# All State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Call

## Welcome

All State VR Agency Call

November 15, 2016

Regina Bowden welcomed everyone to the call and introduced Susan Wilschke, who is serving as Acting Associate Commissioner in Social Security's Office of Research, Demonstration and Employment Support (ORDES). She also introduced Rob Pfaff and Jeff Hemmeter, Acting Deputy Associate Commissioner overseeing ORDES’ research and demonstration activities.

## Presentation on SSA demonstration projects

ORDES staff provided a briefing on the demonstration projects in which it is currently involved.

* Promoting Opportunity Demonstration (POD) 2017- 2022
	+ Section 823 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 instructs SSA to carry out a five-year demonstration project.
	+ Purpose is to test a $1 for $2 benefit offset for SSDI beneficiaries that volunteer and provide written informed consent to participate.
* Early Intervention Mental Health Demonstration (EIMHD) 2016 - 2022
	+ Purpose is to evaluate whether offering an evidence-based package of integrated vocational, medical and mental health services to recently denied disability applicants fosters employment that contributes to self-sufficiency, improved mental health and quality of life, and a reduced demand for disability benefits.
	+ SSA awarded a contract to implement and evaluate the EIMHD to Westat Inc. Recruitment and participant enrollment in the study will begin in late FY 2017 or early FY 2018. Participation will last for 36 months
* Promoting Readiness of Minors in SSI (PROMISE) 2014 - 2022
	+ Purpose is to improve the provision and coordination of services and supports for children with disabilities who receive SSI and their families to achieve improved outcomes that may result in long-term reductions in reliance on SSI.
	+ The Department of Education funded grants to six projects in 11 states for interventions. SSA will evaluate the effects of the interventions.
* Benefit Offset National Demonstration (BOND) 2011 - 2017
	+ The Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 directed SSA to conduct a benefit offset demonstration for SSDI. There are 13 subcontractors and 27 tasks.
	+ BOND replaces the “cash cliff” with an offset that reduces SSDI benefits $1 for every $2 a beneficiary earns above the SGA threshold and also offers some participants enhanced work incentives counseling.

##  Learning Management System (LMS) Update

Adelle Barr, Training Manager at the Ticket Program Manager (TPM), provided a LMS update. TPM currently uses Blackboard Collaborate for monthly All Calls and will eventually launch the Blackboard LMS.

Service providers will be able to view orientation training via the LMS. In preparation for the launch, TPM will send out a GovDelivery in January announcing a training session. TPM previously asked Employment Networks and State VR agencies to designate a LMS POC. If a POC is not received by November 25, TPM will designate the VR Signatory Authority as the POC.

## Current Earnings

Raquel Donaldson gave an update on current earnings based on second quarter 2016 wages. She reminded call participants that when looking at wages, there is a 6-month lag. Third quarter 2016 wages should be verified and in Social Security’s system by mid-January 2017. Social Security will email State VR agencies to let them know when the system is updated.

## CSAVR Relations Committee

David Leon asked for ideas from call participants on how the Ticket to Work and Growing Partnership Plus presentation that is presented at CSAVR’s spring conference might be revamped. Comments and ideas were received over the phone and included the suggestion that there needs to be more discussion between State VR agencies and ENs on how to build relationships and remote participation.

## Question and Answers

Highlights of the Q&A portion of the call included:

* Timely Progress Reviews are still on hold. Rob Pfaff said it is a resource issue and that State VR agencies will be kept posted about any updates.
* Send status codes question to Katie.

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

The next All state VR agency Call will be held
**Tuesday, December 13, 2016 at 3 p.m. ET**.