SSI or SSDI benefits (you do not need the actual ticket to participate)

- Remember! Participation is FREE and VOLUNTARY—there are no penalties if you choose not to use your ticket
Work Incentives
What are Work Incentives?
Work Incentives have many advantages

Work Incentives provide you with a safety net so you can:

• **Receive training for new skills**
Work Incentives have many advantages

Work Incentives provide you with a safety net so you can:

- Receive training for new skills
- Improve the skills you already have

Helping You Today
*So You Succeed Tomorrow*
Work Incentives have many advantages

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Work Incentives have many advantages

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• Pursue your education
• Try different jobs
Work Incentives have many advantages

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Reminder: please type your questions in the questions box.
Work Incentives for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Recipients
Work Incentives for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Beneficiaries

Earned Income Exclusion (EIE)
Work Incentives for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Beneficiaries

- Earned Income Exclusion (EIE)
- Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE)

Helping You Today
So You Succeed Tomorrow
Work Incentives for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Beneficiaries

- Earned Income Exclusion (EIE)
- Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE)
- Plan to Achieve Self Support (PASS)

Helping You Today
So You Succeed Tomorrow
SSI Example: Mandy Goes to Work

Mandy’s only income is her **monthly SSI payment of $674**.

She’s considering a job that will pay her **gross wages of $985/month**, but she’s worried about what effect her wages will have on her SSI.

What can we tell Mandy?

• Tell her about the **Ticket to Work** Program

• Tell her about **Work Incentives** for SSI beneficiaries

• Tell Mandy that as her earnings **INCREASE**, her SSI will **DECREASE**
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 certain amount.
Plan to Achieve Self Support (PASS)

- A PASS must be SSA-approved
- A PASS sets aside money received from sources other than SSI (including SSDI benefits and earned income from work) to purchase items or services that will allow you to achieve a work goal and become self-sufficient
- Things you can buy with a PASS:
  - Car
  - Wheelchair or assistive device
  - Classes/Training
- You must be working or have other income besides SSI
Work Incentives for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Beneficiaries
Work Incentives for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Beneficiaries

Trial Work Period
Work Incentives for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Beneficiaries

Trial Work Period

Extended Period of Eligibility
Work Incentives for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Beneficiaries

- Trial Work Period
- Extended Period of Eligibility
- Expedited Reinstatement
The **Trial Work Period** allows you to test your ability to work for at least nine months **AND** continue to receive benefits.
For 36 months after the Trial Work Period, SSA may restart your SSDI benefits without:

- A new application
- A disability determination
- A waiting period

Extended Period of Eligibility

9-month Trial Work Period → 36-month Extended Period of Eligibility

Ticket to Work Work Incentives
Helping You Today
So You Succeed Tomorrow
After the benefits end, you have an additional **five years to be reinstated** if work stops and there is no medical improvement.
What happens to Medicare if SSDI benefits stop?

- Medicare continues for at least 93 months after the nine month Trial Work Period
- After that you may be able to purchase Medicare coverage
Work Incentives for Concurrent Beneficiaries

(Beneficiaries receiving BOTH Supplemental Security Income (SSI) AND Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI))
If you receive both SSI & SSDI you are receiving **Concurrent benefits**

**Concurrent beneficiaries:**
- Receive all of the Work Incentives because they all apply to you!
- Talk to a Work Incentives specialist to get all the details!
When you’re ready to use your Ticket to Work…

Build your **Employment Team** and get the skills and experience you need:

- Employment Network (EN)
- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agency
- Work Incentive Planning & Assistance (WIPA)
- State Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS)
- Area Work Incentives Coordinator (AWIC)
- Work Incentives Liaison (WIL)
SOCIAL SECURITY
Employment Network Presentation
Building Your Employment Team: Contacting an Employment Network

When you’re ready to use your ticket, you can:

• Call the **Ticket to Work Help Line** at 866-968-7842 (voice)/866-833-2967 (TDD) to speak with a Certified Work Incentive Coordinator (CWIC) and request a list of Employment Networks that serve your area
• Visit **www.yourtickettowork.com** to access a list of Employment Networks near you
Selecting an Employment Network (EN) to work for you… Ask questions!

Questions You May Want to Ask:

• How many people have you helped through the Ticket to Work program?
• What kinds of companies do you work with for job placements?
• What kinds of jobs might be available to me?
• How often will we communicate and meet?
When you call the EN office, remember these tips

• 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
• The EN should talk with you about **any fears you may have**
• You and the EN will develop an **Individual Work Plan** that includes your employment goals and the services the EN will provide to help YOU get there
When you visit the EN office, remember these tips

- 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 un-assign your ticket at any time if you change your mind or decide the EN is not a good match.
- Your Continuing Disability Reviews (CDRs) are exempted as long as you are making timely progress towards employment.
Examples 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
- **Referrals** to other resources in your area
Examples of EN Services

• **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.

• **Referrals 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 cash benefits.

• As always, you will need to **report earnings** to SSA. Some ENs offer to report these earnings to SSA for you as well as your progress to the Ticket to Work program.

• **Meet regularly** with your EN to track progress.
Ticket To Work and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services
When you use your Ticket for VR services:

- There is **Presumptive Eligibility** for you as a Social Security beneficiary.
- You and your VR counselor develop an **employment plan**.
- Your Ticket is considered “**in-use**” with VR when you and your counselor sign your employment plan.
- Your **Continuing Disability Reviews** (CDRs) are exempted as long as you are making timely progress towards employment.
- VR will make a referral to a **Community Work Incentive Coordinator** (CWIC) on your behalf.
When you begin to work using your Ticket with VR…

- You and your counselor discuss the opportunity to have an EN provide employment supports when your VR services end
- When VR “closes” your case, you can use your Ticket with an EN for follow-on employment supports and services
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 SSI and SSDI beneficiaries with disabilities go to work
- **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
- Available even if you do not have a Ticket or your Ticket is not assigned
PABSS assists beneficiaries by:

- Advocating for workplace accommodations
- Advocating for vocational services from Employment Networks or state Vocational Rehabilitation
- Providing information, referral and advocacy around benefits
- Assisting beneficiaries to remove barriers to work
- Addressing overpayment issues
Other Resources
Where to Get More Information

Visit: www.ssa.gov/work to find your local WIPA, Employment Networks, and other Ticket to Work and Work Incentive information

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