QUARTERLY ALL VR CALL RECAP
APRIL 15, 2025

TPM Welcome and Logistics

Keitra Hill, VR Payments Manager (TPM)

Keitra welcomed everyone to the call, provided logistics, and introduced Eric Schmidt and Shelley Paquette to provide a recap of the Cost Reimbursement and Ticket to Work Training Symposium.

Cost Reimbursement and Ticket to Work Training Symposium

Eric Schmidt Program Manager, MD Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)
Shelley Paquette, Program Specialist, MN VR, Ticket to Work/CPWIC

Shelley Paquette and Eric Schmidt recapped the Cost Reimbursement and Ticket to Work Training Symposium, highlighting the need for the event, the steps taken to organize it, and the topics covered during the three-day event held on March 4-6, 2025, in Linthicum Heights, Maryland.

Why the Symposium was Needed

Shelley explained that it had been many years since the last Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) conference, which was held in 2019, and the COVID-19 pandemic had derailed opportunities for such events.

The symposium covered various topics, including cost reimbursement processes, Ticket to Work, data tools, best practices, benefits planning, and Partnership Plus.

Steps to Develop the Symposium

The presenters provided details on the steps taken to organize the symposium, including Eric enlisting a team from Social Security, other VRs, blind agencies, and Employment Networks

(EN), identifying top topics, securing Maryland's leadership and support, and arranging logistics such as location and lodging.

More than 80 people from 27 states attended the symposium, including 36 VR agencies, six SSA staff and multiple staff from ENs and Benefits Planning partners.

The three-day event covered topics such as Cost Reimbursement training, an overview of the VR-driven cost reimbursement basics, data tools and best practices, benefits planning, and Partnership Plus.

Here is a breakdown of the daily agenda:

- **Day 1:** SSA Full Day of Training:

    - Overview of Cost Reimbursement, recommended practices, Ticket Portal highlights, Q&A sessions.

- **Day 2:** VR-Driven CR Basics/Overview:

    - Claims/denials/Recons, C3s/PVRs, tracking claims, general/blind differences, pre-ETS pilot, Ticket or CR - what's best for your state, importance of Ticket assignments, and best practices.

    - Data tools and best practices:

        - UI/SWIS UI, VRCER, Work Number, use of the Ticket Portal, SVES, budget forecasting, Cost Formula, value of good data.

- **Day 3:** VR-Driven Training on Ticket to Work:

    - Benefits Planning, Partnership Plus, and tying all the component processes together to achieve results.

Key Highlights

The key highlights of the symposium were:

- **RSA Forms Changes**: RSA will be changing the forms used for cost formula development, and participants should be on the alert for these changes in the upcoming cycle.

- **Notice of Determination (NOD):** The Notice of Determination for denied claims is printed on the date of the decision, and the notice for paid claims is printed on the date of the wire transfer from SSA.

- **Ticket Assignments:** VR agencies are required to report to SSA clients receiving VR services. When the Portal shows "Ticket is Terminated", this may be reflected as TW01.

If VRs continue to send in the SSN to check, it may result in additional Tickets (i.e., TW02, TW03, etc.).

- **Claims Submission Tip:** If you have a client with multiple periods of VR and your initial claims were denied due to earnings, submit the reconsideration for smallest claim first to see if it is payable before submitting claims for a different period of VR. If the reconsideration for the smallest claim is denied due to earnings, wait an additional quarter before submitting a reconsideration for the other periods of VR.

- **Ticket Portal and *my* SSA Accounts:** If you created your *my* SSA account using a work email, it should be changed to a personal email online via the *my* SSA website.

  - For assistance with changing email addresses, contact the helpdesk for the website used to create the account.

  - **Login.gov**

    - Call for assistance (844) 875-6446, 24 hours a day, or

    - Submit a help ticket at https://login.gov/contact/

  - **ID.me**

    - Submit a help ticket at https://help.id.me/hc/en-us/p/contact_support

- **PVRs/SGA:** VRs are no longer required to indicate the reference number on all documents for diary submissions.

  - For faxed documentation more than 30 days old without a response, email the helpdesk.

  - PVRs are chosen randomly as a percentage based on the previous year's submission.

  - PVR notices now reflect the 75-day due date.

- **Resources Updates:** The VR Handbook and Ticket Portal User Guide updates are in development.

General Highlights:

- **Delays in Claim Submission**: Acceptable "good cause" events include missing deadlines/etc., things out of your control (fire, Act of God, systems issues, etc.); not acceptable (vacation, retirements, etc.).

- **Notice of Determination**: The date on the notice is the decision date, not the date the notice was opened.

- **Request for Information (RFI):** The RFI has been released so the Ticket Program Manager may change.

- **Ticket Unassignment Request Form:** This form can be signed electronically. The form was revised in December 2024. Here is a link to the **Beneficiary Ticket Unassignment Form**.

- **Connecting with NENA:** The association is a resource for those who connect with ENs. For more information on NENA, follow this link **https://nenaticket.org/**.

Symposium Survey

All attendees received a survey to gauge their overall satisfaction with the symposium. Here are two questions from the survey and participants' responses:

How satisfied were you with the agenda?

- 86% Very Satisfied

- 11% Satisfied

- 3% Dissatisfied

How satisfied were you with the overall value in attending the symposium?

- 94% Very Satisfied

- 6% Satisfied

Follow-up questions provided in the survey will be sent to SSA, including questions sent prior to the event and those asked during the event.

The success of the event has prompted planning for future symposiums. The participants provided the following ideas for future sessions:

- Allow more time for networking

- Include breakouts for working topics or by experience level

- Have more experts share on topics in the future

- Address some housekeeping improvements (mic, temperature, etc.)

Additional Training Needs

TOPICS	
Employment Networks, Partnership Plus	pre-Employment Transition Services (pre-ETS)
Establishing national workgroups to address challenges/improve processes	State Verification Exchange System (SVES)
Benefits Planning and cost reimbursement	Morrow Ticket Tracker
Cost Reimbursement for SSI ages 16-18 group without Tickets	Best Practices/Tips
Newbie sessions	Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies as an EN (VREN)
Vocational Rehabilitation Client Earnings Report (VRCER)	The basics/practical
Data strategies from Texas	Ticket Portal fields
Ticket to Work	

Next Steps

The next steps are to edit the symposium presentations and send them to everyone on the CSAVR email list. To be added to the list, contact **Ashlee.Deans@dars.virginia.gov**. This list will be used to connect monthly with the Cost Reimbursement VR group.

Six topics were identified for future CSAVR monthly calls or training sessions, which included the State Verification and Exchange System (SVES), and other topics identified during symposium or in the survey responses. SVES will be the first training session scheduled for May 2025. The group is looking for other states to volunteer to host future symposiums. Send suggestions to eric.schmidt@maryland.gov.

VR Updates

Keitra Hill, VR Payments Manager (TPM)

Keitra provided VR updates regarding the pre-payment validation reviews and the new Ticket to Work email addresses.

Pre-Payment Validation Review

Update:

VR agencies are **no longer** required to send the PVR notice as part of the required PVR documentation.

Required Documentation:

1. Signed SSA-199 with cost listed in numerical order

2. Proof of payment for requested services (should be submitted in the same numerical order as the SSA-199).

3. Signed Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or amended IPE

4. Case/Progress Notes

New Ticket to Work Program Email Addresses

On Friday, March 28, 2025, the Social Security Administration sent a GovDelivery message announcing the new Ticket to Work Program email addresses. VR agencies were advised to update their contacts to the new email addresses listed below.

New Email Address	Email Scope	Where to find the email address
ENOperations@ssa.gov	EN Training and Partnership Plus	Your Ticket to Work Contact Us page
ENRecruitment@ssa.gov	Potential ENs	Not listed on the public websites yet
ENPaymentsHelpDesk@ssa.gov	EN Payment Inquiries	Your Ticket to Work Contact Us page
ENSystemsHelp@ssa.gov	Ticket assignment, service provider website, and Ticket Portal	Your Ticket to Work Contact Us page
TTWProgramIntegrity@ssa.gov	Services and Supports Reviews	Your Ticket to Work Program Operations – Referral Agreements page
ENAPOR@ssa.gov	APOR Inquiries	Not listed on the public websites yet

New Email Address	Email Scope	Where to find the email address
TPRHelpdesk@ssa.gov	TPR Inquiries	Your Ticket to Work Contact Us page
TTWStories@ssa.gov	Success Stories	Choose Work Success Stories page
TTWwebinars@ssa.gov	WISE Inquiries	Not listed on the public websites yet
TTWsocialmedia@ssa.gov	Social Media	Not listed on the public websites yet

Resources

Phone

- Monday through Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. ET
- Toll Free: 1-866-949-3687/TTY: 1-866-833-2967
    - Option 1: Beneficiary Help Desk
    - Option 2: EN Payments Help Desk
    - Option 3: EN Systems Help Desk
    - Option 4: State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies

Email

For issues regarding Cost Reimbursement, Ticket assignment, the service provider website, and the Ticket Portal, email **VR.Helpdesk@ssa.gov**

Questions and Answers

A question-and-answer period followed.