

Katherine Jett: Good afternoon and welcome to the November Quarterly All EN Payments Call. My name is Katherine Jett, and I will be your moderator for today's call. Let's move to the next slide, please. At this time, we will go over a few logistics and housekeeping items, but before we get started, today's call is scheduled for 60 minutes and is being recorded and transcribed. If you click the Q&A icon at the top, we are posting information into a chat as well as a reminder per the Ticket Program Agreement, Part 3, Section 11, Subsection 1, EN staff are not permitted to record this meeting or capture the transcript. All post-call items, which include the transcript from today's call, audio, presentation, and recap, will be available in two weeks on the Your Ticket to Work website, under Training and Events, Archives, and National Calls, EN Payment Calls, and look for November 6, 2024. Now, everyone will receive a GovDelivery blast. It will be sent out after the post-call items are posted to the website. Now, during the call today, during the Q&A session, we will have a very interactive Q&A. MS Teams chat has been disabled, all questions must be asked aloud. If joining via the phone, and you wish to ask a question, just raise your hand, utilizing star 5, and you will be unmuted by the facilitator. Then you will press star 6 to unmute yourself. Notice that during the Q&A session today as well, if you are joining on the MS Teams application, click the raise-hand icon up top and a facilitator will provide access to the audio and allow you to unmute your microphone.

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Please ask questions regarding the topics discussed on the call today. Any additional questions or comments that you may have can be sent to EN Payments Helpdesk at yourtickettowork@ssa.gov email. Now, a link shared during the presentation can be viewed by clicking on, like I advised before on the Q&A icon up top of the MS Teams window. We have closed captioning available for participants who join using the MS Teams application by utilizing a separate closed-caption link. Now, to turn on closed captions, if you are using the MS Teams application, you want to click on More, at the top of the MS Teams window, click Language and Speech, click Next, select Turn on Live Captions. When using the link option, paste the link in the browser. It will open in a separate window to view closed captions.

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At this time, it is my pleasure to announce Nicole Black, our presenter, the EN Payments Manager. Take it away, Nicole.

Nicole Black: Thank you, Katherine. Welcome, everyone. Thank you for joining us for the November All EN Payments Call. As you can see, we have a packed agenda today. We will start with an announcement. Then I will cover the July ePay file stats. We will go over ePay reminders, GovDelivery messages, a few reminders about the Payments Helpdesk and payments reminders. We will cover information about Concurrent Ticketholders. We will

review the resources available to you all, and then we will transition to our Q&A session, and then we will have our closing remarks.

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Here is an important announcement for you guys. SSA is unable to approve payments from December 16 through the 27 of this year. The reason is due to a mandatory system upgrade, the Social Security Administration will be unable to issue payments to service providers from approximately December 16 through December 27, 2024. SSA will continue to review payment requests during this time frame but will not be able to submit any to the Treasury Department for payment. SSA will not penalize service providers for any EN or VR payment request that had filing deadlines in December of 2024, but SSA expects all service providers to submit the requests for EN and VR payments for both December 2024 and for January 2025 by January 31, 2025. Any payment request that is submitted and was approved prior to December 16, when the outage occurs, will go to Treasury, and the payment will be received within the typical 7 to 10 business-day time frame. Also, during the outage, SSA will continue to review all cases submitted using the first-in, first-out method, but no payments can be approved. We want to reiterate that. However, you will still be able to see your denied or diarized cases in the Portal. Last but not least, please continue to submit all of your payment requests during this time period. Do not hold on to the payment requests. We want you to continue to submit those on a regular basis, as it is normally.

Next slide, please.

The July ePay file stats. The last ePay file was completed in September of 2024, and with that ePay file a total of 10,438 claims were paid. A total of 3,091 SSNs were paid. That gave us a total amount paid out to the ENs at \$5,919,126. As I am sure you all are aware we have started processing the October ePay file. We started that on Wednesday, October 30.

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ePay reminders. Phase 1 Milestone 4 is paid via ePay, but ENs must still submit payment requests for Phase 1 Milestones 1-3 through the Ticket Portal with proof of relationship. Unassigned tickets are not included in ePay. ENs must have passed their annual service and supports review to be a part of the ePay file. Please keep in mind that the ePay file is processed in SSN order, not Provider ID order. As you all know, Phase 1 Milestone 4, Phase 2 Milestones and Outcomes are all paid via ePay. ENs are encouraged to not submit for these payment types via the Portal without evidence of earnings when the EN portion of the ePay file is being processed. Submitting for such payments does slow down processing and causes duplicate claim months. However, if you have evidence of earnings; if you have the pay stubs or a Work Number Report for those Phase 1 Milestone 4s, Phase 2 Milestones or Outcomes, please go ahead and submit those payment requests via the Portal. We can process those only if they are accompanied by evidence of earnings.

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Please allow TPM to pay all available claims via ePay before requesting payment via the Ticket Portal. If there is a PII violation, this will remove the EN from ePay for three months or one ePay file. During this time, the EN must submit payment request via the Ticket Portal. For example, if an EN violates the PII rule while a file is currently being processed, for example, in February, they would be removed from the next ePay file, which would be May.

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Here is a reminder about our GovDelivery messages that you all receive. The Social Security Administration communicates important information with service providers through GovDelivery messages, including Ticket Portal issues and outages.

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Please make sure that the email address below is saved to your safe senders list so that these messages do not go into your spam or junk email boxes. And that email address is TickettoWork@subscriptions.ssa.gov.

Next slide. Thank you.

Payment Helpdesk reminders. As a reminder for payment inquiries, all communication regarding Ticketholders and Employment Networks must be with suitable EN staff. That would be your approved Portal Users, Program Contacts, Signatory Authorities, Payment, Contacts, etc.

PII, Personally Identifiable Information. If an EN needs to submit PII, the submission must be done via fax or mail. Please do not send any PII information via email. When you are sending a request or sending an inquiry about a payment, the EN should use the reference number when submitting that request via email and send that request or that inquiry to the Payments Helpdesk.

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The Payments Helpdesk cannot provide the following information. They cannot provide information regarding a Ticketholder's benefits, inquiries or disputes, information on earnings and SSA's records. They cannot provide information regarding claim months needed to complete the proof of relationship, nor information regarding the Ticketholder's current entitlement or the claim months for the payment. What they can help you with is the reason for the denial, and they can provide you with a further explanation for an outreach email.

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Overpayments. EN overpayments can result from a variety of causes, including adjudicative errors and systems problems and or other limitations. When SSA becomes aware of an EN overpayment, SSA will send the EN notice explaining the circumstances and the amount of money owed to SSA. The EN will then have 10 business days from the date of the notice to dispute the determination and submit additional evidence. If the EN does not respond to an EN overpayment notice in a timely fashion, and the EN currently is receiving payments, SSA will initiate recovery of the EN overpayment amount from future payments on any ticket that is assigned to the EN. Failure to resolve overpayments or repeated payment suspensions may result in further recovery action and or termination of the EN's TPA.

Next slide. Thank you.

Transitioning to self-employed Ticketholders. As a reminder, when requesting payment for self-employed Ticketholders, these payments are made based on verified earnings in the SSA's database from the Internal Revenue Service. When you are submitting these payment requests, when you see that the earnings are already proven in the system, specifically for your Phase 1 Milestones 1-3, please make sure that those requests are accompanied with or accompanied by proof of relationship because it is required.

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Concurrent Ticketholders, this has been a hot topic. Your concurrent Ticketholders are Ticketholders that are receiving both Title 2 and Title 16 benefits. We are going to break this down through the three phases and/or the three types of payments so that we can hopefully give you guys a better understanding of how we assess these payment requests. For your Phase 1 Milestones, if the Ticketholder is in current pay for both Title 2 and Title 16, we will use the earnings that are provided to satisfy that payment. If the Ticketholder is in current pay for only one entitlement, Title 2 or Title 16, the payment will be made based on the entitlement that is in current pay and meets the earnings requirements. For your Phase 2 Milestones, if the Ticketholder is in current pay for both Title 2 and Title 16, we will use the earnings that satisfy the payment. If the Ticketholder is in current pay for only one entitlement, Title 2 or Title 16, the payment will be made based on the entitlement that is in current pay and meets the earnings requirement.

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Outcomes. If the Ticketholder is in suspense for both Title 2 and Title 16, and the suspense is due to work or earnings, the payment can be made if earnings criteria are met under either entitlement. If the Ticketholder is in suspense for both Title 2 and Title 16, but one of the entitlements is in suspense, and it is not due to work or earnings, the payment can be made if earnings criteria are met under the entitlement that is in suspense due to work or earnings.

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Our resources, as a reminder, we can be reached by phone Monday through Friday, 9 am to 5 pm Eastern, toll free at 866-949-3687 or 866-833-2967. Option 1 will send you to the Beneficiary Helpdesk. Option 2 will send you to the EN Payments Helpdesk, and Option 3 will send you to the Systems Helpdesk. Or you can reach us by email. For issues regarding your payments, you can email us at ENPaymentsHelpdesk@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov. For questions and issues related to ticket assignment, the service provider website, and the Ticket Portal, you can email ENSystemsHelp@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov.

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Keep in mind that we love for you guys to share what it is that it is like to see on these calls. We invite you to share the topics that you would be interested in discussing through this forum. Our goal is to help educate you and provide clarification on processes and procedures related to payments that matter to you. Please send your topics to the EN Payments Helpdesk at ENPaymentshelpdesk@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov.

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I am going to kick it back to Katherine so she can get us started on our Q&A session.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Nicole. That was a lot of information, a lot of great information, as always.

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Okay, we will start our interactive Q&A session. Just as a reminder to everyone, if you are joining via the phone, if you would raise your hand by pressing star 5 on your keypad, then you will be unmuted by the facilitator, and then you will press star 6 to unmute yourself. Now, if you are joining via MS Teams, just click the raise-hand icon. We have Rebecca who is going to unmute you. Then you will need to click the Microphone icon up top to unmute yourself. I see we have a raised hand. All right, Rebecca, turn it over to you to identify our first raised hand.

Rebecca: Yes, our first question comes from Shanna. Your audio and video are active, and please click the microphones to unmute and activate your video, if you like, and ask your question.

Shanna: Hi, my question is I wanted to see if you could explain why sometimes the Phase 2 Milestones, you pay two and then move on to Outcomes, and sometimes you pay five and how that is decided.

Nicole Black: Thank you for your question, Shanna, so I want to repeat it back, just to make sure I am understanding, or I get it correct. Your question is when you have your Phase 2 Milestones, why is it that sometimes you will get two, sometimes five, eleven, any number, and then all of a sudden, they stop? Is that correct?

Shanna: And how it is decided how many they get before you move into Outcomes?

Nicole Black: Okay, great question. What would make them stop at a number that is just something you are not expecting would be because that Ticketholder has entered suspense of receiving their benefits due to work or earnings. Once that Ticketholder enters suspense, and they are no longer receiving their federal cash benefits due to work or earnings, that is when we will transition the ticket payments to the Outcomes. Any available Phase 2s that were not addressed will be reviewed and looked at during the reconciliation period, and that takes place after you have received Outcome 12. Does that help?

Shanna: Yes, thank you so much.

Nicole Black: Awesome. Thank you.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Shanna. All right, Rebecca, do we have any other raised hands at this time?

Rebecca: At this time, I do not see any raised hands.

Katherine Jett: Okay, I would just like to reiterate if you are joining via the phone, and you would like to ask a question, press star 5, and that is going to raise your hand, and Rebecca is going to unmute you, and then you will need to press star 6 to unmute yourself. On MS Teams, if you have any questions, please click the raise-hand icon up top. Rebecca is going to unmute you, and just click the microphone to unmute yourself. Okay, Rebecca.

Rebecca: Yes, our next question comes from Trish. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone to unmute and activate your video, if you like and ask your question.

Trish: I have a question about the reconciliation phase. Is there a way to see what months were paid with that reconciliation?

Nicole Black: Hi, Trish. Thank you for your question. You were wanting to know what is captured within the reconciliation?

Trish: Correct.

Nicole Black: I am going to kick that one over to Kim because I am not as fluent in describing that.

Kimberly Cutler: Okay. Hi, so as far as the reconciliation payment, I think I am understanding this correctly. We do not use particular months for that. Once you receive your 12th outcome payment, then, as Nicole mentioned earlier, if there were Phase 1s or Phase 2s that you were eligible for, then those will be paid in one lump sum. It is not divided out; your reconciliation payment is paid for a particular month. It is just once you reach the 12th Outcome, it is a lump sum payment that just goes back and picks up the Phase 1s or Phase 2s that you were eligible for. Was that your question?

Trish: Yes, thank you. We got a couple of reconciliation payments, and I was like I am not sure what these are for. I did not realize they came through as one lump sum. I appreciate that.

Kimberly Cutler: Right, and how you could tell when you look at your payments made to you in the Portal, for example, let's say you got all your Phase 1s, and then, you receive Phase 2, Milestone 1. Depending on the entitlement, you may get 11 Phase 2s. If they go right into Outcomes, and you get that lump sum, then looking at your payments, you would be able to say, again, you won't have a claim month to look at, but you would be able to say, oh, okay, I received my Phase 2 Milestone 2-11, you know, depending on entitlement.

Trish: Yes, okay. That is perfect. Thank you.

Kimberly Cutler: Okay, you are welcome.

Nicole Black: Thank you, Miss Kim Cutler.

Kimberly Cutler: You are welcome.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Kim. Thank you, Nicole and Trish. Rebecca, do we have another?

Rebecca: Yes, our next question comes from Samantha. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone to unmute and activate your video if you like and ask your question.

Samantha: Hi, yes. I have two questions, if that is okay. The first one being we have noticed that we have received pending payments I am assuming from the ePay file, as they were payments we did not request, but they were actually payments that we were not due. We were able to get those denied, but if we did not catch those, and they were paid, would that cause an overpayment?

Nicole Black: Hi, Samantha. Thank you for your question. You are asking if you receive payments via ePay that you feel you were not due, if it were not caught by you, would that result in a potential overpayment?

Samantha: Correct.

Nicole Black: Okay, it is very possible that that could result in an overpayment if they were, in fact, not due. To explain it, anything that is paid via ePay, those payments are made based on earnings already proven in the system, or we have the earnings updated to validate why those payments should be made to you.

Samantha: Right, it does, yeah. We just knew in our scenario that we were not due those payments.

Nicole Black: Okay.

Samantha: My second question, we have had to request reconsideration quite a few times for payments that should have been approved, and they were eventually after we had contacted the helpdesk. But I am not sure if maybe anyone is going through extra training, or if there is someone we can reach out to, you know, regarding the situations we have had to request reconsideration on.

Nicole Black: All right, thank you for that also, Samantha. If you could, what is the name of your EN? And then I can do some additional research.

Samantha: Full Circle.

Nicole Black: Oh, you are Full Circle? Hi.

Samantha: Hi.

Nicole Black: Typically, what happens if there is a situation where you do need to request reconsideration, the appropriate first step is to reach out to the Payment Helpdesk, and then they will bring it back to our attention to see if there is something that should have been adjudicated differently to validate that payment request. The process that you are taking is the correct process, and anytime we see something that may be a trend or consistent, that does give us an opportunity to provide refresher training and enhancements. Thank you for bringing it to our attention.

Samantha: Wonderful. Thank you so much.

Nicole Black: You are welcome.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Samantha. Rebecca, I see we have one individual on the phone and another through the app, if you would like to see our next participant.

Katherine Jett: Let's go to our next individual, Rebecca.

Rebecca: Okay, yes, our next caller comes from Mark. You are unmuted. Please press star 6 to unmute yourself, and you can ask your question.

Mark: Can you hear me now?

Katherine Jett: Yes, we can, Mark.

Mark: Okay, good, thank you. My question is in regard to the processing for M1, P1, M1 through P1M3s with POR. If I have pay stubs as proof of earnings, would that suffice in lieu of the POR form itself?

Nicole Black: Hi, Mark. Thank you for your question. Yes. The question that Mark had was for Phase 1 Milestones 1-3 if pay stubs are available to the EN, will that suffice as proof of relationship? Absolutely. For your Phase 1 Milestones 1-3, pay stubs are the gold standard. That would be the best way to provide your proof of relationship, and if you do not have those available, that is when the proof of relationship form is necessary to be sent in.

Mark: Thank you.

Nicole Black: You are welcome.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Mark. All right, Rebecca, any other raised hands?

Rebecca: Yes, we have Caller 8488. Your audio and video, or actually you are unmuted. Please press star 6 to unmute yourself and ask your question.

Cali: I am Cali. I work at a small employment network, Able South Carolina. Something interesting happened back in September, and I am trying to even figure out how to frame it as a question, so maybe you can help me out with that too. I had two beneficiaries who I was seeking Phase 1 Milestone 1 payments for. I had pay stubs in hand. I was excited that we are going to get these folks started on ePay, once I got through Milestone 3. And the denial that came back was related to the FICA, the taxes not being clearly shown on the pay stubs. I reached back out to the beneficiary and was like, hey, you know, do you think you would be willing to, you know, get with your employer about filling out this extra employer form? And neither of them felt super comfortable doing that. I wondered once they turn their pay stubs into Social Security through normal reporting, will Social Security verify the earnings? I feel kind of stuck with these FICA taxes because they both received services, and they are both employed, you know, so I am kind of stuck.

Nicole Black: Hi, Cali. Thank you for your question. Your denial was related to FICA taxes, correct?

Cali: Yes, one of them was not clearly shown, even though the county was the employer. Just was not clearly shown on the pay stub. And then the second one, the employee themselves is responsible for filing their own taxes later, is what she said.

Nicole Black: Okay, so for the first one where they were not clear, I will ask you to send that specifically to the Payment Helpdesk so we can take a look at it because that is a specific situation where we can take another look. And I guess the best way to say is if you get an outreach where we cannot read something, or we are requesting something, and you see it on your side, but we cannot see it, if you submit it again via fax, and we still cannot see it, the best step would be to put it in the mail because that way we will get a clear copy of what it is that you are sending.

Cali: I just think it is the way that the pay stub was written. Like I cannot point to it, and it felt that it was not like it was blurry or anything. But I know that she is paying taxes because the county is the employer.

Nicole Black: Send that email to the Payment Helpdesk, and then I will take a look at it. Ask them to forward it to me. I will take a look at that case for you.

Cali: Tell me your name, again. I am sorry.

Nicole Black: Nicole, Nicole Black.

Cali: Nicole. Thank you, Nicole.

Nicole Black: Yes. You are welcome. And then the second one, it sounds like that is a self-employed Ticketholder. If the taxes are not coming out, well, that is the category that they fall within. But just to make sure because it sounds like it is case specific. Send that one to me as well. I will take a look at it, and then I will be able to let you know for sure.

Cali: Okay, cool. I called the Helpdesk, but did not get a whole lot of resolution. And I guess my underlying question is still, you know, when these beneficiaries report to Social Security, is Social Security going to turn away the pay stubs? Because I was just, you know, can it -- will they eventually be verified? Or you will take a look at it.

Nicole Black: I will take a look at it because this one is specific. It is case specific. When the Ticketholders report their earnings to SSA, SSA does process their earnings and enter the data in.

Cali: Are they looking for the FICA?

Nicole Black: I cannot speak to how SSA adjudicates the pay stubs when they are submitted to the field office, but when we get them, that is one of our requirements.

Cali: Yes. Okay. Thank you, Nicole.

Nicole Black: You are welcome.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Cali. Rebecca?

Rebecca: Yes, our next question comes from Jen. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone to unmute and activate your video, if you like, and ask your question.

Jen: Mine was kind of a follow-up question to the last one asked. We have several clients that work for like a school district, and so their pay stubs, a lot of them come off like payroll calendars. It will give like an end date, or it will give like a pay date and have to refer to a calendar. Is there, other than like an employer's prepared earning statement -- because I was told that the calendars are not acceptable. Is there any other method or any other supporting documentation that we can submit to prove like, you know, pay periods and pay dates?

Nicole Black: Or the Work Number Report? Oh, sorry. Hi, Jen. How are you?

Jen: Hi, good. How are you?

Nicole Black: I am well, thank you. When we need something specific regarding the pay period like that on the pay stub, and the employer does not provide all the necessary information on those stubs for us to have, the Employer Prepared Earnings Statement is necessary. Or you can use a Work Number Report to submit the dates.

Jen: Okay, all right, it is my clarification. Thank you.

Nicole Black: You are welcome.

Kimberly Cutler: Hey, Nicole, this is Kim.

Nicole Black: Yes, ma'am.

Kimberly Cutler: I would also just like to add the Supplemental Earning Statement is something that they can use as well. Of course, they would have to get the employer. So you do have the Employer Prepared Earning Statement. That is a separate form. But just an additional resource would be the Supplement Earning Statement because the employer would be able to enter that information as well. So that is just an additional form that you can use to make sure that we are getting the correct information to process your payment.

Jen: Okay, all right. Thank you so much.

Nicole Black: Thank you, Kim.

Katherine Jett: All right, Rebecca, I see we have another raised hand.

Rebecca: Yes, our next question is coming from Janine. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone to unmute and activate your video, if you like, and ask your question.

Janine: I have two questions. One of them is you were saying, Nicole that the payment helpline is not able to tell us what months we would be eligible for the claim months to do a pay request, correct?

Nicole Black: Yes, ma'am, that is correct.

Janine: Okay. Are they able to tell us any records of earnings that Social Security has acknowledged so we can get an idea of what month we can claim for? Because we have an individual who has provided pay stubs, but she has not provided all of her pay stubs because Social Security has acknowledged that there is earnings for months that we do not have pay stubs for. And so we are having a hard time deciding and figuring out what claim month to go for, and so would they be able to help give that information so we can kind of get an idea?

Nicole Black: Unfortunately, they cannot provide any earning documentation information or earning verification information that we have on record, but, Janine, do me a favor and send that reference number to the helpdesk and then ask them to send it to me so I can take a look at it for you.

Janine: Well, I did, and I have got the email back that says that there is earnings for April of 2024, and yet our information is not adding up on the counting of the months. Because We are going for the Phase 1 Milestone 3.

Nicole Black: Yeah, send that to me because that is specific, and I need to look at it. And I can take a deeper dive and get back to you on that one for sure.

Janine: Okay, is there a specific email that I can get sent to?

Nicole Black: Just send it to the Payment Helpdesk and ask them to forward it to me.

Janine: Well, they were the ones that sent me the email that said that our claim month was incorrect.

Nicole Black: Yeah, just have them send it to me, and I will look at it.

Janine: And then the other one is we were trying to put in pay stubs into the Portal, and we got to a claim month, and it would not allow us to put the rest of the pay stubs in for that month. Only allowed us to put in one, and there is three other checks, and it said that there was no other way to put it in the rest of that month.

Nicole Black: All right, so I want to repeat this one back. You were trying to enter additional pay stub that you have to request the payment, but the Portal would not allow you to enter the data?

Janine: For that claim month, yes. We put in all the previous ones up to the claim month, but it would not let us completely put all of the pay stubs for that month in.

Kimberly Cutler: We may still have to send it over. I just want to make sure that, okay, so you are able to enter some of the pay stubs, which is fine. So what you can do is you still should be able to submit your request. Just send those additional pay stubs in with your request using your fax cover sheet that is associated with the payment request, and then someone that is processing the payment can key the additional earnings. So, yeah, so what you need to do is just enter what you can, but it should not prevent you from still requesting your payment. However, make sure you send in those additional pay stubs because we would need that information to complete the month, to make sure that we are getting all your earnings. So, keep what you can and then just make sure you are submitting the additional earnings. And once we start processing that, we should be able to enter the earnings based off of your submitted evidence.

Janine: Nice, sweet. Okay, great. That will help so much. Thank you so much.

Kimberly Cutler: You are welcome.

Katherine Jett: All right, Rebecca, do we have another raised hand?

Rebecca: Yes, we do. Our next question comes from Jonathan. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone to unmute and activate your video if you like and ask your question.

Jonathan: Hi, thanks for taking my question. So, I have a beneficiary who is self-employed and has been, you know, operating her own business for a number of years, and we have not been able to bill for any Outcome payments because she was in Outcome status. And at first glance for her financial records back from 2022 and 2023, she is earning above SGA. So, I am just curious if you had any suggestions about how I might go about addressing that or verifying whether we are eligible for payments.

Nicole Black: So, with the self-employed Ticketholders, the earnings that are verified in the system, which we would be able to -- sorry, hi, Jonathan. I just jumped right in. We need the earnings to be verified by the Internal Revenue Service before we can do anything as it relates to reviewing the payment request. You have seen their information, but it all depends on how the IRS receives the information and then how it is uploaded into the system and amortized or broken out over the course of the year for the earnings. So, to answer your question, unfortunately, there is nothing you can do at this time. But we do hear your frustrations, and

we do understand what it is that you are having to do with the Ticketholders who are self-employed. And we appreciate you working with them, but we do have to wait on the IRS earnings information to be uploaded in the system and verified for us to make a payment on it.

Jonathan: Okay. Thank you, Nicole.

Nicole Black: You are welcome.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Jonathan. All right, Rebecca, are there any other raised hands?

Rebecca: Yes, our next question comes from Kim. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone to unmute and activate your video if you like and ask your question.

Kim: I have a question with this new two-way engagement that Social Security is requiring us to have with our beneficiaries each month or quarterly, I am worried that if there is a delay in like payments, and we have had to remove somebody from the program that we might not be eligible for those payments. Has that been discussed at all? I do not know if you understand my question or dilemma.

Nicole Black: So, you are asking about how is that you are able to request payments for Ticketholders who the Ticket's been unassigned due to the two-way communication?

Kim: Right. Yeah.

Nicole Black: Okay, so if the ticket is unassigned by the Employment Network, by you, due to lack of two-way communication, we will pay you for the claim month prior to Ticket unassignment if all other earnings criteria is met.

Kim: Okay, and is there a way that it is know that is the reason why they were unassigned?

Nicole Black: No, we just know if it is the Ticketholder unassigns the ticket or if the Employment Network that unassigns it, and that is how we make the determination from there. That information specifically regarding the ticket unassignment is in the TPA. I do not know the page off the top of my head.

Kim: But if you go to the section under payments, like if you go to the TPA and put in a search, unassignment, it will spell out exactly how we process payments if the Tickets are unassigned by the Ticketholder and then how they are processed if they are unassigned by the Employment Network and what the time periods look like for you in order to request additional payments if applicable to the situation. Again, I am so sorry I do not have those pages off the top of my head. Do the search for unassignment, and it will take you to that portion of the TPA.

Kim: Okay, thank you.

Nicole Black: You are welcome.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Kim. All right, Rebecca, any other raised hands?

Rebecca: Yes, our next question comes from Caller 8524. You are unmuted. Please press star 6 to unmute yourself and ask your question.

Erin: Hi, this is Erin with Reability. And hi, Nicole.

Nicole Black: Hi, Erin.

Erin: Hi. I have a question that is been on my mind for a while. I was on the call in August, I believe, and there was a brief discussion about the issue, and a notice came across the GovDelivery system about when the Ticket to Work program verifies income, that Social Security is going to accept that as verification. And it sounded like the systems were becoming more integrated. And I apologize. I do not know if you talked about it earlier on the call today. I had to go take a different call, so my apologies if you already brought that up. But first of all, is it clear what I am asking and do you need clarification?

Nicole Black: Yes, Erin, thank you for your question. You are asking if you submit or if the EN submits pay stubs or evidence of earnings for their Ticketholders, will we enter that information in the system, and then does it get transitioned towards, SSA and if they are able to see that earnings documentation as well? Is that what you are asking?

Erin: Right. Yeah, I am wondering about the collaboration or integration between the Ticket to Work and the Social Security systems.

Nicole Black: What I can speak to is that any earnings documentation that you submit to us regarding the Ticketholder for the claim months that you are requesting, we do enter all of that earnings information into the system, and then it is in SSA's database that the income has been reported for that Ticketholder.

Erin: Okay, because recently I sent an email to the helpdesk because I thought we were heading that way, but then I was told Social Security still has to do something with that information. I had the pay stubs, excuse me, from last June, and Social Security, for some reason, is still not verifying that this person was way over SGA and their benefits should have stopped. So, I did a test run, and it still was not taking it, and I am still not getting paid.

Nicole Black: So, this is specifically related to not so much you receiving payments for it? It is really just verifying the earnings. Is that what I am hearing?

Erin: Oh, well, in the sense that, okay, so I had this issue with one particular, well, actually two, but I was focused on one. I finally got the pay stubs from them because and then I submit it to you all expecting that Social Security would collaborate with you and somehow say, yep, you

are right. They should not be receiving benefits because they are way over SGA in Phase 2. But that never happened, and I am still being blocked from payments.

Nicole Black: Whatever you send in, we do enter the earnings. As it relates to the Ticketholder having their benefits suspended or anything related to their entitlement, that is something that has to be addressed at the field office level. We just enter the data. That is something I would recommend either having the Ticketholder go to the field office or maybe having a conference call with that Ticketholder just so that you can kind of get down to the bottom of what it is that they have on their side. But rest assured anything that you send in is definitely getting entered into the system.

Erin: Okay, is this a new change that you now enter the data is recognized by Social Security, or has that always been the case? Did something change?

Nicole Black: From what I know, well, from my knowledge, this has always been the case. Anything that we enter is in the system.

Erin: Oh, I thought it was a new change. Okay, I misunderstood, so, okay. All right, well, thanks very much.

Nicole Black: You are welcome. Thank you, Erin.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Erin. I am going to pause just one moment. We have about 10 minutes left in the call. So just like to remind everyone if you would like to ask a question, raise your hand by pressing star 5 if you are on the phone, star 6 to unmute. Click the raise-hand icon up top. Rebecca?

Rebecca: Yes, our next question comes from Trish. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone to unmute and activate your video, if you like, and ask your question.

Trish: Okay, it is regarding the 18-month look-back period. And this may or may not be specific to us. I am an Employer EN, as well as a Traditional EN. At one point had to have two SAM codes, and they have since gotten rid of that, and I only have one SAM. And I have an employee that was with my Traditional EN that has moved to my Employer EN, and when I go to bill on him, I am getting a denial because of the 18-month, look-back. How do I fix that?

Nicole Black: Hi, Trish, thank you for your question. This does sound like something that is a specific, unique situation. So, send this question or the reference number to the Payment Helpdesk, and ask them to forward it to me, and we will take a look at it for you.

Trish: Thank you so much.

Nicole Black: You are welcome.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Trish.

Kimberly Cutler: Can I just add something really quick about that? Just please remember that the 18-month look-back when we put the information in, it is based on the first ticket assignment. So that may be what is going on, but definitely send it over to Nicole. But I just wanted you guys to know that when there are multiple assignments, and when it comes to, you know, you still have your Phase 1s, and when it comes to your Phase 1 Milestones and doing your 18-month look-back, it is going to be based off of the first ticket assignment. So We are looking at those months prior to that assignment. So that may be the case here.

Trish: We were his employer when we were the Traditional EN but then we were told because we were an employer, we needed to have two different PIDs. So, you know, it got real sticky with having to transition from the traditional to the employer, and now it is knocking out claims, but we are still the same company. I mean, it is both of them are called Community Services Program. We just have, you know, we just have two different PIDs, one for traditional and one for employer.

Kimberly Cutler: There are things of extenuating circumstances that Nicole can, you know, really explain a little bit more offline about how that works when you are changing PIDs and stuff like that. So, yeah, that will affect your payments. But, again, I won't go down that rabbit hole here. So yeah, Nicole, I am going to go back off camera because what Nicole said was right to send it to her. But just wanted to kind of let you know too about the 18-month look-back.

Nicole Black: Thank you, Kim.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Trish. Do we have any other raised hands at this time?

Rebecca: Katherine, no, at this time we do not have any raised hands.

Katherine Jett: Okay, let's see if we can get Rose to go back to Slide 18 for just a moment. I would like to remind everyone that we still have time, have nine minutes left in the call. If you have a question, just raise your hand. I see one.

Rebecca: Yes, our next question comes from Wendy. Your audio and video are active. Please click your microphone to unmute and activate your video, if you like, and ask your question.

Wendy: Hi, can you hear me?

Nicole Black: Yes, ma'am. How are you, Wendy?

Wendy: I am good, Nicole. How are you?

Nicole Black: I am well, thank you.

Wendy: Okay, good. I have a question. Okay, I'd have to unassign one of my beneficiaries recently because he was only working seasonally. He was working, May, June, July, August, and sometimes September, usually not October. When I am trying to figure those, you know, when I get up into the Phase 1 Milestone 3 because months were dropping off on the other side. So, I found out that the beneficiary opened a case with VR, and he signed a release of information. So the VR agent called me and he said "I was just wondering why you unassigned him". And I said, "well, because if he is just going to continue to work part-time, seasonally, then he is not going to pass a timely progress review, it is not a goal of full-time employment, right"? How is it possible that the VR counselor did not know about the trial work periods? He says "what are those? I said, "are you new?" And he said, "well, kind of. I've been here three years". Now, I know they do reimbursement fee for services kind of things, especially if they ever to do like any AT or things like that. You know, that just really is a problem for ENs because, I mean, we are a small EN. We are trying to build it up, and we are busting our butts for every, you know, milestone and payment that we can get, and it, I mean, we are supposed to have a Partnership Plus with VR, we know more than they do is basically what I am thinking in a lot of respects about how it works. So, anyway, I do not know if you can address that or not.

Nicole Black: Thank you, Wendy. Yeah, that one is a little complex, but that is something that I would recommend you reach out to your ENDT Training Analyst. They may be able to assist you and, you know, with the Partnership Plus piece of it and the calls and the communication with the VR to bring them up to speed with the processes.

Wendy: Do they submit for the Phase 1 Milestones? I know VR helps a lot of people going to school and things like that, but, I mean, do VR agencies do the same kind of submissions for phase payments as Phase 1 payments, Phase 2, Outcome as ENs do?

Nicole Black: So I am not familiar with how the VR and how their payments are adjudicated. Kim is going to step in here.

Wendy: Okay.

Kimberly Cutler: Yeah, so for the VRs, it is a whole different system. So, to answer your question, no, they do not bill for Phase 1s, Phase 2s Outcomes. They are under the cost-reimbursement phase, so it is their payment system is completely different than the Employment Network payments under the Ticket to Work program. Two different pots, right? So you are right, they provide services. You provide services. So the way the VRs bill for payment and ENs bill for payment are completely separate.

Wendy: Okay, thank you.

Kimberly Cutler: Unless they are VR EN, and that goes into something else. Unless they are a VR acting as an EN, then they fall under the same payment method, but if just straight, providing vocational rehabilitation services under cost reimbursement, two separate systems.

Wendy: Okay, thank you.

Candace: Hi, this is Candace. I know we do not have a lot of time, but I thought I could jump in and explain it a little bit.

Kimberly Cutler: Thank you, Candace.

Candace: You are welcome. So for cost reimbursement, they are not getting paid payments. Basically, I wanted to just explain a little bit about the cost reimbursement program versus the EN payment. So cost reimbursement, the VRs will get reimbursement if the beneficiary reaches a continuous period of SGA for nine out of 12 months. So that is what their goal is. So what they have an IPE instead of an IWPE. And the beneficiary actually works with the counselor, signs an IPE to set a goal for what work they want to do or what counts; any kind of a job help that they need from the VR, the beneficiary will get services provided from the VR and help them achieve a CP of SGA, to finally become self-sufficient and come off the rolls, where for EN payments, it is different. So you both are providing services, but it is also based off of when the beneficiary actually walks into the VR and the VR helps them. The VR will assist them, and then they will assign an IPE to decide what their goal will be in the future. So they help with a lot of schooling, counseling, job placement, resume writing, anything that the beneficiary needs to help them achieve a goal and, you know, to receive employment. So we have to wait until they have exactly nine out of 12 months for a continuous period of SGA before we can actually reimburse the VR. So they are not receiving payment for Milestone 1 or Phase 2 or Outcomes. They are actually getting reimbursement for the time that they worked with the beneficiary to the time they actually close the case. So it is a whole different payment system. I hope that was a little clear.

Katherine Jett: Thank you, Candace.

Nicole Black: Thanks, Candace.

Candace: You are welcome.

Katherine Jett: All right, I do not see any more raised hands. Rebecca, we do not have any more at this time?

Rebecca: No raised hands at this time.

Katherine Jett: Well, so move to close the call. If you will go to Slide 21. Yeah. We would like to thank everyone today. Thank you, Nicole, Kim, SSA, and the participants for all your questions and your time. The date for the next All EN Payments Call will be communicated via GovDelivery. And remember, if you have any questions, you can contact ENPaymentsHelpdesk@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov, and everyone have a wonderful day. Thank you. This call is now concluded.