

TICKET
to **Work** | **EN Essentials**

**Thank you for joining today's
EN Essentials Session.**

We'll begin at 1:00 p.m. ET.

**You will not hear audio or see captions
until we begin.**





TICKET
to **Work** | **EN**Essentials

2023 Round-up:

Request for Application (RFA) Changes

November 14, 2023

Agenda



Logistics and Introductions



Purpose



2023 RFA Changes and Updates



Questions and Answers



Resources

Logistics

- Please feel free to ask a question in the MS Teams chat section.
- You may send additional questions or comments to: ENOperations@yourtictetowork.ssa.gov
- Closed Captioning is available for participants who join using the MS Teams Application or by using the closed captions link provided in the GovDelivery email announcement for today's call.
 - To turn on Closed Captions in MS Teams, go to the three ellipses at the top of the MS Teams window; click on “More Actions”; scroll down the list to click on “Turn on live captions.”
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Introductions

Moderator:**Derek Shields**

*Senior EN Development and Training Manager
Ticket to Work Program Manager*

Presenters:**Melanie Webb**

*Branch Chief
Social Security Administration, Office of Employment Support*

Ana Morales

*EN Development and Training Manager
Ticket to Work Program Manager*

RFA Changes

- This session will cover revisions to:
 - PART I — Ticket Program Agreement (TPA)
 - PART III — Statement of Work
 - PART IV—Terms and Conditions
- There were no revisions to:
 - PART II — Payment Rates
- This session will not cover the revisions made to:
 - PART V— EN Application Documentation Requirements
 - PART VI—EN Application Evaluation and TPA Awards

Purpose

The purpose of this session is to:

- Ensure ENs are aware of their responsibilities under the RFA:
 - [*Request for Application \(RFA\) | The Work Site | SSA*](#)
- Share substantive revisions and clarifications made to the EN RFA between:
 - April 2022 - SSA-EN RFA-22-0001 and
 - November 2023 - SSA-EN-RFA-23-0006
- Communicate how SSA will announce RFA changes in the future:
 - SSA will announce substantive changes when they occur and provide an effective date.
 - SSA and TPM will develop and post a resource to the website that provides an annual record of RFA changes.
 - 2023 RFA Revisions Resource

Term of Agreement

- This TPA is valid for ten years from the date of TPA award unless otherwise extended or terminated by the Government or at the EN's request. Additional terms and conditions specific to this TPA are found at Part IV of this agreement. The Government reserves the right to issue unilateral or bilateral changes, which may or may not require written acknowledgment by the EN prior to the change becoming effective.

Termination of TPA

- **New language:**

- *Those persons responsible for the TPA (i.e. Signatory Authority and Program Contact) where the TPA is terminated for cause are permanently ineligible to Participate in the Ticket to Work Program immediately after termination. As well, SSA reserves the right to consider other persons associated with an EN whose TPA is terminated for cause permanently ineligible to participate in the Ticket to Work Program immediately after termination.*

EN Qualifications

- Note: One individual may not be *employed by* more than one EN unless those ENs are affiliated under a common ownership, signatory authority, or government agency.

Employer Business Model

▪ Note:

- *If an EN employs one or more Ticketholders, that EN is required to have an approved Employer EN business model.*
- Paid vocational training with no record of continuous self-supporting employment does not meet the definition of a job for purposes of this RFA. SSA will approve applications for employer EN business models from established business enterprises only.
- SSA will not approve applications to create new business enterprises ostensibly to employ Ticketholders.

Part III - Statement of Work

Administrative EN (AEN)

- The administrative EN defines the terms and conditions of the relationship with its provider affiliates through individual agreements with those affiliates.
- The administrative EN must provide SSA with a list of their provider affiliates on a monthly basis by the 5th of each month.
- *ENs or any employees of an EN are prohibited from becoming provider affiliates for an administrative EN.*
- The administrative EN shall be responsible and accountable for the actions of its provider affiliates in satisfying all of the requirements, terms, and conditions of the TPA.
- Affiliate providers shall be subject to the service delivery requirements of the business model applicable to the services provided. (See Part III – Section 1.B.2.c.(3).
- *Affiliate providers are prohibited from providing a disbursement or reimbursement of funds for expenses incurred by the beneficiary for the purposes of attaining employment.*

Page 16

RFA Part III -
Statement of
Work
Section 1:
EN Qualifications
B.2.c.(3):
Recognized
Business Models
iii. Administrative
EN

Ticket Assignment

- Effective Date
 - *Note: ENs are prohibited from submitting and assigning a Ticket that has a Ticket assignment date which precedes the fully executed IWP date.*

Individual Work Plans (IWP)

■ New Language:

- *The IWP is a living document. The IWP may require amendments when the Ticketholder's circumstances change, resulting in the need for different services and supports. The Ticketholder must agree to all amendments and both the EN and Ticketholder must sign the amendment.*

Part III - Statement of Work

IWP Requirements, Part 1

- At a minimum, the IWP must include the following components:
 - Discussion date and modality (e.g., face-to-face, telephone);
 - Discussion summary;
 - EN's assessment that the Ticketholder's short and long-term goals are reasonable and attainable;
 - How the EN's services and supports will assist the Ticketholder to achieve their goals; *and*
 - *A Statement of Understanding.*

Page 23

RFA Part III –
Statement of
Work

Section 4:

Individual Work
Plans (IWP)

IWP

Requirements

A. 1.

IWP Requirements, Part 2

- Description of Employment Goal:
 - *Each Ticketholder's employment needs are different; therefore, the employment goals on the IWP shall be individualized, specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely for that Ticketholder.* This shall be consistent with the Ticket Program goal of helping each Ticketholder, *based on their unique situation*, advance to and retain employment as well as reduce dependence on cash benefits.

Page 23

RFA Part III –
Statement of
Work

Section 4:
Individual Work
Plans (IWP)

A. IWP
Requirements
2. Description of
Employment Goal

IWP Requirements, Part 3

- Initial Job Acquisition Phase, Minimum Ticketholder Follow-up
 - At a minimum, the EN shall follow up with the Ticketholder monthly to verify Ticketholder progress *and maintain records of these contacts. This is defined as two-way communication and shall be any of the following acceptable mediums in which the Ticketholder provides a response: in- person meeting, a telephone conversation, personalized email messages, voicemail message received by the Ticketholder, personalized text messages, any form of computerized or telephone app communication (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet, Skype, etc.), and personalized letters to and from individuals. The EN shall document the method of communication and, where possible, save any evidence available of the communication and provide this evidence during program integrity reviews if requested. The EN shall make a minimum of three attempts in a one-month period to make two-way contact with the Ticketholder.*
- ✓ Gov Delivery Announcement sent April 5, 2023: Ticketholder Engagement
 - Implemented August 1, 2023

IWP Requirements, Part 4

- Initial Job Acquisition Phase, Ticketholder Communication
 - In the event the *EN does not have a two-way conversation with the Ticketholder*, or the Ticketholder requests no contact, the EN shall unassign the Ticket *within 60 days from the date of initial contact attempt*. In the event contact between an EN and a Ticketholder ceases, SSA may take action to unassign the Ticket as a program integrity measure.
- ✓ Gov Delivery Announcement sent April 5, 2023: Ticketholder Engagement
 - Implemented August 1, 2023

Part III - Statement of Work

IWP Requirements, Part 5

- Initial Job Acquisition Phase
 - The EN must document the *two-way* conversation with the Ticketholder. The documentation should identify key issues that were discussed and include enough information so that third party reviewers (such as the TPM and SSA) know what was discussed, what transpired and what steps the Ticketholder and EN are taking to reach the Ticketholder's goals. *The EN shall have this documented and kept on file.* This documentation should exist on a medium that will allow TPM or SSA to review the records at a TPM or SSA office. *SSA reserves the right to request physical evidence of any and/or all conversations (i.e., voicemails, emails, letters, or texts) between the EN and Ticketholder.* The following communication mediums are not acceptable forms of individualized attempts to contact Ticketholders for the purpose of this subsection: robocalls, blast email messages, newsletters, and mass mailings.

IWP Requirements, Part 6

- Initial Job Acquisition Phase; Ticketholder not Meeting their Goals
 - *If a Ticketholder is not meeting their goals outlined in the IWP, the EN shall discuss and document the following:*
 - 1) *If the Ticketholder goals are still appropriate, then determine if additional services and/or supports are needed to achieve their goals and revise the IWP.*
 - 2) *If the Ticketholder needs new goals, determine if these goals are appropriate based on the guidance in Part III Section 4.A.2 above and revise the IWP.*
 - 3) *If the Ticketholder no longer wants to work towards their established goals or revise their goals and is not working towards self-sufficiency, then the Ticket shall be unassigned.*
- ✓ Gov Delivery Announcement sent April 5, 2023: Ticketholder Engagement
 - Implemented August 1, 2023

Part III - Statement of Work

IWP Requirements, Part 7

- Ongoing Employment Support Phase; Minimum Ticketholder Follow-Up
 - At a minimum, the EN shall contact the Ticketholder quarterly to determine if the Ticketholder requires any ongoing employment supports and maintain records of these contacts. *This is defined as two-way communication and shall be any of the following acceptable mediums in which the Ticketholder provides a response: in person meeting, a telephone conversation, personalized email messages, voicemail message received by the Ticketholder, personalized text messages, any form of computerized or telephone app communication (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet, Skype, etc.), and personalized letters to and from individuals. The EN shall document the method of communication and, where possible, save any evidence available of the communication and provide this evidence during program integrity reviews if requested. The EN shall make a minimum of three attempts in a one-month period to make two-way contact with the Ticketholder.*
- ✓ Gov Delivery Announcement sent April 5, 2023: Ticketholder Engagement
 - Implemented August 1, 2023

IWP Requirements, Part 8

Ongoing Employment Support Phase; Ticketholder Communication

- **New Language:** *In the event the EN does not have a two-way communication with the Ticketholder, or the Ticketholder cannot be located or requests no contact, the EN shall unassign the Ticket within 180 days from the date of initial contact attempt. In the event contact between an EN and a Ticketholder ceases, SSA may take action to unassign the Ticket as a program integrity measure.*
- ✓ Gov Delivery Announcement sent April 5, 2023: Ticketholder Engagement
 - Implemented August 1, 2023

Part III - Statement of Work

IWP Requirements, Part 9

- Ongoing Employment Support Phase; Documentation of Ticketholder Engagement
 - *The EN must document the two-way conversation with the Ticketholder.* The documentation should identify key issues that were discussed and include enough information so that third party reviewers (such as the TPM and SSA) know what was discussed what transpired and what steps the Ticketholder and EN are taking to reach the Ticketholder's goals. *The EN shall have this documented and kept on file.* This documentation should exist on a medium that will allow TPM or SSA to review the records at a TPM or SSA office. *SSA reserves the right to request physical evidence of any and/or all conversations (i.e., voicemails, emails, letters, or texts) between the EN and Ticketholder.* The following communication mediums are not acceptable forms of individualized attempts to contact Ticketholders for the purpose of this subsection: robocalls, blast email messages, newsletters, and mass mailings.

Page 25

RFA Part III –
Statement of
Work

Section 4:

Individual Work
Plans (IWP)

A. IWP

Requirements

3. Description of
Services and
Supports

b. Ongoing
Employment
Support Phase;
(4th bullet)

IWP Requirements, Part 10

Ongoing Employment Support Phase; Ticketholder Not Meeting Goals

- *If a Ticketholder is not meeting their goals outlined in the IWP, the EN shall discuss and document the following:*
 - 1) *If the Ticketholder goals are still appropriate, then determine if additional services and/or supports are needed to achieve their goals and revise the IWP.*
 - 2) *If the Ticketholder needs new goals, determine if these goals are appropriate based on the guidance in Part III, Section 4.A.2 above and revise the IWP.*
 - 3) *If the Ticketholder no longer wants to work towards their established goals or revise their goals and is not working towards self-sufficiency, then the Ticket shall be unassigned.*
- ✓ Gov Delivery Announcement sent April 5, 2023: Ticketholder Engagement
 - Implemented August 1, 2023

IWP Requirements, Part 10

Submitting an IWP

- (For) ENs assigning Tickets for the first time *or ENs with substantial staff turnover:*
 1. A copy of the IWP shall be submitted directly to the TPM.
 2. The TPM will review the IWP for completeness and conformance with Ticket Program requirements (see Part III, Section 4.A above). Ticket assignments are contingent upon the TPM's receipt and approval of the IWP.
 3. ENs shall submit a minimum of 10 IWPs to the TPM for review prior to Ticket assignment. Following successful completion of the review period, ENs shall use the accelerated Ticket assignment process described under Part III, Section 4.D.2, below.
 4. Once TPM finds the IWPs acceptable, the EN shall process the Ticket assignment through the Ticket Portal.

Partnership Plus

Partnership Plus

- *ENs are required to send their Partnership Plus agreement to ENService@ssa.gov when the agreement is finalized and on a yearly basis with their Service and Supports Review (see Part III, Section 9.C).*

EN Training, Part 1

Training Requirement

- 2nd Bullet: The EN *main points of contact and any additional portal users* must complete the training within 60 days following award of the EN agreement.
- 4th Bullet: An EN *or EN main points of contact* shall not initiate services to Ticketholders prior to successful completion of start-up training and satisfying suitability requirements.
- *NOTE: (added) When main points of contact change employment from one EN to another or are reemployed with the same EN and there has been one year or more of absence from the TTW Program, the staff shall take all mandatory training for their new role.*

EN Training, Part 2

- At a minimum, EN training shall cover the following:
 - Overview of the Ticket Program, including roles of the WIPA and PABSS projects
 - EN's program responsibilities and performance expectations under the TPA
 - Ticket Program operations and processes, including Ticket Portal training *for those requiring access to the Ticket Portal based on their job function with the EN.*
- ✓ GovDelivery Announcement sent March 21, 2023: Changes to Ticket Portal and Training Curriculum

EN Essentials Training Series

EN Training, Part 3

Mandatory Training Description

- EN start-up training is mandatory for the EN contact(s) that are responsible on the TPA. *This includes the Signatory Authority (if they are hands-on or involved with PII), Program Contact, Ticketholder Contact, Web Contact, Payments Contact, Suitability Contact and Ticket Portal Users. Any new EN employees with these roles, throughout the life of the award, must also have mandatory training.*

Data Collection and Reporting Requirements

Requesting TPA Changes

- Only the EN signatory authority or program contact shall request changes to the TPA *with the exception of a change in signatory authority.*
- *Only the signatory authority or the governing body of the company shall request a change in signatory authority.*

Evaluating EN Performance

- ... ENs that fail to comply with *the standards outlined in 9.A and 9.B below shall be subject to sanctions (i.e., suspension of: Ticket Assignments, Ticket Payments, Portal Access, and EN Profile from the Choose Work website), and/or TPA termination. In addition, SSA may perform an additional quality assurance review on your EN and require the EN take certain corrective actions to remedy the non-compliance within a prescribed time period that SSA deems appropriate (e.g., contact all assigned Ticketholders or updated IWPs).*

9.A.1. Minimum Performance Requirements

- At a minimum, all ENs are required to:
 1. Take at least one Ticket assignment within the first calendar year of the TPA award and maintain at least three active Ticket assignments during each calendar year thereafter.
 2. Receive at least one Ticket payment during the second calendar year following TPA award and three payments during each calendar year thereafter.

Evaluating EN Performance, Part 2

Continued:

B. SSA will evaluate each EN's performance yearly based on the following criteria:

- Compliance with the minimum performance requirements stated in Part III—Section 9.A, above.
- Provision of the services identified in the IWP.
- Employment results for Ticketholders including job placement and retention rates, achievement of timely progress benchmarks, and achievement of financial independence (exit the rolls with earnings at or above SGA).
- Provision of ongoing employment supports as required.
- Compliance with terms and conditions of the TPA.
- Ticketholder's overall satisfaction with the EN's services.
- Adherence to and cooperativeness regarding requests of SSA and/or TPM.

Privacy, Security, and Suitability

- On-site Inspections
 - Allow SSA and other Federal oversight agencies, and/or contractor representatives of these agencies, to make on-site inspections *without notice* and other arrangements for reviewing/auditing the EN's compliance with the terms of this RFA as found in this section and Part IV—Section 7.K of this RFA, to ensure the maintenance of adequate safeguards.

Protection of Confidential Information

- On-site Inspections
 - The Government reserves the right to conduct on-site visits, *without prior notice*, to review the EN's documentation and in-house procedures for protection of and security arrangements for confidential information and adherence to the terms of this clause.

Questions

Questions

- Please feel free to ask a question in the MS Teams chat section.
- If joining via phone and you wish to ask a question:
 - Press *5 to raise your hand and we will unmute your phone.
 - Press *6 to speak.
- If joining via MS Teams and you wish to ask a question aloud:
 - Raise your hand and we will unmute your mic.
- Please limit questions to one per participant. You may send additional questions or comments to: ENOperations@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov

Resources

- [EN RFA \(ssa.gov\)](#)
- [2023 Employment Network Request for Application \(RFA\) Revisions \(ssa.gov\)](#)

Upcoming Events

- November 15: WISE: Ticket to Work for America's Veterans
- November 28: All EN Call
- January 23: EN Essentials - Completing Your EN Annual Performance Outcome Report (APOR) and SSA-222 Security Awareness Form

Email the EN Development and Training Department at ENOperations@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov with feedback, recommendations or ideas for future EN Essentials Sessions