

Welcome and SSA Updates

Rob Pfaff (SSA)

Robert Pfaff welcomed everyone to the call and provided the following updates:

Social Security leadership changes

On January 20, Social Security Commissioner Andrew Saul announced the departure of Mark Warshawsky as Deputy Commissioner of the Office of Retirement and Disability Policy (ORDP).

Commissioner Saul also announced Kilolo Kijakazi as the new Deputy Commissioner of ORDP. Kilolo, who holds a doctorate in Public Policy from George Washington University, comes to SSA with a wealth of policy experience and specialized knowledge in economic security, social insurance policy and retirement policy. She has quite an extensive resume. Rob recommended that attendees search the Deputy Commissioner's name, and learn about her extensive background with the National Academy Associate Assurance.

Executive Order on advancing racial equity and support for underserved communities through the federal government

President Biden signed an executive order that took effect on January 20, 2021, noting the new Administration's policy that the federal government should pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equality for all, including people of color and underserved communities. SSA is mindful about Ticket to Work Program. Please share your thoughts and ideas.

Ticket Program Manager (TPM) contract status

Social Security is still reviewing the award of the TPM contract and is working through technical issues. Maximus is still the TPM. There will be a public announcement once the contract is awarded.

Employment Summit

Social Security is discussing plans for hosting another Employment Summit in late spring or early summer. The virtual Summit would focus more on developing relationships with employers to connect Ticketholders to jobs. During the last summit, attendees identified the need to address and bridge the gap between Ticketholders and real-time jobs.

Rob invited ideas from Ticket Program service providers on ways to connect and collaborate with employer groups. Please send ideas to Robert.Pfaff@ssa.gov.

My Social Security Accounts

Diandra Taylor (SSA)

Diandra Taylor is part of the Social Security's Office of Communications.

Diandra covered the following topics:

- How to open a *my* Social Security Account
- Services offered through *my* Social Security Accounts:
 - For those who receive Social Security benefits or have Medicare
 - For those who do not receive Social Security benefits
- New enhancements:
 - Retirement Benefits Portal
 - Updated Standardized Benefit Verification Online
 - New Fact Sheets added to online statements
 - Enhanced security features
- Information for people helping others can be found at <https://www.ssa.gov/thirdparty/>

As a resource, a module providing step-by-step instructions on how to create *my*SSA account can be found at <https://yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/training-and-events/foundations-modules.html>

Q&A period for *my*SSA only.

Benefits Planning Query (BPQY) Changes

Kyle Posey (SSA)

Kyle Posey is part of the policy team within the Office of Research, Demonstration, and Employment Support. He discussed the following points:

- BPQY statement explains beneficiary benefits status to help with planning any successful return to work effort.
- Yearly IRS earnings are no longer available on the BPQY.
- Release form 3288 is not sufficient under IRS regulations to release the IRS earnings information; therefore, SSA cannot release that information on the BPQY anymore.
- A different authorization form is available to release IRS earnings to third parties, but it requires a fee.

- Nothing else has changed on the BPQY.
- Beneficiaries can view their earnings record on the *mySSA* account.

Q&A period for BPQY only.

VR Updates and Reminders

Katie Striebinger (SSA) – Backlog status and system issues

The team is processing December 2020 claims. Please email the VR Helpdesk with questions on the status of claims that were uploaded prior to December 2020. We do not have a status update on the system issue regarding x-references that didn't carry over from our old system. Those claims will continue to sit in diary until this issue can be addressed.

Raquel Donaldson (SSA) – Notice of determination, diaries

- Systems Issues – Several VR claims were placed in diary due to cases that did not transfer from the old system. Some have been in diary for a year or so, and there is no update when that will be fixed.
- Notice of Determination – Contact the VR help desk if you are not receiving notices. Please wait a week or two to receive the notices before email the VR Helpdesk with questions.
- Diary – Claims are placed in diary when further information is needed from the VR agency. Please review your claims to see if any are in diary.
- Check the Portal to see if your faxes are received; do not rely on the paper fax confirmation page only.
- 650 denials – VRs should not receive, unless it is for a claim that does not have a signed IPE.
- Reminder about the cost formula – deadline to submit it is at the end of the month, April 30. Reach out to the VR Help desk for an extension if necessary.

Questions/Answers

A question and answer period followed, which is part of the call recording and transcript.

Next Call

The next Quarterly All VR Call is scheduled for Tuesday, July 13, 2021, at 1 p.m. ET.