Cost Reimbursement Update

- The VR Team at the Social Security Administration has cleared over 2,100 claims for the largest year of claim activity on record.
- $70 million in claims was processed for Fiscal Year 2014 compared to $54 million in the prior year.
- The backlog is down to four months and the team is now processing December 2014 claims. If a State VR agency has not received a decision on a claim from October 2014 or before, send an inquiry to the VR help desk and the team will investigate (VR.Helpdesk@ssa.gov)
- State VR agency staff is reminded that the automated system, ITOPPS, will use standardized codes for VR services provided. These codes will be required when using the new Ticket Portal which will connect directly to iTOPSS. State VR agencies should start using those codes now if they have them so that SSA can migrate data into the new system. If the codes are not used now, it could delay claims processing in the future. SSA will send a message with a list of codes to all State VR agencies.
- VR staff should be aware that when there is a year or more time gap in the VR closure and the onset of SGA earnings and no transition work during the gap, a VR explanation of how services provided connects to the employment triggering the SGA earnings will be needed. State VR agencies will see more feedback from SSA on those type of cases.

Leadership Change at SSA

Nate Arnold will be moving into Senior Advisor status and Danielle Armstrong will be heading the VR team on an acting basis. Her email is Danielle.Armstrong@ssa.gov. State VR agency staff can communicate with both Nate and Danielle during the transition period.

Ticket Portal Follow-up

Responses to questions received by chat or phone from the March Ticket Portal call was provided. Synopsis responses included steps to access the Ticket Portal, the TPR process, information on how earnings information will be shared for payment purposes in place of the QBER including the SGA earnings at blindness levels for those who are blind. The Security Awareness form SSA 222 is not required for VR staff to access the portal as they are not contractors. SSA is checking with security officers on VR staff security requirements which may include modified documentation from the State VR agency.

Updates and Reminders

- Thursday, April 16: SSA will jointly co-host with RSA the first of three seminars on Youth in Transition. David Weaver, Associate Commissioner (ORDES), and Janet LaBreck, the RSA Commissioner, will speak followed by a data driven presentation from Mathematica. All are encouraged to attend.
- April 20 – 22: Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) spring meeting

The full transcript and audio from the All VR Call are available at
https://yourtickettowork.com/web/ttw/events-archive.

The next All VR Call will be held **Tuesday, May 12, at 3 pm ET**. Join us to get the latest updates on everything related to Employment Networks in the Ticket to Work Program.