

### **Social Security Welcome to Existing and New ENs**

#### **Robert Pfaff, Director, Office of Employment Support (SSA)**

Robert Pfaff welcomed everyone and provided updates on Social Security Administration's leadership positions:

- Martin O'Malley received a nomination as the Commissioner of Social Security. Mr. O'Malley was previously the Mayor of Baltimore, Governor of the state of Maryland, and a presidential candidate. His nomination is pending Senate Finance Committee approval.
- Susan Wilschke and Jeff Hemmeter have been named permanently to their positions as Associate Commissioner and Deputy Associate Commissioner, respectively, of the Office of Research, Demonstration and Employment Support.

Additionally, Rob announced two management changes:

- Katie Striebinger has moved into a technical role. Renee Clarke will be the Payments and Systems Support Branch Chief. Renee has a Ph.D. in Social Psychology and advanced Contract Officer's Representative certification.
- In terms of the Contracts and Grants team, Cara Caplan has taken a new position as the Deputy Director of the Office of Research and Demonstration. Melanie Webb will be Contracts and Grants Branch Chief. Melanie is a certified Project Management Professional and has a MS degree in Behavioral Analysis with an emphasis on organizational management.

### **Social Security Welcome to New ENs and Beneficiary Satisfaction Survey**

#### **Mike Anzick, Senior Advisor (SSA)**

Mike welcomed and greeted new Employment Networks (ENs):

- Employment Support Services – NV
- Newton Services Foundation – MI
- Empath, LLC – VA
- Prospectus Associates Inc. – PA
- Empower Us - NV
- APL Associates Holding LLC – NJ

Mike provided an update on the upcoming Beneficiary Satisfaction Survey. Social Security will use a contractor to perform the survey to assess the level of satisfaction beneficiaries have with their ENs. Data collection is planned to start in October 2023. Ticketholders will be randomly selected. The survey should take 15 minutes or less to complete. Social Security

asks ENs to encourage Ticketholders to respond and assure them of the survey's legitimacy. Social Security will send a GovDelivery message when the survey is released and provide FAQs to assist ENs in answering questions.

## Best Practices for Reporting Work Activity

### Charles Killen, Policy and Innovation Team, Office of Research, Demonstration, and Employment Support (SSA)

Charles shared best practices for reporting work activity. Below are excerpts from Charles Killen's presentation.

#### Initial Reminders

- Staffing – Social Security is experiencing staffing shortages. Claims Representatives are doing the best that they can, but workload processing times have increased. Even as Social Security works to resolve staffing issues, it will take time to train new hires and reassign staff to manage different workloads. Social Security appreciates continued patience. ENs can connect with a Project Officer, Area Work Incentives Coordinator, or local office management for help with ongoing issues.
- Overpayments – Using automated systems can help prevent overpayments. Beneficiaries and recipients should maintain all receipts and copies of evidence submitted to help resolve overpayments via the Reconsideration or Waiver Process. Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries who know that their benefits should be suspended/terminated may request voluntary suspension during the review process to avoid overpayments.
- Benefits Planning Query (BPQY) – While there is a new online SSA-3288 available, it is not valid to use it to request a BPQY. Please continue to follow the guidelines in the BPQY Handbook (2023 Edition is now online). If the beneficiary or third party requests a BPQY for non-programmatic purposes (i.e., Student Loan Forgiveness), they will be charged the standard fee for a Record Extract. If there is an attempt to charge a fee for the BPQY requested for return-to-work initiatives, contact the local office management or the Area Work Incentives Coordinator.

**Ticketholders receiving SSDI benefits (SSDI, Childhood Disability Benefits (CDB), Disabled Widows or Widowers Benefits (DWB) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) should make initial reports of work directly to Social Security via phone, mail or in person.**

They must tell Social Security right away if:

- Work starts or stops,
- Duties, hours, or pay changes,



- Include: Employer (ER) Name, Address, EIN when available, date work started/stopped, wage/salary, and expected hours of work (20 per week, 40 per week, etc.)

### Wage Reporting for SSDI Beneficiaries

While not a requirement, Social Security encourages monthly wage reporting. The preferred method of reporting wages is via My Wage Report Application (myWR), the online wage reporting system available to individuals with a mySocialSecurity Account.

- Advantages of using myWR include immediate access to an online receipt. Social Security will also have immediate access to the information, and Social Security will maintain a copy of the earnings receipt.
- Representative Payees can make reports via myWR, but they must have their own account.
- Beneficiaries can make wage reports for multiple employers, once the employer(s) are into the system via the initial work report. They should have all pay stubs available for each employer for the reporting period.

Beneficiaries can also report wages by mailing or bringing in pay stubs to the local Social Security office.

- Beneficiaries should request and maintain a receipt that indicates what was reported, and when.
- Manual input of the pay stubs by Social Security staff will take more time to process than wages reported through the mySSA/myWR portal.

Beneficiaries with Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE) can report wages using the myWR portal; however, they should submit receipts and other documentation for the IRWE directly to the local Social Security Office indicating the month of the expense.

### Wage Reporting for SSI Recipients

Reporting monthly wages, and any other types of income received is required. Recipients should report a change in work activity as soon as possible, but no later than 10 days after the end of the month in which the change occurred. Recipients should report the gross amount of wages paid in the month by the sixth day of the following month. The preferred method for reporting wages for SSI and Concurrent recipients is myWR, but other options are available.

- Advantages for SSI recipients are the same as for SSDI beneficiaries. It is important to note that the other 'systems' allow for only one active employer at a time.
- Deemors can use myWR to report their wages, but they must have their own account.

Alternate SSI Wage Reporting Applications:



SSI Telephone Wage Reporting system.

- Recipients call a toll-free number to report their prior month's wages.

SSA Mobile Wage Reporting App

- Mobile application that allows for monthly wage reporting using smartphones.
- Can be downloaded and installed on Apple or Android devices.

One active employer, EIN not required for these methods. Representative Payees and deemors can use these methods to make wage reports. The reported wage amount is posted automatically to the SSI record, and appropriate payment adjustments are made for these methods. Work Incentives cannot be reported with these methods.

### Final Reminders:

SSI recipients who need to report something other than wages, or who use Work Incentives, must report that information directly to the local Social Security Office. An estimate of earnings based on the most recent review will be used for SSDI Beneficiaries until another report is made or a work review is conducted. An estimate of earnings will be used for SSI recipients to adjust the payment monthly if the required reports are not made.

## EN Updates and Reminders

### Erinn Weidman, Social Insurance Specialist (SSA)

Erin discussed the requirements for ENs to use cloud-based solutions. ENs must comply with the information security and privacy requirements outlined in Part 3, Section 12 of the TPA. Any cloud storage service utilized by an EN must have Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP) approval. ENs can access more information on FedRAMP services and requirements at: <https://marketplace.fedramp.gov/#!/products?sort=productName>.

Erin also provided an update on the approval requests for benefits counseling, certifications, work from home requests, cloud-based solutions, Partnership Plus agreements, and proof of workforce status. To enable the EN Service Help Desk to respond more quickly, ENs must include "Approval Request" in the subject line of their email. ENs should also include their Provider Identification (PID) number in the subject line of all emails sent to the EN Service Help Desk (ENService@ssa.gov).

## Program Integrity Updates

### Mary Kay Murphy, Program Integrity Senior Quality Manager (TPM)

Mary Kay discussed the process for including a Discussion Summary in the IWP form or as a separate document. She also advised ENs that, to expedite their requests to investigate and



resolve Ticket assignment and unassignment issues, Program Integrity needs the Ticketholder's name and Social Security number. To avoid a PII violation, these requests must be emailed through GSO or faxed to TPM at 703-893-4020.

## Training Updates

### Ana Morales, EN Development and Training Manager (TPM)

Ana discussed the new EN Guide for Working with Ticketholders, which provides tips and details on conducting Intake discussions, creating IWPs, assigning and unassigning Tickets, and preparing for IWP and Services and Supports reviews. Additionally, she mentioned the EN Essentials virtual training events and how to participate in them. The events will include a variety of topics, and there is no need to register in advance. All the training materials, which includes audio, transcripts, and webinar presentations are posted at [EN Essentials Learning Events - yourtickettolearn.ssa.gov](https://www.ssa.gov/yourtickettolearn).

Finally, Ana discussed the TPA Change Form, which is required to add or remove Ticket Portal users. Ana provided a detailed review of the form, which includes section 7 for clarifying any relevant information. Ana requested ENs to complete only the sections that are relevant to their request.

## Communications and Outreach Updates

### Jayne Pendergraft, Director, Communications and Outreach (TPM)

Jayne provided an overview of the Ticket to Work (Ticket) Program's outreach efforts. The Ticket Program's Outreach Team promotes the Ticket Program to eligible beneficiaries through a variety of different avenues including:

#### Work Incentive Seminar Event (WISE) Webinars

Online events designed to explain the Ticket Program and Work Incentives through accessible learning opportunities.

- They are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month.
- Average monthly attendance ranges from 400-600 participants, depending on topic.
- The next WISE topic: "5 Frequently Asked Questions About Working While You Receive Benefits" on August 23 from 3 - 4:30 p.m. ET.
- The TPM sends sample social media posts for ENs to share every month via GovDelivery.

ENs and beneficiaries can visit the [WISE web page](#) for more information, register for the next WISE webinar, and access WISE On Demand recordings.

#### Choose Work Social Media



The TPM schedules daily social media posts (Facebook and Twitter) to promote and highlight:

- Blog posts
- Ticket Program resources and fact sheets
- WISE webinars
- Success stories
- Important Social Security updates
- Relevant information from other federal agencies

### Fact Sheets

Ticket Program fact sheets provide information about the Ticket Program and other Work Incentives. This month, we encourage you to share [What is Social Security's Ticket to Work Program?](#) with Ticketholders interested in learning more about the program.

### Success Stories

Success stories feature individuals who have achieved financial independence with the help of the Ticket Program. Stepping Stone stories feature individuals who have made a major step on the path to financial independence but have not yet eliminated their reliance on benefits.

### Success Story - Make the Most of Your Ticket: Work with Your State VR Agency and an EN

Amy and Jason wanted to stop relying on their Social Security disability benefits and earn a good living for themselves, so they contacted their state VR agencies. Through them, they started their journey to financial independence. When it was time for services with their VR agencies to end, they knew they wanted to receive more supports while they continued working. Their VR agencies told them about the Ticket Program and how they could connect them with an EN to receive continued supports and services they needed while on the job. For information about his arrangement, known as Partnership Plus, contact [enoperations@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov](mailto:enoperations@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov).

### How Can You Share Success Stories?

- Promote success stories on social media.
- Become familiar with the stories, and, if you have a Ticketholder with a similar background, share with them.
- [Success Stories](#) are available online.
- For sample social media posts, contact [socialmedia@choosework.ssa.gov](mailto:socialmedia@choosework.ssa.gov).

### Stay in Touch

- Like us on [Facebook](#)
- Follow us on [Twitter](#)
- Watch Ticket Program videos on [YouTube](#)
- Subscribe to [GovDelivery](#) updates
- Subscribe to [Choose Work! Blog](#) updates



- Email [socialmedia@choosework.ssa.gov](mailto:socialmedia@choosework.ssa.gov)

## Questions/Answers

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

## Next Quarterly All EN Call

The next All EN Call is scheduled for Tuesday, November 7, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. ET.