



QUARTERLY ALL VR CALL RECAP JANUARY 14, 2025

TPM Welcome and Logistics

Keitra Hill, VR Payments Manager (TPM)

Keitra welcomed everyone to the call, provided logistics, and started the call by sharing Announcements.

Announcements

Keitra Hill (TPM)

Keitra provided the following announcements:

New Ticket to Work Email Address

- On December 2, 2024, Social Security announced via GovDelivery message that the Ticket Program email address has changed.
- Support@choosework.ssa.gov is now TicketToWork@ssa.gov.
- This email address is for Ticketholders and the general public who would like to contact us for additional information.
- Please be sure to update your website content with the new address.
- For a limited time, emails sent to Support@choosework.ssa.gov will be forwarded to TicketToWork@ssa.gov.

Cost Reimbursement and Ticket to Work Training Symposium

- **Hosted by:** State VR Agencies
- **Dates:** March 4-6, 2025
- **Location:** Anne Arundel County Career Center (AJC)
613 Global Way, Linthicum, MD 21090
- **Cost:** No cost to register.
- **Link to Registration:** <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/8068555/New-Survey>



Eric Schmidt, from the Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services, shared the following details regarding the symposium:

- **Attendees and Topics:** Over 60 attendees have registered; a mix of blind agencies, general agencies, and combined agencies. Topics will include cost reimbursement, Ticket to Work partnership, benefits planning, and data for VR agencies.
- **Logistics:** Event location is in proximity to Baltimore Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport. Hotels in the surrounding areas have shuttles to and from the airport, and the location was chosen to make travel cost-efficient for attendees.

Section 301 Overview

Renee Moore, Office of Employment Support Policy (SSA)

Renee provided an overview of the Section 301 policies, including the following:

- Eligibility SSI or SSDI benefits may continue after a medical cessation or when a beneficiary does not meet the adult requirements for disability benefits, if the following requirements are met:
- The individual participates in an appropriate program of VR services, employment services, or other support services.
- The individual began participating in the program before the month their disability or blindness ceased. (This means that an SSI child must be in the program prior to or in the month of the age 18 SSI medical cessation.) If the beneficiary stopped participating prior to the month of cessation, in the month of cessation, or during the month after the medical cessation, there is no potential 301 eligibility. (DI 14510.003)
- The individual's participation in the program continues through the two-month grace period after cessation; and
- SSA determines that the individual's completion of the program, or continuation in the program, will increase the likelihood that the individual will not return to the disability rolls.

What is an Appropriate Program?

- Examples of an appropriate program include but are not limited to:
 - Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
 - State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies
 - Employment Networks (EN)



- Participation in a Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS)
- An Individual Work Plan (IWP), an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) under our Ticket to Work Program

When Does Section 301 Entitlement End?

- An individual completes the program.
- The individual stops participating in the program.
- SSA determines that continued participation in the program will no longer increase the likelihood that the individual will not return to the disability rolls.

Benefits terminate effective the month after the month of program completion or participation stopped (DI 14510.007).

When to flag Section 301 Cases

- During a Medical Continuing Disability Review (CDR) or an Age-18 Redetermination, we ask whether the beneficiary is participating in VR, employment or other support services. If the beneficiary indicates that they are, we mark the case with a “Potential Section 301 Case flag” to develop for participation if there is a medical cessation.

How You Can Help

- Part of the CDR process is for the beneficiary to complete form SSA-454. Section 7 of the form asks if the beneficiary is participating in any educational, specialized work or VR training or similar. You can help by ensuring this part of the form is completed.
- This is important because a completed Section 7 prompts us to flag the case to develop for continued payments.
- You can also consider asking questions about the beneficiary’s medical review status as part of your discussions.
- **For example:**
 - You can ask the beneficiaries if they’re going through a medical review:
 - If they are – share with them that there is important information about educational and vocational training, needed on the SSA-454, and please consider offering to help complete it.
 - If they are not – ask them to let you know when they start the medical review process so that you can help them complete Section 7 of the SSA-454 thoroughly and correctly.



Section 301 Development After the Medical Cessation

- If an individual appeals the decision and requests Statutory Benefit Continuation (SBC), SSA does not pursue verification of vocational rehabilitation participation during the appeal.
- If they do not request SBC, SSA will contact the vocational rehabilitation service provider listed on the medical review forms and collect information about program participation on form SSA-4290.
- SSA will then send the case to another office to determine if the program meets the requirements and if participation will increase the likelihood of permanent removal from the roles.
- SSA will inform the individual of the decision. If it's an approval, the individual will continue to receive benefits if they meet the non-medical requirements for payment.

For more information on our Section 301 policies, refer to [DI 14500](#).

Questions and Answers

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

Fiscal Year (FY) 25 Cost Formula and Vocational Rehabilitation Client Earnings Report (VRCER) File Tips

Keitra Hill (TPM)

Keitra provided the following FY25 Cost Formula reminder and tips for the VRCER file:

Reminder: FY25 Cost Formula – Due Date Extension

- On October 2, 2024, the Social Security Administration announced via a GovDelivery message that the due date for submitting your Administrative, Counseling and Placement (ACP) data was extended to **Friday, January 31, 2025**.
- If you need an additional extension, please email Raquel.L.Donaldson@ssa.gov.
- Continue to submit your claims as usual.
- **Do not** hold claims because you have not submitted your cost formula.
- If you have questions, please send an email to VR.Helpdesk@ssa.gov.



VR CER File Tips

- VRs have the option to customize their VR CER files.
- Instead of having SSA send every record, consider having SSA send smaller files with only relevant clients:
 - Remove clients without earnings.
 - Remove clients who do not have earnings at D, E, or F level.
- Consider sending in faxed quarterly earnings for cases where SSA does not have the 3rd quarter on record.
- VRs are strongly encouraged to use “VR CER” as the case note for any claim where the VR CER file was used to determine earnings. SSA uses this tag to track VR CER cases.
- To request changes to the file contact: VR.Helpdesk@ssa.gov.

File Codes	Range of Earnings
A	Less than 1/2 Trial Work Level (TWL)
B	Greater than or equal to 1/2 TWL but less than TWL
C	Greater than or equal to TWL but less than Non-Blind SGA
D	Greater than or equal to SGA but less than Blind SGA
E	Greater than or equal to Blind SGA but less than 250% (Federal Poverty Level) FPL
F	Greater than or equal to 250% FPL

2024 Year in Review

Keitra Hill (TPM)

Keitra provided details of the year in review including payment statics, top 3 payment denials and a description of the denials and tips on how to avoid them.



VR Payments Statistics – 2023 vs. 2024

Fiscal Year	Receipts	Payments	Claims Processed
FY23	31,818	\$201,142,719	37,417
FY24	25,471	\$189,470,303	36,630

2024 Top 3 Payment Denials

Denial Code	Denial Reason	2024 Total
620	Untimely Filing	3,440
220	8 Months or Less of SGA	2,128
320	9 Months of SGA But Not Within 12-Month Period	1,606

Description and Tips to Avoid Denials

Denial Code	Denial Reason	Description	Tips to Avoid Denial
220	8 Months or Less of SGA	8 months or less of verified SGA level earnings were found in SSA’s records.	If an initial claim was denied due to insufficient earnings, please wait an additional six months to submit a reconsideration claim to avoid another 220 denial.
320	9 Months of SGA But Not Within 12-Month Period	9 Months of SGA were found in SSA’s records, but the 9 months are not within a continuous 12-month period.	<p>1 Check quarterly wage information to determine if 9 months are found within 12 months of the SGA level earnings identified.</p> <p>If not, the SVRA must provide verifiable documentation of 9 months within 12 months of SGA level earnings.</p>

Denial Code	Denial Reason	Description	Tips to Avoid Denial
620	Untimely Filing (Initial Claim)	The initial claim was filed more than one year from the last month of SGA.	<p>2 If an initial claim was denied due to insufficient earnings, please wait an additional six months to submit a reconsideration claim to avoid another denial.</p> <p>Review the earnings provided on the Vocational Rehabilitation Client Earnings Report (VRCER) to ensure you file the claims no more than one year from the last month of SGA.</p>
620	Untimely Filing (Earnings Reconsideration)	The reconsideration claim for an earnings denial was filed more than one year from the decision date.	Review the notice of determination from the initial claim to ensure you file the reconsideration no more than one year from the decision date.
620	Untimely Filing (Non-earnings Reconsideration)	The non-earnings reconsideration claim was filed more than 60 days from the decision date.	Review the notice of determination from the initial claim to ensure you file the reconsideration no more than 60 days from the decision date.

Pre-Payment Validation Review (PVR) Documentation

Keitra Hill (TPM)

Keitra provided reminders of the documentation required for PVR claims and where to find more information on the pre-payment validation review process.

PVR Required Documentation

1. PVR Notice
2. SSA-199 with costs in numerical order and the total direct cost requested



3. Proof of payment for requested services

Examples

- Copies of all direct costs, including date of service, type of service rendered, cost of service, proof of payment.
 - Copies of bills, checks, credit card, and EFT transactions.
 - Receipts under the vendor's letterhead with paid date stamp and signature.
 - Authorizations and invoices with Warrant or Procurement numbers.
4. Signed Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or amended IPE
- Beneficiary and Counselor's signatures required.
5. Case/Progress Notes

PVR Reminders

- Ensure that VR services and costs meet the requirements for the requested payment.
- For more information, refer to the [VR Provider's Handbook](#), page 41.

Questions and Answers

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

Upcoming Events

Work Incentive Seminar Event (WISE) Webinars

- Promote and [join us](#) for WISE webinars on the fourth Wednesday of the month.
- Next WISE Webinar, "Ticket to Work and Mental Health," is on January 22, 2025, from 3-4:30 p.m. ET.

Today's Call

All materials from this call will be posted to the [Your Ticket to Work](#) website in the next few weeks, under the [Events Archives](#) section, including:

- Transcript
- PowerPoint Presentation



- Recap
- Audio

Next Quarterly All VR Call

- The next All VR Call will be Tuesday, April 15, 2025, from 1 - 2 p.m. ET.
 - The call was moved to Tuesday, April 15, due to the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) Conference that is scheduled for the week of April 8.
- Please send All VR Call training suggestions to VR.Helpdesk@ssa.gov by Friday, March 7, 2025.