Good day and welcome to the National Employment Network Payments Call. Today's conference is being recorded. At this time, I'd like to turn the conference over to Miss Kimberly Cutler, EN Payments Manager. Please go ahead ma'am.

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Thank you. Welcome and thank you all for attending the All EN Payments Call today, Tuesday April 30, 2019. So, it's our last day in April.  I am Kimberly Cutler EN Payments Manager and host of today's call. So, I want to go ahead and jump right in and the purpose of today's presentation is to provide insight into the payment process on the following agenda topics.

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So, we have the ePay stats, ePay reminders, changes to EN payments process, locating the proof of relationship or POR form, POR examples, or proof of relationship examples, proof of relationship denials, preventable denials, state location rehabilitation agency involvement. And then we're going to cover your resources and we will open up at the end for questions and answers.

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The processing of the most recent ePay files began on December 31 of last year. Claims are processed by social security numbers instead of (duns). The ePay file contained a little over 20,000 SSN's. As of Monday, April 22 there were 20,528 claims paid, 4,190 SSN's paid which a total amount paid was $10,444,919.

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I have three reminders I would like to cover regarding ePay. First, we are currently processing an ePay file and we will be done with that file soon. There was a delay— I know a lot…  We've received some questions about the processing of ePay and some payments, but just wanted to let you know that there was a delay in starting the ePay file, which was due to the quality review of EN and ePay eligibility.

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So, we did get started. There was that delay, but we are in the process of completing that file. And like I said earlier, we do expect to be done with that file soon.  And the next ePay file is due to start in August of this year.  Second reminder:  please ensure that you're EN payment contact information is current. We do send emails to the EN payment contact for payment outreach messages and confirmation of possible split payments.

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So, it is imperative that you keep your contact information up to date with all contacts but as it relates to payments you want to make sure that you're payments contact is current.  And finally, when you are submitting information to the Employment Network Service Team — or ENST — about payments, please annotate your EN contact information for payment.

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To add payment contact, please send a request to enservice@ssa.gov and make sure you specify the name of the person and indicate the title you want them to have.  And remember that all payments contacts must have completed suitability.  And I think Cara — I think you had a reminder that you wanted to also add for ePay.

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Yes.  If you are eligible for ePay, which is most of you since the ePay file is back on track now — it was a little delayed just because we were assessing everybody's service and supports review to see who was eligible.  But it's not necessary to send the Phase 2's and the outcomes through the portal if you're able to wait.  So, that's just a little reminder for everybody since ePay is 100% back on track now.  Thanks, (Kim).

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All right.  Thank you, Cara.  So those were your ePay reminders.  Moving on to the next slide, we're going to discuss some changes to the EN payments process.  And to ensure that we provide the highest quality of service to EN — Employment Networks — and their Ticketholders on March 25 of this year Social Security Administration implemented the following changes to the EN payments business process.

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The first change impact the proof of relationship requirement for Phase 1 Milestones.  We are now excluding Phase 1 Milestone 4 from the proof of relationship requirements. You will not have to submit a proof of relationship form for Phase 1, Milestone 4 payment request. However, please remember that no Phase 1 Milestones are available through ePay.

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So, EN's still must submit these payment requests through the Ticket portal. So, the biggest thing to remember there is for Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3 you still must supply or provide proof of relationship. But for Phase 1 Milestone 4, that requirement is no longer —we no longer require that you show proof of relationship for Phase 1 Milestone 4.  But all Phase 1 Milestones are not available through ePay. So, you must submit those requests through the portal. The second change to EN payments impacts earnings verification. The new process will align EN payments earnings verification with agency standards.

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Previously, TPM performed an additional check for evidence of monthly earnings even when the Ticket portal displayed earnings are already proven. Now, TPM will validate payment requests and either pay or deny the case based on the evidence in the system. Although we will now process these payment requests, Social Security still strongly encourages you to continue submitting primary evidence such as pay stubs or the work number report whenever you have that information available.

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So, we will use the information verified in SSA system to make payment but of course we still would want — if you have your pay stubs or the work number on employee prepared earning statement, we will prefer that you send that information in — or continue to send that information in.

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Continuing with changes to the EN payments process. The third payment change is that TPM will now process cases on a first in-first out basis. This means that the oldest cases will be processed first and will not — and we will not prioritize cases by any other factors.

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All cases will still be evaluated within 30 days of receipt and either paid, denied, or placed in diary.  Of course, if you're placed in a diary that means that we need additional documentation — additional information — to complete the payment request.

As a reminder, it may take 7 to 10 business days after a payment is approved before your EN receives payment. So, just wanted to reiterate that that TPM, SSA we will process all payments or evaluate all payments within 30 days and even after that there still may be a 7 to 10 day business delay. It may take 7 to 10 business days after that payment has been approved for it actually to show up into your account.

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Finally, TPM will be eliminating outreach from the proof of relationship process. The certification of service form has been replaced with the POR form — or proof of relationship form — for Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3 payment requests.

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A GovDelivery message was sent out to all EN's explaining this policy change back on March 25. If you have not yet downloaded and reviewed the POR form, we will show you how to access the forms from your Ticket to work website on the next slide. But we do want you to make sure that you're going to the link — and I'll go over that on the next slide —and that when you're submitting for Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3 that you are completing this form and sending it in with your request.

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So, if you are asking for a Phase 1 Milestone 1 through 3 and you're not submitting pay stubs— if you're proof of earnings are the earnings you received the message, "Earnings already proven" you're submitting your earnings via the work number or an employee prepared earning statement the requirement is that you establish proof of relationship.

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So, you will need to submit the POR form and understand it because we're no longer performing outreach for that if you do not submit the required form with your payment your payment will be denied. So, please make sure that you are— that you download that form and that you are submitting when required.

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Okay, as I mentioned as a courtesy TPM previously performed outreach to ask for this form but will no longer be doing so. So, if you're EN neglects to provide a pay stub or sufficient POR form with the payment request for Phase 1 Milestone 1 through 3 the case will be denied. No outreach will be performed.

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You will receive notification of the denial in the Ticket portal. And we will review those, and I will post later in this presentation. If you have any questions regarding the NOW, please contact the payments help desk and you can contact the payments help desk at enpaymentshelpdesk@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov for more information.

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It is SSA and TPM's expectation that these changes will simplify the current business practice and speed up payment processing. SSA encourages EN's to continue to submit primary evidence — this is your pay stubs or the work number reports — for payment requests when earnings are at or above the SGA— I'm sorry SGA level which is substantial gainful activity level and beneficiaries continue to receive a monthly benefit payment.

TPM will input these earnings into SSA systems for field office to perform work continuing disability reviews or CDR. Completion of these work CDRs may result in the cessation of monthly beneficiary payments and place beneficiaries in a suspense status due to work and earnings. This suspense payments that is due to work and earnings along with earnings at or above SGA level will qualify EN's for outcome payments. So, please make sure that you continue to submit your primary evidence of earnings.

Moving to the next slide.  We've talked about the POR form and if you haven't already downloaded the POR — the proof of relationship form — you can find it on yourtickettowork.ssa.gov. And here on this slide you can actually see the steps that you would need to take or the path that you would take to be able to access that form and download that form.

Okay.  And as a reminder, you should always open PDF forms using Adobe Acrobat. Your computer may be set to open the PDF in the browser; however, you will not be able to properly complete the form this way. If the PDF opens in the browser, you can move your curser toward the top right-hand corner of the PDF in the browser window and a downward pointing arrow icon should appear as a button that allows you to download the PDF.

Alternatively, you can right-click the PDF link on the forms page and select either "Save link as" or "Save target as" depending on your browser.  And we just wanted to add that bit of information because sometimes I know that there may be some difficulty in downloading the form and there may be a call that comes into our payments help desk. So, we just wanted to kind of provide that little information to help you be able to download that form — that required form.

Moving on.  Now, we talked about where you can find the form and that you need to download the form and complete the form. In this slide, what we have provided is an example of a POR that meets the requirement for sufficient proof of relationship. So, here you can see that the services are clearly documented and monthly contact is annotated.

So, you want to make sure that when you're showing your proof of relationship you want to make sure that you are providing the date. You want to provide the services that you provided but you also need to make sure that you're providing the date of the service.

Some of the forms that we have gotten in the past we'll see that you'll just have services listed but there's no date associated with it. And we must have the date associated because remember from past calls and past trainings that when you're showing — when you're establishing — proof of relationship you need to make sure that the services provided are within your Milestone range or that they cover the entire Milestone range.

So, that's why it's so important that you document the date that the services were provided.  And you also want to make sure that during the initial phase that you are making monthly contact with your beneficiaries. So, this is an example of what a form — a POR form — looks like that will pass because all of the information is there. The monthly contact is there. The services are there. And the date of the service is provided.

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Now the next slide — so of course if we show you the POR that passes, we need to show you a POR that does not pass. So, here you can see a POR that has failed because it did not provide sufficient proof of relationship during the Milestone range. So, as you can see here, per this POR form there's one service provided and then there's attempt at contact. So, you know, they sent emails, called and no answer, attempted to call client and the phone is disconnected.

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So, these are methods of attempted contact and attempted contact does not show proof of relationship. So, we do see — there are some PORs that come that will fail because remember we're looking for the monthly contact and we're looking for the services provided during that Milestone range. But again, I just wanted to reiterate this that attempted contact does not show proof of relationship.

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Okay. Now, next slide. There are two denial codes based on POR — or again, proof of relationship. Denial Code 44 Proof of Relationship not Received will be used whenever a payment request requires a POR form, but one is not included in the payment request.

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Denial 45 which is Proof of Relationship Failed Review will be used if a POR is required for request and received but does not provide sufficient proof of relationship. So, when you're looking and you get these denial codes just wanted you to understand why the case would have been denied.

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So, again if — when you're asking for a Phase 1 Milestone 1, 2, 3 and you're not submitting pay stubs as your primary evidence of earnings please make sure you are submitting a completed POR form that meets the requirements which means it shows monthly contacts and shows the services provided and it shows the date of the contact. And they all in those dates cover your Milestone range.

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And for example, if you submit a payment request for Phase 1 Milestone 1 based on earnings from the work number report, employee prepared earnings statement, or earnings already proven in SA system and do not include a POR form the request will be denied using Code 44 — using Denial Code 44.

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However, if you do submit a POR but fail to indicate services provided and dates provided then the request will be denied using Code 45. So just wanted to make sure you guys are aware of the different denials that are associated with the proof of relationship requirements.

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Next, we will discuss denials that can be prevented by using resources available to service providers via the Ticket portal and the Ticket to work web site. Here we have a list of these denials and it was a period of time that we captured these denials. As you can see the highest — well, not the highest — but you'll see the first one which talks about a Duplicate Request Payment Already Made.

So, EN's should use the Ticket Portal Payments Already Made to Me page to see all payments that the EN's received. Knowing the next payment will cut down on EN's submitting for payments that were already paid which ends up in a denial for the reason Duplicate Request Payment Already Made.

So, please make sure you're using the resources available through the Ticket portal because that is section of the portal that you can use to see what payments you've received so you can see what your next payment will be. Another resource is the Payments at a Glance document that's located on the Ticket to work web site.

This resource shows the earnings required for each type of payment and the order in which payments are made. So, as we can see here, the different denials for Earnings Amount Do Not Meet Criteria for Payment. So, looking at the Payments at a Glance if you know that your next available payment is a Phase 2 Milestone and we know that you're Phase 2 the earnings amount required is SGA level earnings.

So, you want to make sure that before you're submitting for your payment request that you have the correct amount of earnings to satisfy the payment. Same thing with Earnings Do Not Meet Phase 1 Milestone Criteria. So, if you're asking for a Phase 1 Milestone 1, we know that the earnings requirement for those payments would need to be at least trial work level earnings.

So, you want to make sure that you have all of this information available when you submit for payment. Insufficient documentation — this is huge one that we have. Simply you're EN's are not submitting the required information. This denial is used a lot when we have to request information there's something that we need.

You may send in pay stubs that we're unable to read the pay stubs. So, we will— we're not just going to deny that case. We will perform an outreach and ask that you provide pay stubs or, you know, earnings information that we can actually read. So, we'll explain why. So, if you do not respond within nine business days to that request, now we have insufficient documentation.

So, we want to make sure that we have the required information. Payments must be made in order. Again, checking the portal to see which payments have already been made to your EN. Also looking at the Payments at a Glance that shows you the order of the payment. It shows you the earnings amount. It shows you where the benefits must be.

So, you know trial work levels and current pay and receiving, you know, they're receiving their benefits so that you know you need to submit trial work level earnings. So, please make sure that you're using your available resources when you're requesting your payments. And that cuts down on the level of work of having to process a request and then deny it.

It also cuts down on the number of denials that you as an agency — that you are having to receive in you're, you know, so we want to make sure that you are aware of these are the types of denials. And we've labelled it Preventable Denials because if the information is submitted correctly — the correct earnings amount, the information either requested or when you initially send in your payment making sure that you have all the documentation. Making sure that you know which payment is next.

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It's in the Payments at a Glance so, you know, if you get a Phase 1 Milestone 1, you're next payment is a Phase 1 Milestone 2. You have to receive— all of your Phase 1 Milestone 4 payments must be addressed before you can make a Phase 2. Or, you know, get paid for a Phase 2. So, just making sure you're using all of your available resources.

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Now, on the next slide what we talked about was using the resources available through the Ticket portal. So, here we have a screen shot of the section I was telling you about which was Payments Already Made to Me. So, you can actually go in and you can do a range. You can put in your date range to see a specific time — a period of time.

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And then you'll actually see here where you'll get to see that the claim ((inaudible)), the payment number, the payment type, you know, whether it was a Milestone or if it's an outcome, the percentage paid to you, the amount of the payment. And you'll be able to see the payment decisions so it says Allow to Pay.

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So, this helps you, again to know. You know, you may say, "Oh, I don't know if I received a particular payment. You know, which outcome am I on? How many outcomes have I received?" You know, so you'll be able to look at this and just do a sort and see which type of — which payments have already been made. So, this is a very valuable resource and we do encourage EN's to use this Ticket portal.

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Okay, now, next slide I also talked about the other resource which was the Payments at a Glance. And this is a form — this is a documentation or resource — that is updated every year because the trial work levels or SGA amounts may change every year. So, we make sure to put this information up.

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So, here you have your steps that you would need to take to actually go and download this form. This is a great desk reference because you want to make sure, again, that you're following your payments in order, you look to see what is required, you also get to look to see what the payment is that you can expect.

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So, again please make sure you're using the Ticket portal and also making sure you're using the Payments at a Glance. Okay. Next slide what we want to talk about is the state VR agency involvement

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When it comes to payment. So, if a Ticket was previously in use with a state VR agency and the case was closed successfully that removes all Phase 1 Milestones from the table.

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So, your Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 4 are no longer available. The first possible payment for an EN will be a Phase 2 Milestone. So, again if a Phase — if the Ticket was previously in use with the state VR agency, and the case was closed successfully then the Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 4 are no longer available. The first available payment may be a Phase 2 Milestone for the EN.

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If a VR EN previously served a Ticketholder under the cost reimbursement payment method and close the case whether it was successfully or unsuccessfully closed the same VR cannot assign the Ticket under the EN payment method and receive Ticket to Work payments. So, again, if you are a VR EN and you— the case was placed with you under the Cost Reimbursement Payment Method and once you close the case — be it successfully or unsuccessfully — you cannot assign that same Ticket under the EN payment method and receive Ticket to Work payments.

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Hey (Kim) this is (Cara). I just wanted to reiterate something. On the first one where it's a Ticket was a previously assigned to a VR and the case was closed successfully, if the case is closed successfully or if it was closed unsuccessfully but we have made a cost reimbursement payment to the VR then the Phase 1's are off the table.

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Okay, so just to make sure, if the case is closed successfully no Phase 1 Milestones are available. If the case is closed unsuccessfully, but the VR received a cost reimbursement payment then the Phase 1 Milestones are off the table as well. Okay. Thank you, Cara.

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Okay, and now we're almost done with the presentations for our part. Just wanted to show all the available resources for our service providers. So, again we talked about the proof of relationship form — or POR form — and where it's located. A couple slides back you actually see the steps where you can actually go download this form.

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Please make sure you do it. It is a required form for your Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 4 when you're establishing proof of relationship. And we do have, you know, if you need to contact us, we are here Monday through Friday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Eastern Time. There you have our toll-free numbers and you have a different option that you would select depending on your need.

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You also had — you can send us an email for any payment related issues. You're going to make sure you send that to enpaymentshelpdesk@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov. Please remember to not include any PII and the emails when you send them unless you're going to password protect it. And for questions — any questions or issues related to Ticket assignment, the service provider web site or the Ticket portal then you want to contact [ensystemshelp@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov](mailto:ensystemshelp@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov) .

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So that concludes the presentation part of today's call. So, at this time I would like to open the lines— well we would like to move to the question and answers session. So, I would like to ask (John) do we have any questions from the chat?

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Yes, we've got a large queue built up. Our first question comes from (Thomas) who asks, "How far through the ePay file are you? What percentage of the ePay is left?"

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Okay, so, I don't have the numbers as far as a percentage but as I stated in the previous slides we are expected to be done with that ePay file soon. So, you know, we did provide the stats but right now I do not have the exact percentage. But we do anticipate that we'll be done with the file— well I guess May is tomorrow so we will complete the file within the next month.

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All right. And then for our next question on the ePay slide we had mentioned that the next ePay will begin in August 2019. And Real Solutions by DT Reading had asked, "I thought that the ePay was done quarterly."

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That is the goal that we would — sorry, someone was saying something? Okay. That is the goal that we process the ePay file every quarter but also mentioned earlier that there was a delay in processing the file because we were going through the services and the ports review of EN's to make sure that, you know, for the eligibility of the ePay. We are — our goal is that once we start the ePay file in August that we will be back on schedule and that we will go to an every quarter of processing the ePay file.

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All right. And then our next question comes from (Sandy Jordan) who asks, "For Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3 can we either provide a pay stub or a POR form to request payment?" So, they want to know if a POR form is still required if they have pay stubs.

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No. If you are submitting pay stubs as your proof of earnings, the pay stubs also will show proof of relationship. So, the POR is only required when your evidence of earnings is the work number, employee prepared earnings statement, or earnings already proven. But it is submitting pay stubs and that is your proof of earnings and that is your proof of relationship. Okay. All right. Thanks, (John).

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All right now we've got three questions.

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Yes, all right. So, (Cody) do we have any questions in the queue on the phone?

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Currently there are no questions in the queue. Everyone and once again that's star one if you'd like to ask a question. If you're using a speakerphone, please make sure your mute function is turned off to allow your signal to reach our equipment. A voice prompt on your line when the queue once your line has been opened. Once again, that's star one and we'll take our first question from Jeff Barrett with Options Plus Inc. Please go ahead.

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Yes, I have some people who are self-employed or frankly don't know how to get copies of their pay stubs. So, if I fill out a periodic POR would that take care of the payment issues?

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Your POR would have to show proof of relationship so just filling it out— when we do a review or an assessment of that we're looking for monthly contact and services provided.  So…

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That I can provide.  I mean, I have records of everything.  So…

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And all cases are processed, you know, on a case by case basis so I would encourage you, yes you can go ahead and send in for payment. As we know of course the first thing with all payments before we get into proof of relationship or things like that, the first thing we look for is the earnings requirement.

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So, if we have the earnings to satisfy the payment and you have proof of relationship and all other payment criteria is meet then we will make the payment. But it is on a case by case basis. But I would encourage you, yes if you do not have your pay stubs and you have other methods of confirming the earnings, then complete your POR making sure it meets the requirements of what we covered earlier and go ahead and submit it.

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Okay.  Thank you.

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You're welcome.

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Thank you. Once again that's Star 1 if you'd like to ask a question.

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Okay, (Cody) and we…

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Michelle.

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Okay, that's fine.

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Okay, we'll take our next question from Michelle Cap with DAWN Center for Independent Living.

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Hi.  My question is regarding the pay stub. I have consumers or beneficiaries that I work with who it's been difficult to — I'm in touch with them but it's difficult to — get them to send the pay stubs.  Is there, like, a limit to when I can submit pay stubs for their earnings?  Like, say for example, if I were able to get in touch with them and then submit pay stubs from earlier — like, let's just say last year — would that still be acceptable?

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You mean waiting for a year…

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Hello?

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Yes, okay.  So, I just want to make sure I'm clear. So, you mean, like, not waiting to submit for payment until you actually get the pay stubs?  Michelle are you still there?

Hello?

Hi, okay, hi Michelle I didn't know if you could still hear me. So, I just wanted to make sure I understood your question. So, you can submit for a payment request, but we do have — there is a limit to answer that question. So, you have to submit your request within two years of the month following after they've earned the earnings.

So, if you have a client that you're working with and let's say you just got their pay stubs today, but it was from last year, then yes, you're still within that window of time that you can submit for payment. But we…

Okay.

Okay, go ahead.

You said— okay, you said within two years of the date that they started earning over SGA?

Yes, or whatever the earnings requirement is, yes.

Okay, thank you.

You're welcome.

Thank you. We'll now take our next question from (Barbara Velma) with Orange Grove.

Hello.

Hello.

My question is should— can you hear me?

Kimberly Cutler: Yes, ma'am.

Okay. My question is should the EN include a POR with a pay stub that just is a print out of the person's earnings that does not include, like, the start and the end date that they get the week — the pay period started?

Okay, we need the pay period beginning and ending date. So, you could also submit a supplemental earnings statement along with the earnings information. So again that goes to that— we talked about denials as far as insufficient documentation, so yes, you know, you can submit what you have but if you see that there's information that's missing from the pay document or the pay stub then you can submit a supplemental earnings statement along with that.

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Okay.  All right.  That was it.  Thank you.

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Operator:  We'll now move onto our next question. Thank you. We'll move onto our next question from Hamid Hajebian with HH Employment Training.

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Hi.  This is Hamid.  I just want to clarify two things.  It said if you receive the stub — or you're struggling to receive that — and you do have the POR form and the employer — the boss — you're kind of saying— are you, you know, you're asking questions about the earnings and you're filling out that POR form and so if I get the stub available, is it necessary then to have the POR form?  It's not…  Like, for Phase 1 and going through Phase 3?

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Okay, so if you have pay stubs then you can— if you have pay stubs then you can submit your pay stubs and you do not have to submit a POR.  So, the POR is going to be— because your pay stubs that's your proof of...

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((Crosstalk))

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I'm sorry?

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Three if this is through one through three — Phase 1 through 3 if it's through those phases you don't need the POR form then.  Am I understanding correctly?

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If you have pay stubs that you're submitting with your payment request you do not have to submit the POR form.  If you are not submitting pay stubs and you're using any other source of earnings, then you would need to submit your POR.  But if you want to submit pay stubs and a POR it's fine. You could submit both but…

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What about, like, the work number? If they have available a work number in process there is it the same as, like, a pay stub and do you need the POR form?

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No ma'am.  You need— no your pay stubs are just your pay stubs.  If you're submitting the work number, if you're submitting an employee prepared earnings statement, if you're submitting based on the message that you received in the portal earnings already proven then you must submit a POR.  Pay stubs are the only stand alone.  Everything else must be supported with a POR.

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Hello (Kim), this is (Deborah).

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Okay.

It sounds like from these questions that it is some confusion — more confusion —than we've had about this proof of relationship issue on the previous calls.  And I just want to make sure that everyone knows that we replaced the EN COS with the proof of relationship. The same type of information is required that we've been requiring for the last six months or so.

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The requirements are the same about pay stubs.  The only change that we've made with this presentation is to let you know that you only have to submit the proof of relationship if you don't have pay stub for Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3. That's the only difference that we've had or the only change to this process since we announced this last year.

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Okay, thank you Miss (Tennessee).

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In the past if you've been submitting the EN COS and it passed review then continue to do the same thing. You're dates, you're services, and that's only if you don't have pay stubs. Pay stubs and proof of relationship are equal. So, you only have to send one or the other but the thing is the proof of relationship must cover all months in your Phase 1 Milestone request and your pay stubs needs to cover that period of time. But if you have pay stubs for your Phase 1 Milestones, you're submitting a request for, they meet the earnings requirement then those pay stubs will also meet the proof of relationship requirement.

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Yes, thank you Miss (Tennessee).

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We will now move on to our next question from (Chris Kayer) with New Horizon's ((inaudible)).

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Can we actually…

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Go ahead.

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I was going to say can we actually hop over to the chat questions?  Our first question comes from (Mary Lin) who asks, "When SSA unassigns a Ticket, can the EN request a payment for a claim months that is prior to the months preceding Ticket unassignment?

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You said when SSA unassigns the Ticket?

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Yes, when SSA unassigns a Ticket can the EN request a payment for the claim month prior to the month preceding Ticket unassignment?

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Yes, they can.

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Yes.

All right.  And our next question comes from (Jamie) who asks, "Even though we don't need to provide the POR for Phase 1 Milestone 4, do we still need to submit all pay stubs since Phase 1 Milestone 3 to show that they qualify for Phase 1 Milestone 4?

No, you do not have to submit— the only requirement for your Phase 1 Milestone 4 is that the earnings requirement is met.  So, you do not have to submit any type of POR information because Phase 1 Milestone 1, 2, and 3 as long as they've been addressed, and Phase 1 Milestone 4 is your next available payment then we're looking of course just to meet the payments criteria.  So, you would just need to submit your earnings required for Phase 1 Milestone 4.

Okay, so they would only need to submit the pay stubs if it didn't have earnings already shown in the portal?

It could be pay stubs or any earnings evidence.  It could be the work number. It could be an employee prepared earnings statement. It could be earnings already proven but if they have already submitted or they've already received, or we've already addressed Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3— and I say addressed because one Milestone may be eliminated due to look back earnings situation or whatever.

But as long as Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3 have been addressed and there were enough earnings to cover Phase 1 Milestone 4 somewhere — either already proven, by pay stubs submitted — and you only need three more months to meet the earnings requirement for Phase 1 Milestone 4 you only need to submit the pay stubs for the three-month period. You don't have to do the whole nine months of earnings.

All right. Perfect. And our next question comes from (Mary Lynn) who asks, "I understand once the payment request is made through the portal the EN has up to nine days to fax the cover sheet and evidence of the relationship. Is this correct?

Correct.

All right. Perfect. And that actually answers a couple other questions that people asked.  So, we can go ahead and hop back to the phone line now.

Okay, and we'll come back to you after we do…

(Crosstalk)

Right, so we'll take three questions through the phone and then we'll go back to the chat.

Thank you. We'll go back (Chris Kayer).

Hi (Chris).

Hi. Previously with the ((inaudible)) I was printing from our internet database of dates and contacts and submitting it instead of typing everything in the form. Is that still acceptable?

Yes. Yes, I think…

It’s a very thorough print out better than typing it in.

Right, I think I’ve seen a few of those, yes. As long as the required information is there it’s fine.

Okay, thank you.

You’re welcome.

Thank you. We’ll now take the next question from (Pamela Grils) with Deaf Employment And Business Solutions.

Hi, I had a question. The first one is can I get a copy of this Power Point that you guys showed us?

Yes, ma’am. (John) do we have the Power Point up just yet?

Yes, the presentation is available on line. I’ve posted a link in the chat.

Okay, that link to the Power Point is so dark you can’t even see it but that’s okay. The second question is this goes into this POR form and goes into effect now because I have two Ticket requests pending but I did submit pay stubs so I’m not too worried about that. So, the next Ticket request I have to make sure I have the POR for Phase 1 Milestone 1 correct?

If you’re not submitting pay stubs then, yes, you need to submit the form. But if you’ve submitted pay stubs then that’s — as we said earlier — that will serve as your proof of relationship and your proof of earnings.

Awesome, great. But I did that. Thank you.

You’re welcome.

Thank you. We’ll take our next question from Howard Funkhouser with Sources in Community Independent Living.

Hello.  I wanted to make a comment. It's just that outside of the actual pay stubs unless you have those you must be able to show a proof of relationship to the POR is that correct?

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That is correct for your Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3, yes, sir.

---

I just wanted to simplify that into one sentence for everybody because it seemed like something that was coming up. And so really, we've got to be able to contact these beneficiaries. Even if they change their contact information we don't really have a legal way to compel them to share that new information but in order to get paid we have to continue that relationship, show that we at least attempted to provide services such as benefits counseling or showing job leads for those first six months of employment or we will not get paid for anything there or past?

---

Right. So, Phase 1 Milestone 1 through 3 you must show proof of contact— I'm sorry proof of relationship. So, the services that you provided and remember attempted contact does not establish proof of relationship so if you are having issues contacting your beneficiary then that may become an issue of whether or not you, you know, you keep the Ticket assigned but this is the initial phase.

---

These are your, you know, initial phase is when you're assigning the Ticket with your services. So, yes, in order to receive payment for your Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3, you must show proof of relationship either through pay stubs or a completed POR form.  That shows…

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There's no legal way to compel them to let us know about a change of information whether that be an address or a phone number or an email. It's totally up to them whether they want to bring in their pay stubs or share those changes of information.

---

And so I think that's where a lot of frustration has been is that, you know, we've put a lot of money in on the front end with staff time, with training, with certifications, and wardrobes, with benefits counseling but if those beneficiaries choose not and it's their choice choose not to share a change of contact information with us we cannot bill for any of that.

---

Are you saying that you're putting all of this up front prior to assigning the Ticket?

---

No, we assign the Ticket part of the IWP shows the services that we provide which include benefits counseling. This is with gaining the certification, doing interview coaching, spending staff time doing that, doing resumes, applications, job leads, all those things that we put in on the front end and then if that person is successful in finding a new job and get the better apartment or a better phone or ((inaudible)) then we are unable to actually recoup any of that front end money because that person chose — and it's their choice — to not share that change…

---

But why are you saying you're not?  All you have to do is right down the dates that you provided these specific services and if they are working those earnings will show up in the Social Security system.  So when you're going into the portal checking one of your beneficiaries and it says earnings already — is that what it says in the portal — earnings already proven then all you have to do is submit the POR form stating the services that you provided and the dates and you should get paid accordingly.

---

I can see that that would work for Phase 1 during that first month that we got somebody employed. Let's say we have somebody that was assigned during— we got him a job in March. They started getting pay checks, but they didn't bring us their pay stubs and they changed their contact information and did not notify us. So, during the ((inaudible)).

---

So, you're saying that you've provided all the services in one-month time?

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Very common for most of the EN's that I'm aware of in this area which there are quite a few in my area. And then that…

---

((Inaudible)) be the case. So, I mean, I get you provide more intensive services up front but there still should be— that's the whole point of all the Phase 1's is to provide ongoing services to these. And I get it, they got a job and they may say oh, we don't need your services anymore. But you should still be able to write down things that you've done.

---

Right, if I write down everything that I did in March but if they made enough money for us to get a Phase 1 payment in the first month of eligibility in April, we're not eligible for that because we were not able to provide a proof of relationship. And therefore, we aren't able to provide a proof of relationship for Milestone 2, Milestone 3, and then the 4th one going on.

---

And so, I think that's where a lot of that frustration's coming from is that it's difficult to show that proof of relationship if the beneficiary chooses not to share that information.

---

And we understand that and that should be part of your contract with them in the IWP that if they change their location or phone it's, like, their obligation to keep up with you guys as well. And if they're not doing that then honestly you guys should be unassigning the Ticket because they shouldn't be given those benefits as well.

---

Inaudible)) we're not, I mean, and they can reassign their Tickets somewhere else if they want to maintain, you know, their, you know, timely progress review guidelines but that means that we lost a lot of money in March that we cannot recoup in April, May, June, July, August, September, October. And there on. And that's what ((inaudible)) that's all. I'm not trying to…

---

We understand your frustration, but I don't think it's common to provide every service in a couple weeks' time and not communicate with the beneficiary for the next year. That's not the goal of the program.

---

Well, you know, I can agree to disagree on that one. It's been difficult for us because we're really good at getting our people jobs. When they come ((inaudible)) but sometimes they do not share their ((inaudible)).

---

Well if you actually get them a job and they stayed employed for 12 months then you would get all that money back also in the reconciliation payments.

---

All right so here's something that has…

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(Crosstalk)

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Got them a job and then they started making SGI and then they got off the roles you would get all those Milestones back.

---

Okay, so that's what I think a lot of the people on this call needed to hear is that even if we did somehow lose contact with these beneficiaries once they come off the rolls if they're successful in their employment we're still eligible for reconciliation payments. You know?

---

Because at the very end of things it may take a longer time, but we can still get eligibility for those reconciliation payments if they are successful using their trial work period, their extended period of eligibility and they get their benefits terminated and continue to work above SGA then we can still be eligible for reconciliation.

---

I think — this is Kimberly and as far as that part again we do assess every case — every, you know, payment request — on a case by case basis. So, there are different factors that come into play when reconciliation payments are involved so that could be the case. But again, I think it's — I don't think we can generally say that because we'd have to just go through each case.

---

But, you know, so I think that's where we are with that and we can't — we don't want to, you know, just make that a blanket statement to say that yes, you know, if you do not get your Phase 1 Milestone 1's because you're unable to show proof of relationship that those payments will be picked up in reconciliation because the issue of proof of relationship is still valid for your Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3.

---

So, again, I think that would be more of a case by case basis. But all we can do is encourage you to when you're meeting with your clients and like you said you guys do a really good job in helping them get a job, so maybe, you know, during your intake process and things like that making sure you put the expectation on your beneficiaries of the contact.

---

If it's mailing them a self-addressed, you know, envelop to them or, you know, letting them know that I, you know, any type of change you need to make sure you report that to us. Because again, if they're making a change to their address or things like that that information needs to be reported SSA as well. And not reporting it to SSA could cause their benefits to go into some type of, you know, suspense.

---

So, these are the things that maybe you can just drive home during your intake process. But for the— when it comes to the Phase 1— when it comes to the proof of relationship for your Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3 then, yes, in order to get paid your Phase 1 Milestones — I'm sorry — you must show proof of relationship for those payments.

---

So, continue to work with them, continue to document, like, (Carol) was saying. The services that you're providing make sure you're documenting that but again putting the responsibility on your clients. You know, we're going to help you get the job because that's the service that we provide, but there are some expectations from you as well that you must, you know, contact us once a month.

---

We're going to reach out to you, you know, but understanding if your phone changes, your address, it is your responsibility to contact us and if we have not heard from you— and you can put a window of time if you choose to and let them know that then there's a possibility that the Ticket will be unassigned.

---

And then make sure you're talking to them about, you know, unassigning a Ticket affords you opportunity to be excluded from a medical CDR. If we have to unassign the Ticket then that protection is gone. So, different things that you can put into play when— in that part.

---

But just to let you know as it relates to proof of relationship it is going to be required for Phase 1 Milestone 3 either through pay stubs or your POR.

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Right now we have, you know, a ((inaudible)) highlighted and yellow that you're responsible to bring us pay stubs and notify us of changes of information but we have no legal recourse to actually cause that to happen. And so, you know, it's ((inaudible)) 1 through 3's.

And I see where you're coming from and it is nice to know that if we are successful enough to get somebody into, you know, outcome, you know, the end of their outcome payments that we may be eligible for, you know, some of those recon payments. That's good to know. I think everybody here is very relieved to hear that. I know it's ((inaudible)).

---

Right. So just want to say that part. But just remembering that the Phase 1— the proof of relationship is still required to get those payments, be it up front or reconciliation. So, again it's a case-by-case basis but and I understand there's no legal recourse and I can't even speak to that. I can only speak from the side of the requirements for the Ticket to Work. And if they don't, you know, contact you or — and you're unable to contact them then one of the options would be to unassign the Ticket.

---

Okay. And that might be something that would be an incentive for them to maintain contact is to say, you know, if you don't let us know about changes of contact or bring us your pay stubs we may unassign your Ticket because ((inaudible)) that maintain contact even though we’ve already put a lot ((inaudible)) in.

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(Crosstalk)

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Which EN are you?

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We’re ((inaudible)).

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I’m sorry, you’re broken.

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((Inaudible)).

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(Crosstalk)

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You know we do a lot of networking with— we live in a very nice economic area, you know, where it’s easy for us to help people find employment and, you know, we’ve got some good connections with employers in the area. And sometimes those employers send people to other states or other cities or they end up making enough money where they get rid of their government paid phone and their public housing and they don’t necessarily tell me. You know, so, ((inaudible))… part of it. What’s that?

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What state are you in?

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Arkansas.

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Okay, we totally understand. I mean, we’ve heard this before but like (Kim) said, we have to go by the rules and the regulations and the purpose of the program. We do appreciate, you know, everything you’re doing to help the beneficiaries. If you want to talk about this further, you know, we— you can certainly contact your EN service specialist. I believe yours is (Tina). And she can assist you with this. I think we need to…

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Very good.

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Thank you so much.

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Okay, thank you sir. And (John) now we’ll go back to see what questions we have in the queue. I mean the chat. I’m sorry, in the chat.

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Absolutely. So, our next question comes from (Linda) who asks, “If a payment is received for Phase 1 Milestone 1, and the beneficiary loses the job the second month of employment then returns to work eight months later how do you count toward reaching Phase 1 Milestone 2?

Okay, so if you're looking at — and that goes back to using the resource of the Payments at a Glance — so in order to get, you know, a Phase 1— in order to get a Phase 1 Milestone 2, it's three months within a six-month window. So, if they start work, you know, and then you get your Phase 1 Milestone 1 but then and they stop, and they go back to work eight months later then your count starts over. So, now you're looking for three months of earnings at trial work level within that six-month window.

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All right. And our next question comes from (Thomas) who asks, "How does Social Security decide when a Ticket will be unassigned? We have had clients unassigned that we have had relationships with and have had to work to get them reassigned. Is there a particular process?"

---

There are different reasons why a Ticket can be unassigned. One of the cases is this Ticket to work program is definitely about choice so at any time at an employment network or a beneficiary can unassign their Ticket. So, again but there are different reasons why a Ticket will be unassigned, and I know you asked SSA specifically, so I don't know if there's someone at SSA want to go into more information about that. But it just— there are different reasons.

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This is (Deborah). I don't know your particular situation because it could be for different reasons a Ticket was unassigned by SSA and then later reassigned. Sometimes it could have been an issue with the EN COS the way it was initially reviewed and some systems issue or whatever. And whenever the EN comes back and gives us some proof or whatever it depends on the reason it was unassigned.

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More recently, we've had some issues with the EN COS where they were not submitted timely and we unassigned the Ticket and then some information may have come in a few days later or whatever. And it was something that we just went ahead and reassigned on. We're not doing that anymore with these. That's why we stopped the dowry process.

---

If you don't have the information we're just going to deny the case instead of pushing it to be unassigned or whatever. If the information is not — or the POR or at that time it was the EN COS — if it failed, we may have, you know, unassigned the Ticket. So instead of doing that now, we're just denying the case, letting you know the reason for the denial.

---

You can resubmit with correct information or whatever and possibly pass, or if it's a situation where you never submitted the POR you can resubmit your payment request and submit any type of evidence that was missing. But it could be for different reasons and again it could have been a systems issue. But, you know, you would be told if you— I believe you would be told a reason for the unassignment.

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If it's a system's issue— this is (Shannon) from Social Security Administration. If it's a system issue that's something that we're actively working on a daily basis. We receive emails from PTM to fix the Tickets that were incorrectly unassigned or terminated by the system. Sometimes the Ticket may unassign if your Ticketholder has a second period of disability also known as an EXR which would technically qualify them for a second Ticket ((inaudible)).

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(Crosstalk)

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It’s 44 and 45.

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That’s usually the reason.  If you do not receive a reason on why your Ticket is unassigned typically it’s due to a system’s issue that we work on a daily basis to fix.  And you’ll notice maybe within 30 days that your Ticket is back assigned to you.

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Thank you.  Next question.

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All right.  Our next question comes from (Rosalee Daily) who asks, “How should attempts to reach beneficiaries be documented?”

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Say that again, (John).

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How should attempts to reach beneficiary be documented?

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I think you would just— if you’re talking about how when you’re filling out the POR you would just put your date and the contact method. But just remember that attempt to contact does not show proof of relationship.

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But what we’ve seen in the past is we’ll see a date, you know, well say October 18, 19— I mean 2019 or 2018 and then they’ll have calls Ticketholder unable to leave a message. Or called Ticketholder and left a message. So that’s, you know, that does come in on the POR but again it does not show proof of relationship.

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All right.  And I’ve actually located the services and supports training on your Ticket to work so I’m going to post the link in the chat.  That does go over the telephone and message documentation as well. So, just so everyone is aware for that link it will be Slides 13 through 15 in that document.

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Okay, thank you (John).  And next question.

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Our next question comes from (Linda Oxford) who asks, “Why can’t we look up the next payment to be requested in the Ticket portal?”

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Why can’t you look up… I’m sorry, (John), could you repeat the question?

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Absolutely.  Why can’t we look up the next payment to be requested in the Ticket portal?

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Well, you have a couple of resources so when you look at the payments already made to me it will show you what your last payment was. And then you can look at the EN Payments at a Glance and see what the next payment should be.

---

So, if you're looking at the payments already made to me you do your filter by your date range, and you see that the last payment you received was a Phase 1 Milestone 2, and then you look at your EN Payments at a Glance, you'll see that your next payment should be a Phase 1 Milestone 3.

---

All right. And we'll take one more question from the chat. (Janet Stevely) asks, "Can we attach the info on dates and services on something other than the POR form instead of just attaching the logs that we've already created to avoid having to retype them into the POR form?"

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The form…

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We would prefer…

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I'm sorry (Kim). The form is not mandatory. It's just a guide.

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But you want to make sure that if you're not using the form that the documentation that you are submitting does provide the dates of services and it also— we need to make sure that whatever documentation you're sending is signed because the POR does require a signature.

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All right. And do we want to open the question back up on the phone queue.

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Yes, we'll take a couple more question through the phone lines. (Cody) please.

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Absolutely. We'll now hear from (Lauraleen Crankton) with Business and Career Services Incorporated.

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Hello. The question that I have is if you have let's say maybe three months of pay stubs because the person gets paid once a week and you have them from them but they're missing three, how would I— and this has to do with the Phase 2 Milestone payments. If they're missing can I still submit it, or do I have to submit a supplemental document with it?

---

If you're submitting for a Phase 2 Milestone the key thing to remember when you're submitting for those payments is you must— the earnings requirement must be satisfied. So, if you're— and Phase 2 Milestones are paid on a month to month— for a month work. So, unlike the Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 4 you have to have three months, you know, or six months, where Phase 2's it's each month.

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So, if you have pay stubs it would have to be for each month. So, you want to make sure that your earnings requirement is met. I think you were saying that you have some pay stubs and then you don't have the others?

I only have three that are missing and the client is trying to get them for me, but we haven't been able to do that.

---

Right, well remember when you're requesting for Phase 2 Milestones, you're not looking for your— we're not looking for proof of relationship for Phase 2. So, we're looking that you meet the earnings requirements. So, if you receive the message through the portal that the earnings are already established or are already proven then, you know, and you submit for payment then those payments can be made.

---

But of course, if you— whatever pay stubs you have you want to make sure that you submit those in. But we do have to make sure that the earnings requirement is met either through pay stubs, the work number, employee prepared earnings statement, or the earnings already established in the system for your Phase 2 Milestones and outcomes.

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Okay.

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Hello, this is (Deborah). And I know you did mention Phase 2, but this is for any EN's who have pay stubs and may just be missing a couple. Let me give you an example. In January you received a— January 2018 you received a Phase 1 Milestone 1 and you submitted pay stubs. And as the previous caller mentioned the pay stubs were weekly so now you're ready to submit a Phase 1 Milestone 2 and you want to do it for March.

---

So, you have — we've already paid the Phase 1 Milestone 1, but you have a couple pay stubs missing in February and maybe one missing in March. We know that the earnings— we can tell whether or not the earnings are— earnings requirement has been met because we look at year to date information and we may also happen to have that earnings information already proven in the system.

---

But the fact that you submitted pay stubs for January, February, March — not one for every single week — we will accept that because you did receive pay— there was a relationship those months because you did receive some pay stubs. So, we would accept that if you had a couple pay stubs missing.

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Thank you.

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Thank you. We'll take our next question from Robert Perkins with Heart of Worship.

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Hello.

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Good afternoon. How are you doing? The first question is the— if you have someone that's been working for eight months maybe in a previous year — 2017, 2018 — and then they stop working for a year but they go right back to work maybe a year later is it reasonable to say that that payment one

Milestone 4 won't be on the table because of their trial work level being completed as soon as they start working again at SGA or above?

---

I'm not so— okay. I just want to make sure I understand the question. So, when it comes to your Phase 1 Milestones 1, yes, there is a, you know, there's a window of time. So, and help me because I want to make sure I have this right. So, you have a client like you said they worked and then they stopped for maybe, like, a year and then they go back to work. So, you have to be mindful of your window.

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So, if you've got a Phase 1 Milestone 1 and 2 already and now, you're trying to get a Phase 1 Milestone 3, you know, you need six months' worth of earnings so it's just that you're count would start over.

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Right.

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Was that…

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So, I guess what I'm asking is, so, now that I know I have to wait nine months to get that payment for— then if they work at SGA wouldn't they either go to the outcomes and not be able to get that last payment or do I still have to wait the nine months before that Milestone 4 is denied and still wait and get paid?

---

Okay. I see what he's saying. I see what you're saying. You're saying that the beneficiary went from trial work level to SGA level in earnings. As long as the beneficiary — excuse me — is still in current pay status he would be eligible for Phase 1 Milestones.

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So, regardless, I mean if we paid one and two at trial work level whatever and then stopped working a long time, you know, eight-nine months later he went back to work again and his earnings were SGA level. Okay at that point he still— remember we pay EN payments in order and the next order you will have to complete all your Phase 1 Milestones before you would be eligible for Phase 2's.

---

Now for outcome payments if the beneficiary was placed in suspense when he went back to work at some point in time because the earnings were at SGA level and you only received Phase 1 Milestones 1 and 2, okay those Phase 1 Milestones 3 and 4 would not be available at that time because the beneficiary is in suspense. And once you're in suspense we do not go back and pay Phase 1— I mean any Milestone payments.

---

You will have to wait until the reconciliation period. And at that time, SSA would evaluate that particular record, see that there were available payments— when I say available it means that they were not— that they could have been paid due to earnings or any other requirements. They weren't off the table due to look back earnings or something like that.

---

So, if the beneficiary remained in current pay, we would have paid them. So, during the outcome period— I mean, excuse me, the reconciliation we look at any Milestone payments that were available to have been paid if the beneficiary has still remained in current pay. So, in that situation a Phase 1 Milestone 3 and 4 would have been paid. Any Phase 2 Milestones would be paid.

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Got you.  Got you. Now is it also unrealistic to expect a reconciliation payment of someone that you haven't contact in the— because I heard they were talking about it earlier and it just seemed like it's an unrealistic expectation to get someone two years from now and if you couldn't contact them within the first three to six months of employment.

---

Well, if you couldn't— the first six months of employment you may— you have no contact with them you may want to unassigned their Ticket because you're not providing services. You don't know what's even going on with that beneficiary.  But let's say, you know, let's say it was a situation where it's possible that the beneficiary did go into the outcome phase and you did not get your Phase 1 Milestone payments.

---

As long as that Ticket was not unassigned by you — I believe is the rule — then you would be during the reconciliation process you still would be eligible for the Phase 1 Milestones that you did not receive. You still could even be— the Ticket still could probably be even assigned to you and you would be eligible for those missed payments.

---

But normally, you know, what SSA is basically saying if you don't have any contact with the beneficiary where we supposed to be providing these attentive services— this is the point, you know, people who are trying to get back to work and, yes, they may get a job but there are other services that they may require; not just getting the job but some more counseling or there are other things there. That's why SSA wants EN's to maintain contact for that — at least monthly contact — for that period of time for that reason so that they can continue to work.

---

So, you know, if in the first six months you can't get in contact with the beneficiary only after the Phase 1 Milestone, you may really want to unassign that Ticket because you are not providing any services— not that you may not want to do that but if you can't contact them you can't provide any services.

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Okay, thank you.

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Thank you.  We'll take a follow up from Hamid Hajebian with HH Employment Training.

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Hello.

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Please ((inaudible)) mute function. We're unable to hear you. Getting no response, we'll hear— take our next question from (Sarad Delinoso) with Disabled Workers.

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Hello.

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Hi.

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Hi, can you hear me?

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Yes.

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Oh, hi.  I have a question. Several of our Phase 1 Milestone payments have been denied on the Code 43 and they meet both the earnings requirements and the POR requirements. So, we're wondering if there's an extra requirement that we need to request— I mean that states that we need to request a Phase 1 Milestone payment for the exact month that's showing your system that Milestone was attained.  Does that make sense?

---

Yes, it does.  So, denial number 43 is actually for— is earlier attainment month established or identified. So, if we ship— so that denial is related to if we see in SSA's data base verified earnings that will satisfy a Milestone payment earlier than the month that's actually being requested then we will deny the request that the month that you're requesting for.

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And then the EN would need to submit for the earlier attainment month. And I know that you just get the denial reason so you're not able to see what that earlier attainment month may be, but I just wanted to explain that's what the code is for.

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So, if you see that, you can actually — I would encourage you to maybe — outreach to the payments help desk.  But that's just to explain that's what the denial is for. We actually see that there are verified earnings in SSA system that show that the Phase 1 can be paid at an earlier month — and earlier attainment month.

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Okay, so I understand that you guys have information of an earlier attainment month. So, what happens if we don't have a proven relationship for that month? We have proven relationship for a different month and we also pay stubs for a different month, but we completely lose out on the Milestone because we can't establish proven relationship for the month that you guys have in your system.

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(Crosstalk)

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Yes, if you're working with a beneficiary and you are able to get pay stubs and there were earnings prior to that.  Contact your beneficiary and ask for, you know, pay stubs for that period of time.  But we have to pay in order and if the earlies— if a Phase 1 Milestone was— you are eligible for a Phase 1 Milestone based on the earnings requirement and for the payment status of the beneficiary early then that's the attainment month you should be submitting your request for.

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Okay, and if there is no way that the client can obtain those pay stubs — let's say they no longer work there, they just can't get them any more — how do we— and in that month you guys have as an attainment month, let's say for M1 it happens that the client didn't answer the phone so that the contact was not made.  It wasn't a successful contact, but we do have contact with the client for other month and pay stubs for other month what do we do then?

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So, again because everything is, you know, it is a case by case basis we would encourage you to send it in because it depends on the timing of it.  You know, of course if you submitted for a Phase 1 Milestone 1 for February and you have pay stubs and we see that you can get the payment, you can— the Phase 1 Milestone 1 could actually satisfied say January, we'd have to look at the case because we're looking at a Milestone range.

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Pay stubs actually show that you have proof of relationship so it's different things that come into play as to the gap of time of when you are actually submitting for request and when we see the earlier attainment month.  So, I would just like to, you know, to say just go ahead and submit.

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And if you could just— I think we have your information so I will actually try to reach out to you so maybe we can go over a few of those cases so I can just kind of explain where we are, look at the pay stubs that submitted because I think this is one of the questions that you also had in the chat that you are submitting your pay stubs.  So, I would like to kind of, you know, you and I can maybe go over those cases.  But just wanted to explain what that denial reason that…

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Okay, yes, I'm award of the denial reason it's just that we are running across some issues when we're trying to obtain a payment and we have proof of relationship and pay stubs but there's an extra requirement that we're not meeting that was never talked about and we didn't even know that we had to request exact claim months that you are showing your system. We couldn't find that in there in any manual. So, I was confused about why was that if we're still meeting the pay stubs requirements and the POR requirements.

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Right.  And I understand the question because that's something that we have discussed that is a denial and that what you guys get to see is actually the denial reason but not the information behind it. But like I said, it's a case-by-case basis and so I would like to kind of look at that information. But when we went through the training last year about— we talked about that and we did cover that, you know, if SSA— if we do identify an earlier attainment month in the system then we would deny the claim.

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So, I definitely can speak with you offline about it and then we'll go from there.

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Thank you.

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This is (Deborah).  I just have a general question for you. How many month are you talking about you can't get, I mean, you're saying for whatever period of time you guys take those but are talking just about one month different or are you talking six months difference? What are you seeing in ((inaudible))?

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(Crosstalk)

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We have had cases where, let's say we have pay stubs and proven relationships for March, like, last month. March and we want to request Phase 1 Milestone 1. And then more payments is denial and they're saying that you guys have prove of earnings from 2000 and I don't know, like, beginning of 2018 and the client worked.

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And the client never send us a pay stubs. They can't get them anymore because they don't work there. They don't have any relationship with the previous employer. So, we can't get anything for that, let's say January 2018 but we do have proven relationship and pay stubs for March 2019.

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(Crosstalk)

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((Inaudible)) it was assigned over a year. There was no way you could get proof of relationship from pay stubs. Because you're saying it dates back to 2018 is when there were earnings, but you just got pay stubs for March of this year.

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Right. We still contact the client. Sometimes they pick up the phone. Sometimes they don't. We try via emails. Sometimes they reply. Sometimes they don't. But we still trying on our end to obtain these things to prove contact.

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((Inaudible)) for a whole year. For a whole year you have a Ticket ((inaudible)).

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No that ((inaudible)).

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No that's exactly ((inaudible)). For a year, let's say six months, four months, five months this is a period where you're supposed to provide intensive services.

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Can I ask you a question (Shari) this is (Karen). Do you have receipts from the beneficiary of services they've purchased for those months that you're trying to claim? And you're saying Phase 1 was January of 2018— I'm making that up. Do you have receipts from purchases from January of '18?

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No, we don't work— we are ((inaudible)) for payments. We don't do the— what's it called? We do the older type of EN system.

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There is no other— I mean that's what the CDS model is is that you're supposed to have receipts from the purchases from the beneficiary. I mean, this is a whole nother conversation but that would be…

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(Crosstalk)

CDS EN if you did not have a pay stub, and you had— we had earnings in our system and you had receipts from the beneficiary that we know are from the beneficiary like signs for services purchased then that would be another way to enable you to get a Phase 1 payment. But you would have to have those receipts from that time period for work related expenses from the beneficiary.

Okay.

Okay, thank you ((inaudible)). Thank you (Sarad).

We'll take the next question from (Leslie). I apologize.

Okay, so if we don't have any others in the queue what we'll do is we'll just take a couple of more from the chat and then we'll go ahead and wrap it up at that point. So, (John) do you have a couple of more for us?

Hi, yes. Our next question comes from (Lanette) who asks, "I received a denial for payment because I did not submit a POR. Should I resend the request for payment with the POR included?"

Yes.

All right. And our next question comes from (Daniel Ryan) who asks, "If work investment boards and AJCs are not required to submit POR's do we still need to continue maintain the COS statements?"

Yes, those are two different things. The POR is payment. The COS is for service and supports review. So, they are totally separate issues. So, yes, when a COS is requested from MAXIMUS you would need to send that in.

All right. And our next question comes from (Malinda Oxford) who asks, "How does an EN find out if VR case closure has been successful or has been paid?"

The best way I think is to speak with the client or also I think the Ticket portal actually shows if there was VR involvement or if the case was with the VR.

Say that again (Kim).

(Crosstalk)

I think the question was how does an EN know if the Ticket was closed successfully or not from the VR.

(Crosstalk)

Didn't he also ask if it was paid— the cost reimbursement as well? Did he ask that as well?

Yes.

I'm not sure… Okay.

So, the only way that there's no information that they're able — the EN's are able — to view in the portal to let them know that— the cost reimbursement payment was made. So, these are questions that would need to come into our payment help desk.

Right but I think the portal does show that it was with the VR, right? It just doesn't show the status. I thought it showed the status and it showed an N for a Y maybe. Does anyone at SSA… I'm sorry what did you say, (John)?

It's (Cara). It does show whether it's been assigned to a VR in the past but to know if they've been reimbursed they would need to call the payments help desk.

Right. Okay. Okay, thank you. So, (John) we'll take maybe one more.

All right, our next question comes from (Jamie) who asks, "In regard to payment being submitted in order we were recently denied a Phase 2 payment because we needed to be approved or denied for Phase 1 Milestone 4. But when we tried submitting for Phase 1 Milestone 4, we got a pop up that said due to look back the Phase 1 Milestone payment is precluded. So, it wouldn't even allow us to submit. What do we do in this case?"

In that case you should call the payment help desk on that because if it was excluded due to look back earnings then we would need to create a case and deny that case and then we would be able to move onto the next Phase 2.

Because remember earlier when I mentioned whether Phase 1 Milestones were available— unavailable any time that there is a denial due to either VR closures or to look back earnings, those Phase 1 Milestones are not available. In this situation we would address the Phase 1 Milestone 4 but by creating a denial and then the Phase 2 Milestone could be ((inaudible)).

Okay.

All right. And I have the payments help desk phone number up there on the screen for everyone. And we just have one more question that several people have asked and just asked again recently and that was just regarding the ePay for August. Is that going to cover everything from January through July?

Well at TPM actually receives the ePay file from SSA and there is a criteria which they use to develop that file but unfortunately, I'm not sure what all information or time period will be covered in that ePay file. I don't know if someone from SSA can speak to that. But we— once we receive the file from SSA they've run their criteria on the back end, and I can't speak to what's included there.

But let me say this (Kim). This is (Deborah) with MAXIMUS. When we process the current ePay file if we see that there are earnings or the criteria is met and Social Security Systems for any claims — even though the last file was run at the end of December or January — if we see that there are payments that could have been made for March, you know, February or January we are making those payments.

So, the person who actually runs that file she's not on the call right now I don't believe but I think one of the things — one of the criteria — that is used in developing about they look at the earnings issue and they look at the— the system looks at — when the last payment that was made for— on an asset. And so, we would — whatever is on that file — we would include all payments up to that point or up to that attainment month.

We're working that file as long as, you know, the criteria is met. So, I guess the answer to the question is yes. We would cover all payments — anything, you know, prior to August of 2019. It could even be some payments for 2018 where the payment stat is closing— some retroactive outcome claims. So, we would assess any available payments.

(Crosstalk)

Okay. So, I know we had a lot of questions today. Thank you all so much for your time and participation. Thank you for some really good questions. And hopefully that your questions were answered. Please remember your resources that you have.

If you have any additional questions, please contact our payments help desk and I think up on the slides — in the presentation — what (John) put up right now is the toll-free number for contacting the payments help desk and also if you choose to contact them via email. But again, thank you so much for your time and participation in today's call and please enjoy the rest of your day.

Thank you. That does conclude today's conference. Thank you all for your participation. You may now disconnect.