All EN Payments Call Transcript
October 31, 2023

Katherine Jett: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to the quarterly All EN Payments Call. I want to advise everyone this call is being recorded and transcribed and will be 60 minutes.

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We will go over a few logistics really quick. Just to let you know, the recording transcript, PowerPoint presentation and the recap will be available on the Your Ticket to Work website. We will send a GovDelivery message and advise that it has been posted. We are going to have open Q&A today. If you are joining via the phone, you will need to press star 5 to ask a question, and we will unmute you. You can press star 6 to unmute yourself. If you are joining in the MS Teams application, you will just need to click the raise hand icon to ask a question. You will be unmuted by the facilitator, and you will have access to both your audio and video. Please limit your questions to one per participant and do not duplicate questions. You can send any additional questions or comments to ENPaymentsHelpdesk@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov. We have closed captioning available. We are going to put a closed captioning link into the chat, which will access the closed captions on the browser. We will also have closed captions in Teams, so if you look at the very top of your screen for the three ellipses under more or above more to turn on your closed captions, you will click on the list, go to language and speech, and then click on turn on live captions. Thank you for joining today.

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And we will go over the agenda real quick. We have a welcome by Kimberly Cutler, our Ticket Operations Manager. We will have a presentation by Nicole Black, our EN Payments Manager. She is going to discuss ePay reminders, EN Payments reminders, and resources, and then we will go to our live Q&A session. So, at this time, I would like to welcome the Ticket Operations Manager, Kimberly Cutler. Kimberly, take it away.

Kimberly Cutler: Thank you, Katherine. Good afternoon, everyone and thank you guys so much for joining. Actually, this is our last quarterly All EN Payments Call of 2023. So, thank you guys for joining today. I am going to go ahead and hand it over to our EN Payments Manager, Nicole Black. She has some great information that we are going to cover today. So, sit back and enjoy. Go ahead, Nicole.

Nicole Black: Thank you, Kim. Welcome everyone. Thank you for joining us today.

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Today we are going to go over, as Katherine mentioned, some ePay file reminders, some EN payments reminders, our resources, and then we will have our open Q&A session.

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For the ePay reminders, please remember that Phase 1 Milestone 4, Phase 2 Milestones and Outcome payments are paid via ePay. ENs should not submit for these payment types via the Ticket Portal without attaching earnings evidence while the EN portion of the ePay file is being processed. Submitting for such payments does slow down the processing and causes duplicate claim months. If you submit a request for Phase 1 Milestone 4, Phase 2 Milestones or Outcomes without attaching the earnings evidence during ePay, that SSN will not be processed until it comes up on the ePay list. It may take more than 30 days for SSA to process your request if this happens.

More reminders.

ENs must submit payment requests for Phase 1 Milestones 1-3 through the Ticket Portal with proof of relationship. Proof of relationship must be faxed in at the same time as the request. ENs do not have nine days to submit proof of relationship for these payment requests. Unassigned Tickets are not included in ePay. ENs must have passed their Annual Services and Supports Review. The ePay file is processed in SSN order, not Provider ID or PID order. ENs with an initial PII or personally identifiable information violation, will be removed from the ePay file for three months or one ePay file. During this time, you must submit payment requests through the Ticket Portal. For example, if an EN violates the PII rule while a file is currently being processed, for example November, they will be a removed from the next ePay file in January. Please allow SSA to pay all available claims via ePay before requesting them through the Ticket Portal. Now, we're going to transition to the EN payment reminders.

The first topic is the 18-Month Look Back Tool. ENs can use this tool to determine what Phase 1 Milestones are available prior to submitting payment requests. SSA will perform a lookback of earnings in the 18 months prior to Ticket assignment, using earnings information submitted by the EN with the payment request as well as earnings information in SSA databases.

Now, the Aged Claim Rule. An EN shall request a payment no later than 24 months following the month the Ticketholder’s work and earnings meet the criteria for SSA to make the payment. SSA will not accept payment requests for periods outside of this 24-month window.

Submission of Supporting Documentation. ENs must submit the proper document type when submitting additional information with payment requests in the Portal. So, this for example, if you’re submitting The Work Number Report or Proof of Relationship form, or even the pay stubs; when you do this, and sometimes you have a combination of one or two different types of documentation, a unique fax cover sheet needs to be created for each document type.
To generate a properly labeled fax cover sheet, once the claim has been submitted in the Portal, you'll go to the pending payments for me screen. Select fax additional information. Then select the option that corresponds with the type of fax documentation that you are providing.

Proof of Relationship. ENs must provide proof of relationship when requesting payments for all Phase 1 Milestones 1-3. Proof of relationship is established with paystubs or a completed Proof of Relationship form. This will detail the services provided to the Ticketholder with the dates the services were provided. Proof of relationship with pay stubs, or the Proof of Relationship form must be received at the time of the payment request, or that request will be denied. ENs will have three opportunities to provide the required proof of relationship for the requested Milestones before the Ticket is unassigned. Here are some acceptable proof of relationship services.

These are some examples: So, when you're providing this documentation, you want to notate that maybe you provided transportation assistance, provided job coaching services, discussed work incentives, benefits planning opportunities; where you spoke with the Ticketholder, and everything is going OK with their job, or you may have emailed instructions on how to report wages to SSA.

Some unacceptable services that are not approved for the Proof of Relationship form would be called and left a voicemail for the client to call back, sent an email to the client requesting they mail in their pay stubs or just sent an email, or sent email to client to update contact information. What we're looking for here is something a little bit more detailed about what that email communication was.

Required Paystub Information. So, some of the information that is required on a pay stub for submission is the Ticketholder's name, the employer's name, the pay period, start and end date, the check paid date, FICA withholdings (that includes Social Security taxes and Medicare taxes), and then you also want to have the gross and net earnings on that pay stub.

The Supplemental Earnings Statement. So, this document must be completed and signed by the Ticketholder's employer. If it is not signed by the Ticketholder's employer, it is not an acceptable document for us to use. This form is used when submitted evidence of earnings is missing required information. Whenever you receive a request for additional information, the payment request will then be placed in diary awaiting the additional information that we are requesting. For example, we could be requesting additional earnings, clear pay stubs or the pay stub may be missing the FICA withholdings. The case will remain in diary status for nine business days and on the 10th day the claim will be processed through to completion, and it will either be paid or denied.

State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Involvement. When working with the State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agency, if a Ticketholder has a successful case closure with a VR agency within 18 months prior to the Ticket assignment date, all Phase 1 Milestones are not available to the EN. Additionally, if a VR agency received a Cost Reimbursement payment, Phase 1 Milestones are not available. Please note that this information is not on the Portal. If a VR agency did receive a Cost Reimbursement payment.

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So, with that, if you have any payment topics that you would like us to cover, we invite you to share those topics that you'd be interested in discussing through this forum. Our goal is to help educate you and provide clarification on processes and procedures related to Payments, so please send your topics to the EN payments help desk at ENpaymentshelpdesk@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov
And from there, it's time for our Q&A and I will hand it back over to Katherine.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Nicole. Appreciate all the ePay reminders, proof of relationship reminders, and other EN payment reminders. Great job and now we'll go to our open Q&A.

OK, next slide.

Just as a reminder, if you want to ask a question over the phone, you need to press star 5. You'll be unmuted by the facilitator and you'll press star 6 to unmute yourself. Now, if you're joining via the MS Teams application at the very top of your screen, there's a hand. Just click on the hand, which is the raise hand, and you'll be unmuted. You'll have access to audio and video if you want, and you'll need to unmute by clicking the microphone and ask your question. OK. We'll go to Rebecca at this time for the raised hands. Rebecca, can you identify our first individual with raise hand?

Rebecca Yohannes: Yes.

Katherine Jett: If you have any questions, go ahead and just raise your hand either by pressing star 5 or just click the icon. I see we have another Rebecca.

Rebecca Yohannes: Yes, we have Giaberto Vanzant with our first question. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone to unmute and activate your video if you like and ask your question.

Giaberto Vanzant: Yes. Can we obtain earnings from clients who are working Uber or Lyft with no taxes being taken out, and how we will be able to report those?

Nicole Black: Thank you for your question, Mr. G. So that's a great question. I want to make sure that I heard you correctly. You're wanting to know how you go about reporting income for a client or a Ticketholder who is receiving Uber or Lyft wages, and they do not have any federal withholdings. Is that correct?

Giaberto Vanzant: Yes, ma'am.

Nicole Black: Alright, so with those Ticketholders you will have to wait until their income is reported via them filing their tax returns.

Giaberto Vanzant: So, we have to wait a whole year in order for them to report their earnings?

Nicole Black: Yes, sir, because the only way for us to be able to verify their earnings is through their actual tax returns.

Giaberto Vanzant: Thank you very much.

Nicole Black: You're welcome.

Katherine Jett: Thank you. Thank you, Nicole.

Nicole Black: You're welcome.

Katherine Jett: Rebecca let's go ahead and identify our next question.

Rebecca Yohannes: Yes. Our next question comes from Natalie. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone and mute and activate your video if you'd like to ask your questions.

Katherine Jett: OK, if you'll just click your microphone up top, that will unmute you. We'll give Natalie just a moment to click on the microphone to unmute. And Rebecca, do we have any others with the raised hand?

Rebecca Yohannes: Yes. Our next question comes from Casey. Your audio and video are active. Please click your microphone to unmute and activate video if you'd like to ask your question.

Katherine Jett: Hi, Casey.

Casey Rehg: Hello, how are you?

Katherine Jett: Doing good.

Casey Rehg: I see it on there, the VR cost reimbursement. Since it does not show in the Portal, how exactly are we to know if they if the VR received a cost reimbursement? Do we just submit a Phase 1 and see if it's denied, or is there a different way to tell?

Nicole Black: Thank you for your question, Casey. This is one I am going to defer to Kim or Katie to answer for me.

Kimberly Cutler: Hi, Casey, this is Kimberly. So unfortunately, right, you're unable to see that information in the Portal, but you should go ahead and submit for your Phase 1 Milestone 1. When we receive your payment request, of course, we're going to do our own check. We're going to do an 18-month look back check based on information that we have in the SSA database. Based on information that you as the EN submit and in the SSA database, we are able to see if there was a cost reimbursement payment and if there was, we will deny all of your Phase Ones and you will be able to see that denial in the Portal, that the cost reimbursement payment was paid to the VR. Unfortunately, you cannot see it. But we will go ahead and deny all of your Phase Ones so if you only submit for Phase 1 Milestone 1 because you did your look back and you see that there aren't any earnings. You won't have to necessarily go through submitting Phase 1 Milestones 1, 2, 3 and 4 because we will go ahead and take those off the table for you guys.

Casey Rehg: OK, so there's just not a way to previously know that, right? We're just going to have to kind of test it and see? OK.

Kimberly Cutler: Yeah, at this point. It's something that we would have access to in SSA's database that you guys would not. So, we encourage you to do your due diligence with the prior earnings, right? 18-month look back in that portion and submit and again, if the system shows that there was a cost reimbursement payment made, we will deny those cases and you would know that from the denial that you will be able to see in thePortal. And the same thing with your 18-month look back, you may have information, or we may have additional information or you would complete your 18-month look back tool and you would submit it with that information. But we may have additional information in the SSA database that will exclude all or some of those milestones. So, it's kind of the same process. You do your due diligence in submitting what you have and then we'll use that along with information and SSA's database to process the payment.

Casey Rehg: OK. Gotcha. Thank you so much. Appreciate it.

Katherine Jett: Thank you. Thanks, Kim. Thanks Casey. And Rebecca, we have another raised hand. Let's try going back to Natalie just a moment. Natalie, if you'd like to click your microphone to unmute. OK, you have another raised hand, Rebecca.

Rebecca Yohannes: Yes. Our next question comes from Andrea. Your audio and video are active, and you can click the microphone to unmute and activate your video if you like to ask your question.

Andrea Cetera: I'm not even quite sure what my question is, but it has to do with when you submit a payment request and, in the presentation, you mentioned that the backup has to be included with that payment request. Did I understand that correctly? So, it has to be included at the same time that you make the request, so I'm trying to understand what the process is.

Nicole Black: Thank you for your question, Andrea. I want to make sure that I'm hearing you correctly. So, when you're submitting a payment request, and the earnings are not already proven and you're submitting your payment, your proof of earnings documentation or your proof of relationship you're wanting to know the appropriate steps to take to make sure that your submission is accurate. Is that correct?

Andrea Cetera: Yeah. What happens with the barcode page? I'm just trying to understand the different steps. Yes, please. Thank you.

Nicole Black: So, when you submit your initial payment request through the Portal, it will generate the initial fax cover sheet. Then if you have additional documentation that needs to be submitted, that's when you would, Rose, can we go back to the slide with those steps?
So, when you're in the Portal to generate an additional fax cover sheet, you're going to go to the "Pending Payments For Me" screen and then you will be able to utilize the reference number that you had for the initial submission, go to that number and click the actions link. I believe it's on the right side. Then at that point you're going to select fax additional information and then there will be a radio button to select the corresponding document that you need in order to submit the accompanying the documentation with the fax cover sheet that will have the barcode to differentiate what that actual document is.

Andrea Cetera: OK, OK. I have to do it a couple of times to get this. Is this a new process?

Nicole Black: No, ma'am, it's not.

Andrea Cetera: Oh, OK, so I could just continue doing what I was doing?

Nicole Black: Have you received any type of feedback that it's not working, or denials based on it not being done the right way?

Andrea Cetera: No. I'll then I will keep doing what I have been doing. It's working. OK. I just thought maybe there was something, a couple of other steps that I have to do now. Thank you. I appreciate it.

Nicole Black: You're welcome.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Andrea. Thank you, Nicole. And now we'll go to Natalie again. Natalie.

Natalie Harrison: OK, I think I'm ready this time. Can you hear me?

Nicole Black: Yes.

Natalie Harrison: Good afternoon, everyone. My question is regarding the Phase 1 Milestone payments, and I think it was just addressed a little bit. Phase 1 Milestone 1, Milestone 2. If a beneficiary is paid weekly, it's not so many check stubs, but when it gets to Phase 3 and 4, it's like six months and nine months' worth of check stubs. Do we have to submit from month one thru month six for Milestones 3 and month one through month nine for Milestone 4 or how should the submissions go because it becomes lengthy? It's a lot of check stubs at that point?

Nicole Black: Thank you for your question, Natalie. So, I want to make sure I'm getting the question correct. You want to know if you're submitting pay stubs or if you have pay stubs or evidence of earnings for Phase 1 Milestones 1-4, how many pay stubs do you need to submit each time? Or you are duplicating the effort and sending all the pay stubs all over again as you progress through the milestone request?

Natalie Harrison: Correct. That's correct, absolutely.

Nicole Black: Great question. Thank you for that. So, once you submit your pay stubs for Phase 1 Milestone 1 and your payments been approved and paid, you do not need to send those pay stubs again because the earnings have already been captured in the system. So, when you submit for your Phase 1 Milestone 2, you don't need to worry about that first month of earnings because you've already submitted that earnings information to us. You just need to submit the pay stubs that are reflective of month two and month three or the second month. So, you just send in what is new if we already have it, we're good. We don't need to see it again.

Natalie Harrison: OK, I've been denied several times and had to resubmit all over and that's why I said the previous question kind of answered it because I would have to do a submit additional documentation just to get approval for that milestone. So, I just wanted to get clarity from senior leaders on how we should do it. So, I'll try it again this month, because someone is at Milestone 3, so I'll be submitting six months' worth of check stubs, and I'm prepared to submit six months. But I'll pick up at month four through six and see if it's denied.

Nicole Black: So, Kim, I'll kick it to you. Do you have something to say?

Kimberly Cutler: Yeah, Natalie, I just want to make sure of course, without having the actual details of the denials. Just remember exactly what Nicole was saying. If you're using the earnings to satisfy the following milestones, the next milestones you're OK. But just remember that you must submit your milestones within a certain window of time, right? So, if you're asking for Phase 1, Milestone 1 and like Nicole said, you use those pay stubs. The case was satisfied, and you have a window of time to request your Phase 1 Milestone too. If you're outside of that window, then the earnings from Phase 1 Milestone, 1 may not apply because you have to start over. So, I don't know whether that's the reason you're being denied again without looking at the case. Please just make sure and if you're not familiar with it, we have some amazing resources on the Ticket to Work website. We have the Payments at a Glance, which actually gives you the milestones that gives you the window of time. So, we just want to make sure you know if it's if it's in order and you're within the window, then what Nicole said was right. You'll be able to use those earnings previously and then provide earnings for the additional claim months that you're requesting that will make up the milestone. But if it's outside of that window, then you're going to have to resubmit everything again, right? New months to cover the whole period, so I just want to add that that little bit of information.

Natalie Harrison: OK, just to be clear, just to be clear, so you're not saying even if the earnings meet the Trial Work Level or the SGA level, if I wait too long in between submitting for the next milestone, that could be the hiccup?

Kimberly Cutler: It could be because if you request Phase 1 Milestone 1, you're paid for that, but then you're outside of the window for submitting your Phase 1 Milestone 2, you're no longer going to be able to use that Phase 1 Milestone 1 claim month. Now you're going to have to have three new months, so that could be. I'm not saying that it is because again, without having the details of the case. But it's something to consider.

Natalie Harrison: Right. OK.

Kimberly Cutler: And again, just take a just take a look at the Payments at a Glance and you will be able to look right because you'll know what month you requested your Phase 1 Milestone month and look at your window of time for when you have to request your Phase 1 Milestone 2 and then it may be the hiccup or it may not, but it it's worth looking at but that is a rule that it has to be within a window in order to use the previous months toward the next milestone period, so it's worth taking a look at.

Natalie Harrison: Thank you. I think I get it. Thanks so much.

Kimberly Cutler: You're welcome.

Nicole Black: Thanks Natalie.

Katherine Jett: We'll go back to Rebecca. Thank you, Kim. Thank you, Nicole. Rebecca, can you identify if we have another raised hand?

Rebecca Yohannes: At this time, Katherine, we do not have any more questions in the queue.

Katherine Jett: Thank you very much. We'll go to Jalin with the chat. Jalin, do we have any questions in the chat?

Jalin Horn: We have one question from Linda asking if the employer does not list the type of deductions. It only has gross and net pay. Is it still acceptable since we are now requesting the evidence of FICA deductions in a more detailed breakdown?

Katherine Jett: Nicole.

Nicole Black: Thank you. Thank you, Jalin. Thank you for the question, Linda. Without actually seeing the paystub, I would have to say if it does not specifically say have the FICA or Social Security or Medicare withholdings for us to be able to see specifically what they are, it would not be acceptable. However, I would recommend submitting the paystub and letting us review it, and then we could let you know if it's acceptable or not, or if additional documentation will be needed to process the case.

Katherine Jett: Thank you. Jalin, do we have any other questions?

Jalin Horn: Yes, there was one. Just asking how long an appropriate period of time is when there is a payment denial, so if they want to send a request to the help desk to review the information and make a new determination.

Nicole Black: The first part of that broke up. Did you ask if there a specific amount of time in between a payment denial before and EN reaches out to the payment help desk for additional information as to why the case was denied?

Jalin Horn: Yes.

Nicole Black: OK. Kim, you may need to step in with this one, but from my understanding there is not a specific amount of time as long as it's within the specific amount of time necessary to request a payment for that Ticketholder.

Kimberly Cutler: Right, Nicole. Once the case is denied, the EN can reach out right away to find out about the denial and then just note that once the case is denied and if the EN can call the help desk and they find out that it was a correct denial. Let's say it was denied because we were missing certain information. The EN will have to submit a completely new payment request, provide all the information, resubmit their request through the **P**ortal. But as far as the window of time, if the case is denied today at 1:35, the EN gets the notification in the **P**ortal that the case was denied, and if they have questions, they could reach out to the help desk. I would encourage you guys before doing that as a reminder that in the **P**ortal, not only can you see the denial reason, but you can also see the comments. Sometimes the comment may answer your question, but of course if you disagree with the denial ─ if we're saying that the earnings were not at Trial Work Level and you clearly have the earnings that were at Trial Work Level, please reach out to the help desk because they will look at the case and make sure that the case was denied correctly. If for some chance it was not denied correctly on our part or SSA's part, then we will go in and recreate that case. So, it wouldn't be any action needed from you guys. If it was an incorrect denial after you contact the help desk, we will go in and recreate and pay the claim. But if it was correctly denied, like I said, hopefully, the comments will be able to answer your questions. If not, reach out. The help desk does an amazing job with explaining that and then you be able to go from there.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Kim. Thank you to Nicole and thank you, Jalin. We're going to go back to the raised hands. Rebecca, you identify our next raised hand.

Rebecca Yohannes: Caller 6007. You are the next caller and you're unmuted. Please press star 6 to unmute yourself and ask your question.

Katherine Jett: You are unmuted.

Rebecca Yohannes: You're unmuted.

Katherine Jett: While we wait on that one to unmute. Let's go to the next raised hand.

Rebecca Yohannes: OK. Our next question comes from Casey, your audio and video are active. Please click your microphone to unmute and activate your video if you like to ask your question.

Katherine Jett: Hi, Casey.

Casey Rehg: Hello again. Do you by chance have the payment amounts for 2024 for Outcomes and Phase 1?

Kimberly Cutler: Hi, this is Kim. Actually, we will have that information, Casey, and we will go through the process of updating the Payments at a Glance because again, I just love that document. But we will make sure to get that information out to you as soon as it becomes available by way of updating the Payments at a Glance for you guys to have. As we all know, right, the rates change each year Trial Work Level, SGA levels change. And so, the earliest that you would be able to request payment under the new amounts would be in February 2024 when you request for January 2024. So, we would definitely make sure all of our resource documents are updated and get that information out to you before you know it's time for you to submit that payment.

Casey Rehg: Sounds good. Thanks.

Katherine Jett: Thanks, Casey.

Nicole Black: Thanks, Casey.

Katherine Jett: Thanks, Kim. OK, Rebecca, let's see if we can identify the caller on the phone.

Rebecca Yohannes: Caller 6007, are you able to unmute? Can we move on to the next question that would be coming from Shannon, your audio and video are active. Please click your microphone to unmute and activate your video if you like to ask your question.

Shannon Mieski: Hi, how are you?

Katherine Jett: Hi, Shannon. Good.

Shannon Mieski: So, I just have a quick question. I have a Ticketholder that works in a Canadian based company and from January to July the paystubs were accepted but the way they do things there that once they reach a cap, then those taxes aren't taken out anymore. So those taxes show as zero, and now the pay stubs aren't being accepted as proof of pay. How do I go? Do I have to wait then for this Ticketholder to then file the taxes to be able to submit for payment?

Nicole Black: So, what we would need in that instance would be the Supplemental Earnings Statement to be completed by the Ticketholder's employer in order for you to request payments now.

Shannon Mieski: OK. Thank you.

Nicole Black: You're welcome.

Katherine Jett: Thanks, Shannon. Thank you, Nicole. Alright. Rebecca. Who's our next caller?

Rebecca Yohannes: Our next caller is Janine, I believe, and your audio video active. Please click your microphone to unmute and activate your video if you'd like to ask your question.

Janine (Ability 1st Utah): Hello, how are you?

Katherine Jett: Hi Janine.

Janine (Ability 1st Utah): So, I have a question. When I submit pay stub, there's been several occasions where I have submitted pay stubs that shows proof of SGA and then it's denied based on the fact that Social Security hasn't acknowledged that the person is in suspension and we've tried to remedy it by calling Social Security several times and I still can't get that status to be acknowledged so that we can get the pay request. So, what do I do in a case like that?

Nicole Black: Hi, Janine, how are you?

Janine (Ability 1st Utah): I am doing good.

Nicole Black: So, in those cases, Janine, we will not be able to process even if they are above SGA until the field office suspends their benefits. So, the best course of action is just to have that Ticketholder continue to follow up with the field office and get those benefits in suspense by reporting their earnings as well.

Janine (Ability 1st Utah): OK. So just keep handing on the Ticketholder to actually follow through with reporting their pay stubs and things like that.

Nicole Black: Yes, ma'am.

Janine (Ability 1st Utah): OK, alright, wonderful. Thank you for your help.

Nicole Black: You're welcome, Janine.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Janine. Have a great day. OK. Rebecca. Who's our next raised hand?

Rebecca Yohannes: Yes, our next raised hand is coming from Lauren. Your audio and video are active and please click your microphone to unmute and to activate your video if you like. And then you can go ahead and ask your question.

Lauren Womack: Hi, my name is Lauren Womack. I've been working with Ticket to Work for about six years now. We have a major issue with our field office. They don't process anything until the person has already gotten out of the trial work month period. It causes overpayments. I've tried to work with my WIPA. We've tried to advocate; we don't know of anything we can do. Is there somebody that we can contact in Social Security to alert them of this problem? We've tried to before and we were told that, unfortunately, every field office is allowed to do their own thing, but someone really needs to know and advocate for our Ticketholders there. Having thousands of dollars in overpayments for doing the correct thing and what their caseworkers tell me is you need to just tell them to open their own a bank account and keep that money there in case we decide to come get it back. And to me, that's not acceptable, but we have nowhere to go. We don't know who to speak to or how to get systems changed to help our clients and our region. So, if anyone could give me as a contact. We reached out to our own CWIC and, unfortunately, she just said that wasn't her purview. So yeah, I don't know if that's for this call or if there's just a contact you can give me, but it's been a problem for many years.

Nicole Black: Hi Lauren. Thank you for your comment. You're right. This is something that is not related to the EN Payments Call. However, the best recourse would be to continue to do what you're doing, following up with the field office and your WIPA in order to try to get the information updated for the Ticketholder in a timely fashion.

Katherine Jett: All right. Thank you, Lauren. Thank you, Nicole. Rebecca, can you identify another raised hand?

Rebecca Yohannes: Katherine, at this time, they are no more questions in the queue.

Katherine Jett: OK, we have just a few more minutes left in the call if you'd like to ask a question, please raise your hand by clicking the icon at the top, the raise hand icon, or if you're on the phone, you can press star 5 to raise your hand and we'll unmute you and then you press star 6 to unmute yourself. I see we have someone else. Rebecca.

Rebecca Yohannes: Yes, I believe this individual caller 6007, if you can please press star 6 on mute yourself and ask your question.

Katherine Jett: Hi there, caller 6007, do you have a question? Go ahead and press star 6 to unmute. Give it a second and then ask your question. Go ahead, I hear you.

Caller 6007:
Can you hear me now?

Katherine Jett:
Yeah, I hear you. Great.

Caller 6007: Oh, cool. This is Steve, with SKG Career Services in Colorado. How's everybody doing today?

Nicole Black: Well, hi Steve.

Caller 6007: Hey, I have an issue with a client. I started working with her in December of 2019 and or excuse me, in October of 2019, got a job in December and she's been working at the same place I was paid all Phase 1 Milestones. I was paid all Phase 2 Milestones and then I stopped getting paid in July of 2021. She's continued to work at the same job. I keep getting a code too. I've advised her over and over and over again to the call into Social Security. She is actually going to time out. And in terms of age and it's been over two years since I've been trying to submit payments for her. So, I'm worried about getting timed out for that. So, what can I do?

Nicole Black: Kim, can you help with this?

Caller 6007: I mean, we're talking about over $30,000 that she's going to owe. And you know, I have over two years of payments that I haven't gotten.

Kimberly Cutler: Hi, Steve, this is Kimberly. So, in that case I think it kind of goes back to what we were previously just discussing about the field office. So, if I if I heard you correctly, you got all your Phase Ones, you got all your Phase Twos and you're unable to move forward with your Outcome payments, which would be your next payment because the beneficiary or the Ticketholder is still in current pay.

Caller 6007: Correct.

Kimberly Cutler: Right. And I understand your concern about, like you said, it's going to time out as Nicole provided to the previous caller. It's just kind of stay on top of them, call them, have your Ticketholder contact the field office.

Caller 6007: I've attempted to have her call the field office and she doesn't do it. She wants to wait until she was retired. You know she's going to be 65 soon, and so I'm afraid she's not even going to be in the system anymore.

Kimberly Cutler: No. OK, well, unfortunately, you know if she's not willing to contact them, I don't know too much that you could do right now. But again, until the system updates, we are unable to process Outcomes because we work in real time. So, we process cases based on what's available to us in the SSA database. So unfortunately, our hands are tied. I mean, I hear you, understand, but as far as it relates to payments, and without that our hands are tied.

Caller 6007: OK, so at some point I know, she's going to need to reconcile this. At that point, well, I need to send in all of the pay stubs for two years. Plus, again, I've sent them in about three or four times.

Kimberly Cutler: Yeah. And that's good that you are continuing to request. So, we can see that you are asking timely, right?

Caller 6007: Yes, I just got some pay stubs for October.

Kimberly Cutler: OK. And you know, I don't necessarily know without having all the details of the case. Yeah, you have to do that. I would just say, keep the information, continue to request because it's real time the system could actually update tomorrow. Who knows? So, I would just encourage you to continue to submit your payment. So, we can have that on file.

Caller 6007: OK.

Kimberly Cutler: Now you know we do have the issue of, you know, of the aged claim within the 24 months of when they earned the money. So, again, without having all the details of the case, I don't want to give you any guidance that's misleading, you know. And then it's well, Kimberly said. So, I would have to have the details of the case, but for right now today I just have to say that we are unable to process any payments but just continue to submit and hopefully she'll have a change of heart and maybe contact them and stay on top of them. But until then, until the system updates, we're not going to be able to make any payments.

Caller 6007: OK. I know you wanted one question, but I got a real quick question. I have GSO account and I'm having trouble getting into it. How do I get some help with that?

Kimberly Cutler: I would encourage you to contact Program Integrity department. Let them know what issues you are having with that, because that's again out of our wheelhouse for EN payments.

Caller 6007: OK.

Kimberly Cutler: But contact Program Integrity.

Caller 6007: Is there a phone number or an email?

Kimberly Cutler: I'll make sure that we get that the email for Program Integrity in the chat.

Caller 6007: Thank you.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Steve. Thank you, Kim.

Nicole Black: Thank you.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Nicole. Rebecca, we have one with a hand raised, can you help us?

Rebecca Yohannes: Yes. Our next question comes from Janet. Your audio and video are active. Please click your microphone. Unmute and activate your video if you'd like and ask your question.

Janet Steveley: Hello.

Katherine Jett: And Janet, we can hear you.

Janet Steveley: Hi. Can you hear me?

Katherine Jett: Yeah, I can hear you.

Nicole Black: Yes, ma'am.

Janet Steveley: OK, my question is I have somebody who's been self-employed and has benefits suspended some time ago. The last payment I received was in June of 2021, so I'm out of that 24-month window and when I've tried to submit claims, it keeps coming back. But there's no way for me to even make the request because there's no verified earnings in the system and I know he files jointly with his wife. And as far as they know, he's not directly sending information to Social Security because he's not getting benefits anymore. Right? So, it's not a priority to him, but I'm wondering if there is a way to make a formal request so that I have a request in kind of as a time stamp that I made the request when there's no verified earnings that's in the file.

Nicole Black: Thank you for your question, Janet. And Kim may need him to help me with this, but my recommendation would be to go ahead and submit the next applicable payment request that you should receive. If there are not earnings in the system that we can see that are verified because as Kim said the information is updated in real time, then the case would be denied, but it would also be notated that you requested that payment within the appropriate amount of time.

Janet Steveley: But the how do I request the payment? Because I've called several times about this and I've never had anybody be able to say like how to make the payment request because if they go into the Portal, it just says there's no verified earnings, you can't make a request.

Nicole Black: And you don't have any pay stubs. Kim, can you help with this one?

Janet Steveley: No, no, it's self-employment. There are no pay stubs.

Kimberly Cutler: I may have missed the first part of this case. I'm sorry. I was putting the email address in the chat, but I just heard self-employment. So just making sure if Nicole already said this, I'm sorry. So, we were unable to process any payments for self-employed Ticketholders until the earnings are posted in our database. Now the piece that I've missed, did we say that this has been a year or two? I'm sorry I missed that.

Janet Steveley: The last payment I received was June 2021 and I have to make a request to kind of put that time slot in the system so that if requested, it is within the 24 months.

Kimberly Cutler: Yeah. So, you're right. So, for self-employed Ticketholders, you know that's considered certification payment. We no longer accept that those payment types, so if we don't have the earnings in the system, then I think Nicole did cover this, we're not going to be able to make the payment. I think your concern was you're not able to request payments because it's not going to give you that earnings already proven. You do not have paystubs information. You know it's a self-employed beneficiary. So, with me not having too much knowledge about the Portal. So unfortunately, I mean if you're talking to your Ticketholder. You have that relationship with him or her.

Janet Steveley: I've actually had unassigned him not too long ago.

Kimberly Cutler: OK, because there are a couple of things that go ahead.

Janet Steveley: They're still several months of payments that they should have been getting in there.

Kimberly Cutler: Right. OK, so there are a couple of things with this case, and I don't necessarily want to go into each one, but there are, a couple of issues. The Ticket was unassigned by you, so that determines certain type of payments, because the EN unassigned the Ticket. Then there's the concern that this is a self-employed Ticketholder. I would strongly suggest to call the help desk and briefly explain to them what you went over and let us look at this case offline because there are a lot of different working moving parts with this case because it was unassigned. So yeah, I would just call, reach out to the help desk. Give them a brief summary of what's going on and then let that come back to Nicole on the back end.

Janet Steveley: I've talked to the help desk several times about this. Is there somebody a supervisor or somebody I could talk to that would have a little more knowledge it is it? Is it no fair situation? I understand that not everybody would have.

Kimberly Cutler: Yeah. email the help desk with your information and they'll forward it to Nicole and me. We'll go from there.

Janet Steveley: OK. Thank you.

Kimberly Cutler: You're welcome.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Janet.

Nicole Black: Thank you, Janet.

Janet Steveley: Thanks.

Katherine Jett: OK, we have time for one more quick question. If anyone has a raised hand, Nicole, I mean Rebecca.

Rebecca Yohannes: Katherine at this time there are no more raised hands, no more questions in the queue.

Katherine Jett: OK. We could take a quick question from the chat. Jalin, do we have any questions in the chat?

Jalin Horn: Hi, Katherine. I don't see any unanswered questions in the chat, but I did see a couple of people stating some concerns they had that they were attempting to raise their hands and it wasn't being seen.

Katherine Jett: OK, if you'll click the icon at the very top, the raised hand icon and I don't see anyone with their hands raised right now. Even those on the phone.

Jalin Horn: I know we had one specifically. Lori Popejoy had asked to be called on as she was attempting to raise her hand.

Katherine Jett: OK, not a problem. We can call on her one moment. OK. We have a raised hand now. Rebecca go ahead.

Lori Popejoy: Lori Popejoy. I'm here.

Katherine Jett: Hi, Lori.

Lori Popejoy: Hi. Thank you.

Katherine Jett: You're welcome. Sorry about that.

Lori Popejoy: I not certain what just happened, but everything came to life.

Katherine Jett: Good.

Lori Popejoy: My question has to do with EN Portal and entering payment requests and I am working on a laptop, so I don't know if that is in fact part of the problem or not, but a couple things. One is the data entry. I did not know where we were at in possibly changing it, so we're not having to use the mouse to move around or the tab. And then the other thing is, and I don't know if this is because it's a laptop screen, but I did several entries for a Phase 2. Yes, no Phase 1. Excuse me, yesterday Phase 1 Milestone 3 and I went to edit one of those after I hit save but before I hit submit and there was no edit button, there was an action underneath one of the entries and I went to action and pressed on action or whatever you do, then drop down screen occurred, and it said delete it. Well, I thought. I'll just delete this and nothing worked. I couldn't delete it. I couldn't enter edit it and I don't know is this the new thing now or is that just because I'm limited to a laptop screen?

Nicole Black: Hi, Lori. Thank you for your question. I will have to ask either Alexis or Katie to reply to this as it directly relates to the Portal.

Lori Popejoy: OK. Thank you.

Nicole Black: You're welcome.

Katie Striebinger: This is Katie. You probably know what I'm going to say.

Lori Popejoy: Yes. OK, great.

Katie Striebinger: Because we have not heard this from anyone before. So, we just need to get the information together to see if we can recreate it. You said you're using your cell phone?

Lori Popejoy: No, I'm using a laptop.

Katie Striebinger: But yeah, if you could reach out to the help desk that would be fantastic. And then we can try troubleshooting from there.

Lori Popejoy: The systems help desk.

Katie Striebinger: Yes.

Lori Popejoy: Correct. And then the other part, the first part of the question is, are we doing anything about data entry? I know that many of us are finding it rather burdensome. Excuse me, with the way it is now.

Katie Striebinger: It's the way it is now. We had applied a security update and we're still applying additional security updates to keep the Portal up to the standards for the agency and you know the government as a whole. So, you know, we are hoping that perhaps you know we make another change to upgrade the security and it fixes the problem.

Lori Popejoy: OK.

Katie Striebinger: But at this point, you know, we're kind of stuck with it right now.

Lori Popejoy: I understand. Thank you. OK.

Katie Striebinger: Yeah, unfortunately, I'm sorry about that.

Lori Popejoy: I get it.

Katie Striebinger: But yeah, we can't reverse it.

Lori Popejoy: Kind of like Fed RAMP.

Katie Striebinger: Yeah, we're all marching forward.

Lori Popejoy: Yes.

Katie Striebinger: But yeah, we are hopeful that, you know, like I said, we still have a lot more security updates to go. I mean, they're pretty regular at this point. So, we're just kind of hoping that when we upgrade to the next, it's kind of fixes itself.

Lori Popejoy: OK, great. Thank you.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Lori, for that question.

Nicole Black: Thank you, Katie.

Katherine Jett: And thank you, Katie.

OK, next slide please.

We'd like to thank everyone for your participation today and thank Nicole and Katie and Kim for all their informative updates. We would like to let you know that the next All EN Payments Call is scheduled for Tuesday, January 30, 2024, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Thank you today everyone and have a great day.

The call is now concluded.