



# ALL EN PAYMENTS CALL TRANSCRIPT

## FEBRUARY 24, 2026

**Katherine Jett:** Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to the first Quarterly All EN Payments Call for 2026. On behalf of the Social Security Administration and the Ticket Program Manager, thank you for joining today. Now a quick introduction. My name is Katherine Jett. I'm the Project Coordinator for the Ticket Program Manager. I'll go over the agenda today, provide a few call logistics, and introduce our main speaker for today. Let's get started.

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The call is being recorded and transcribed. And, per the Ticket Program Agreement, Part 3, Section 11, Subsection I, EN staff are not permitted to record this meeting or capture the transcript. When will the transcript, recap, PowerPoint, and audio be available on the Your Ticket to Work website? We're going to have a GovDelivery sent out when all the post-call materials are ready and available and are posted to the Your Ticket to Work website.

How do you locate the information on the website? If you navigate to the Ticket to Work website, click on the top banner, select Training and Events, then Archives, scroll down the page to the National All Calls, and select 2026, and look for today's call, the Quarterly All EN Payments Call for 2/24/2026.

Now, if you have technical issues on today's call, such as not being able to hear the speakers, you need to log out of the meeting then rejoin. And if you have any questions for our speakers, we ask that you hold those until the question-and-answer session. And, during the Q&A, you're going to click the Raise Hand icon at the top of the Teams window, and a member of the production team will provide audio/video access and advise you when it's available in time for you to unmute. Now, if you're joining via phone, the process is to press \*5 to raise your hand. You will be given audio access, and then you'll need to press \*6 to unmute. To allow everyone time during the Q&A, please only ask one question each time you're called upon and try to keep your questions regarding the topics presented on today's call. Any additional questions or comments may be sent to [ENPaymentsHelpDesk@ssa.gov](mailto:ENPaymentsHelpDesk@ssa.gov). Any questions not answered during today's call will be forwarded to the appropriate speaker for comment.

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Closed captioning is available for today's call in two ways. You have the Teams application and via the browser. To activate the closed caption in the Teams app, you'll go to the top of the Teams window, click *More*, click on *Language and Speech*, and select *Turn on Live Captions*. To



activate closed captions in the browser, you'll just capture the link, drop it in the browser; and then it'll open up a separate window to view the closed captions.

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We'll go over today's agenda. The call is slated for 60 minutes. On today's agenda, we're going to go over the Ticket Evaluation Update, enter the first question-and-answer session, and provide the 2025 End-of-Year Statistics; the 2026 Trial Work Level, SGA-blind, SGA amounts, the 2026 Ticket Payment Rates, the July ePay File Statistics, ePay Reminders, Payments Help Desk Reminders, Phase 1 Exclusions, Top Three EN-Related Denials for Fiscal Year 2025, Concurrent Ticketholders, Payment Topics, question-and-answer session number 2, and then close the call out with the next Quarterly All EN Payments Call date.

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**Nicole Black:** Thank you, Katherine. We are going to kick the call off with Ellie Stinnett. She's going to go over the Ticket evaluation updates that we have.

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**Ellie Stinnett:** Thank you. I am Ellie Stinnett. I'm an economist here at SSA, and we are conducting an evaluation of the Ticket to Work Program. This is to help us understand best practices and identify potential improvements. In the next few months, our contractor Mathematica will be fielding a survey to service providers. As an EN, you will receive a link to a survey. There's only one submission per EN, so one person at each organization will be invited. You'll get a letter in the mail and an email, and this person will be whoever is named as the Program Contact for your organization. Now, if you receive the survey and you feel that another person at your organization should complete it instead, or you need to ask others for help as you're answering the questions, that is appropriate. After completion, Mathematica will offer a \$40 check for completing the survey, but you will have the option to decline the check if you prefer. We do really encourage you to participate in the survey. This will have questions about your beneficiary intake process, experience providing services, and ask for recommendations you have for SSA to improve the program.

Now, additionally, we will be conducting interviews with beneficiaries. And Mathematica will select the interview respondents based on predetermined criteria. Beneficiaries will also receive a letter in the mail and a telephone call inviting them to participate, and they will be eligible for a \$40 gift card if they complete the interview. If one of your clients is contacted and maybe reaches out to you to ensure that this is a valid data collection, please assure them of the legitimacy of our study and encourage them to participate. We expect that we will administer the survey and conduct these interviews in mid-spring into late spring. If you have any questions, I'm happy to take those now. Or my email address is below, along with the email



address of my colleague, Seth. And we'd be happy to answer any questions we can over email. Pass it back to y'all.

**Nicole Black:** Thank you, Ellie. We appreciate that.

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And just one more time to give the opportunity. Are there any questions for Ellie before we move on to our agenda? Okay. We will start off the February EN Payments Call with the 2025 end-of-year statistics. For 2025, \$124,976,744.00 was paid. That was 163,650 total payments, and that included 52,982 total denials. The most common denial reason was Denial Reason number 2, the Ticketholder was still receiving Federal cash benefits.

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For 2026, the Trial Work Level and Substantial Gainful Activity Amounts are as follows: The Trial Work Level amount is \$1,210. The SGA amount is \$1,690. And the blind SGA amount is \$2,830.

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The 2026 Ticket payment rates are below. For the Milestone Outcome method of payment, SSI payments: Phase 1 Milestones are paid at \$1,904. Phase 2 Milestones will be paid at \$319. And the Outcome payments will be paid out at \$319. For SSDI payments: Phase 1 Milestones will again be \$1,904. Phase 2 Milestones will be paid at \$571, and the Outcomes will also be paid at \$571.

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For the Outcome Only method of payment, SSI payments will be paid at \$594, and SSDI payments will be paid at \$1,063.

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**The July ePay File statistics.** The July ePay File was completed in September of 2025. There were 11,628 total claims paid that encompassed 6,659 SSNs with a total of \$5,983,834. And SSA has started processing the January 2026 ePay File.

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A few reminders when we're in the ePay period. Phase 1 Milestone 4 is paid via ePay, but ENs must still submit payment requests for Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3 through the Ticket Portal with proof of relationship. Unassigned Tickets are not included in ePay. ENs must have also passed their annual Service and Supports Review. And the ePay File is processed in SSN order, not provider ID or PID order. Phase 1 Milestone 4, Phase 2 Milestones and Outcomes are all paid via ePay. ENs are encouraged not to submit for these payment types via the Portal



without submitting evidence of earnings when the EN portion of the ePay File is being processed. When submitting for such payments, it slows down processing and causes duplicate claim months.

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Please allow TPM to pay all available claims via ePay before requesting payment via the Ticket Portal. And a final reminder is that an initial PII violation will remove the EN from ePay for three months or one ePay File. During this time, the EN must submit payment requests via the Ticket Portal. For example, if an EN violates the PII rule while a file is currently being processed —let's say that infraction happens in February — they will be removed from the next ePay File.

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**Payment Help Desk Reminders.** When reaching out to the Help Desk for payment inquiries, all communication regarding Ticketholders and ENs must be with suitable EN staff. That would be the approved Portal users, Program Contacts, or the Signatory Authority.

**Personally Identifiable Information.** If an EN needs to submit PII, the submission must be done via fax or mail. ENs must not send PII via email. And ENs use the SSA Reference Number when emailing payment inquiries to the Payments Help Desk.

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Now we'll discuss Phase 1 Exclusions.

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When we have a successful VR closure, no Phase 1 payments will be available to the EN if that Ticketholder previously had an open case with a State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, or the SVRA, and was working at the time the SVRA closed the case as a successful closure. When multiple ENs are involved, the exclusion is determined based on the first Ticket assignment date, not your specific Ticket assignment date. Please keep in mind all VR-related exclusions are associated with the first initial Ticket assignment date for that Ticketholder. Another exclusion is when there is a Cost Reimbursement payment. If the Ticketholder previously had an open case with a state VR agency and SSA made a Cost Reimbursement payment to the State VR Agency prior to the EN requesting a Phase 1 payment, no Phase 1 Milestone payments will be available to the EN. And a final exclusion is prior earnings. No Phase 1 Milestone payments will be available to an EN if the Ticketholder achieved the level of work associated with that milestone within the most recent 18-month period prior to Ticket assignment. Again, when there are multiple ENs involved, the exclusion is determined based on the first Ticket assignment date.



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Now we'll move on to the top three EN-related denials for fiscal year 2025.

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**The Denial Reason: Insufficient Documentation.** This denial reason applies when the EN did not provide the required supporting documentation within nine business days of submitting a payment request. For example, the EN did not provide evidence of earnings. A helpful tip is to always send in supporting documentation within nine business days. Please keep in mind that that communication gets sent to your Payments Contact. So, it is imperative that the Payments Contact checks to see what emails are being sent to them by the Payments Help Desk. And this can also be tracked in the Portal when you hover over the claim that's in the Portal. And you can see the actual denial reason, which will indicate what additional supporting documentation is being requested.

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**Denial Reason: Payments Must Be Made in Order.** This denial reason applies when the EN has submitted a request for a Phase 2 Milestone payment before all available Phase 1 Milestone payments were processed to completion. A tip to deal with this denial reason would be review the denial comments. Phase 1 and Phase 2 payments must be processed in order. ENs should track payment requests received for each Ticketholder. Check the 'View Ticket Payments Already Made To Me' and view 'All Pending Payments for Me' options to view the status of the last payment request submitted. And another tip is the 'List Beneficiaries Currently Assigned to Me' screen displays the most recent claim month and the payment type for each Ticketholder.

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**The final denial reason for fiscal year 2025 would be Earnings Do Not Meet Phase 1 Milestone Criteria.** This denial reason applies to Phase 1 Milestone requests. It means the information that the EN submitted and the Ticketholder's earnings records available to Social Security do not show the required Trial Work Level earnings within the required timeframe. A tip to address this denial would be, when submitting for Phase 1 Milestones, ENs should check to make sure the Ticketholder has achieved Trial Work Level earnings. For Phase 1 Milestones 2, 3, and 4, ENs should check to make sure the number of months of Trial Work Level earnings is adequate and the earnings occurred within the designated timeframes to qualify for payment. A resource to use when trying to ascertain this information is the 2026 Monthly Earnings Estimator. It is a helpful resource and is found on the Your Ticket to Work website.

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Next up, we'll discuss Concurrent Ticketholders.

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Your Concurrent Ticketholders would be the Ticketholders who are both receiving Title II and Title XVI benefits. When you are requesting your Phase 1 Milestones, if the Ticketholder is in current pay for both Title II and Title XVI, use the Trial Work Level earnings that satisfy the payment under either entitlement. If the Ticketholder is in current pay for only one entitlement, Title II or Title XVI, the payment will be made based on the entitlement that is in current pay and meets the Trial Work Level earnings requirements. For your Phase 2 Milestone payment request, if the Ticketholder is in both current pay for Title II and Title XVI, we'll use the SGA or blind SGA earnings to satisfy that payment. If the Ticketholder is in current pay for only one entitlement, Title II or Title XVI, the payment will be made based on the entitlement that is in current pay and meets the SGA or blind SGA earnings requirements.

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When requesting your Outcome payments, if the Ticketholder is in suspense for both Title II and Title XVI due to work or SGA or blind SGA earnings, the payment can be made if SGA or blind SGA earnings criteria are met under either entitlement. If the Ticketholder is in suspense for both Title II and Title XVI but one of those entitlements is in suspense not due to work or earnings, the payment can be made if SGA or blind SGA earnings criteria are met under the entitlement that is in suspense due to work or SGA and blind SGA earnings.

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We'll go over our resources now. You can reach us by phone Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern, toll free at 866-949-3687, or TTY at 866-833-2967. You'll choose Option 1 for the Beneficiary Help Desk, Option 2 for the EN Payments Help Desk, And Option 3 for the Systems Help Desk. Please remember, we do communicate via GovDelivery messages. Please save this email address to your safe senders list so that these messages do not go into your spam or junk email boxes. That email address is [Tickettowork@subscriptions.ssa.gov](mailto:Tickettowork@subscriptions.ssa.gov). Or you can email us. For payment issues, you can email us at [ENPaymentsHelpDesk@ssa.gov](mailto:ENPaymentsHelpDesk@ssa.gov). For questions and issues related to Ticket assignment, the service provider website, and the Ticket Portal, please email [ENSystemsHelp@ssa.gov](mailto:ENSystemsHelp@ssa.gov).

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As a reminder, we want to make these calls of interest to you and discuss topics that are valuable to you all. We invite you to share 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. Please send your topics to the EN Payments Help Desk at [ENPaymentsHelpDesk@ssa.gov](mailto:ENPaymentsHelpDesk@ssa.gov).



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We are now ready for our next question-and-answer session. If you're on Microsoft Teams, please raise your hand, and you'll be unmuted by the facilitator. You will need to click the microphone to unmute yourself. Or, if you're on by phone, raise your hand by pressing \*5, and you will be unmuted by the facilitator. Then you will need to press \*6 to unmute yourself. Rebecca, who do we have our first question from?

**Rebecca:** Yes. Our first question comes from Justin. Your audio and video are active. Please click your microphone to unmute. And activate your video, if you like, and ask your first question.

**Nicole Black:** Hi, Justin.

**Justin:** Hi. I have a quick question regarding an example of denial reason 2. Can you go back a few slides for the EN payments denial?

**Nicole Black:** Sure.

**Justin:** They had to do with requesting things in order.

**Nicole Black:** Okay.

**Justin:** So, I've noticed in the past, I work occasionally with a VR agency here in California; and if they were previously enrolled with a VR, there's a solid chance that the VR Agency gets priority on requesting Phase 1 Milestone payments. I'll just ask for Phase 2 instead. But I have regularly gotten denied, saying that I need to request Phase 1 first, just to be denied that. And then I get to go back to requesting Phase 2. Is there any way that we can get that cleared up in the system so we don't have to deal with making three requests just to get one finally approved?

**Nicole Black:** So, the way that the system is set up, or just the way that payments are processed, is all Phase 1 payments must be addressed, regardless of whether there will be an exclusion. So, what we ask you to do is request that Phase 1 Milestone 1. And then, when the payment technicians are reviewing that initial request and they do see that there are exclusions that are applicable to your case, they will proactively address the remaining Phase 1s so that you can resume with your appropriate Phase 2 Milestone request. So we always have to address the Phase 1 first, and then we can take it from there and create any additional payments that are necessary.

**Justin:** Okay. So, it's kind of a just-in-case situation because I know that sometimes the 18 months or something like that after VR closure — sometimes the other ENs are eligible. So just kind of double check our numbers to make sure everything's in line, basically, right?



**Nicole Black:** Right. And it just gives us the opportunity to make sure everything that we have is current as of today and just to check all of our boxes to make sure that the payment decision is accurate for you.

**Justin:** Great. Fantastic. Thank you.

**Nicole Black:** You're welcome. Thanks, Justin.

**Katie Seymour:** Nicole, this is Katie. Could I chime in?

**Nicole Black:** Yes.

**Katie Seymour:** So, as long as the EN is eligible for ePay, right, even if they request Phase 1 Milestone 1 and get denied, the staff will then look for any available payment that they can make. We're not expecting the EN to then submit Phase 2 Milestone 1, right, if it's available?

**Nicole Black:** Correct. Yes. They will create and deny the remaining Phase 1 Milestones that should be denied and then create whatever is available and pay that for the EN based on that initial request.

**Katie Seymour:** So, can you just summarize that for us?

**Nicole Black:** Yes. Absolutely.

**Katie Seymour:** Want to get the whole point home.

**Nicole Black:** Absolutely. So Justin, just to circle back, if you know that you have a Ticketholder whose all Phase 1s are excluded, they're off the table. If you request that Phase 1 Milestone 1, we see that there are exclusions, we will proactively, at that point, deny the Phase 1 Milestone 1 due to the exclusions. And then we will move forward and create and deny the remaining Phase 1 Milestones. And then, if there's any additional available payments based on what we have in the system, or, to your point, knowing that you should start at a Phase 2 Milestone, we'll go ahead and proactively create and pay those payments for you. And then, if you're on ePay, if you're just a traditional EN, we will start at Phase 1 Milestone 4 for you if there are earnings on record, we'll go ahead and make those payments for you versus you needing to request Phase 1 Milestone 1 for those Ticketholders. Rebecca, who do we have our next question from?

**Rebecca:** Our next question comes from Sandra. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone to unmute. And activate your video, if you like, and ask your question.

**Sandra:** Thank you. Good afternoon. My question is, what are the ePay dates for this year?

**Nicole Black:** Hi, Miss Sandra. How are you?



**Sandra:** I'm good. How are you?

**Nicole Black:** Well, thank you. So the ePay dates for 2026?

**Sandra:** Yes, ma'am.

**Nicole Black:** Is that what you're asking? All right. So we're currently working the January ePay File. And then this is the cadence: we typically have ePay Files in January, April, July, and October of each year.

**Sandra:** Okay. April. You said April, July, and October.

**Nicole Black:** Yes, ma'am.

**Sandra:** Okay. All right. Thank you.

**Nicole Black:** You're welcome. And, Rebecca, who do we have our next question from?

**Rebecca:** Next question comes from Michael. Your audio and video are active. Please click your microphone to unmute. And activate your video, if you like, and ask your question.

**Michael:** Thank you. So we're having a couple of different options or couple of different problems. We have three clients who are currently working at SGA. The benefits have been successfully suspended. But, when I request a reimbursement, we're still getting a Code 2. And so I spoke to SSA and they said, well, it's coded incorrectly on our side. The claimant needs to contact the office and have the code changed. But our clients works full time, and they don't want to be on hold for an hour or two hours waiting for SSA to get on the call. So, my question is this: Is there a different release that I could use so I can just go into the office and get this coding issue corrected?

**Nicole Black:** Hi, Michael. Thank you for your question. And so I want to restate it and make sure I'm hearing you correctly. So you have a Ticketholder, and you're currently receiving denials based on the benefit status not being accurate in the system?

**Michael:** Correct. But their benefits have been successfully suspended. They're no longer receiving benefits. They haven't received benefits for a while. But the Code 2 still pops up that they're receiving Federal benefits. But they're earning like 5- or \$6,000 a month, and they're in Outcomes Payments now. But something switched, and they got coded incorrectly on SSA's side. I'm just confused on how we can move forward without this being an issue for the client or the claimant to try to handle because they don't want to do anything with Social Security, to be honest. So I'm trying to see how I can get this fixed.



**Nicole Black:** All right. So your question is specific to a specific Ticketholder, and so what I'll ask you to do is to send an email to the Help Desk with the reference number of your most recent denial. Please put it to my attention.

**Michael:** Okay.

**Nicole Black:** And then I can review the case, and then we can hopefully give you some better guidance as to how to move forward.

**Michael:** Okay. Thank you. I will do that.

**Nicole Black:** You're welcome. Michael, what EN are you with?

**Michael:** I'm with Pride Industries.

**Nicole Black:** Thank you, sir. I'm making a note so I can look for it.

**Michael:** Awesome. Thank you.

**Nicole Black:** You're welcome. And, Rebecca, who do we have next?

**Rebecca:** We have Ruchi. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone to unmute. And activate your video, if you like, and ask your question.

**Ruchi:** Hi, Nicole. So my question, I want to make sure, you know, that we are requesting the correct phase of payments. I know that the Portal is a living system, so things change, you know, from time to time. But we are kind of always confused as to what phase to request in certain cases. So, just as an example, the Portal showed non-pay status for this one person. BPQY shows that they are in pay status. So we requested Outcome payments based on the Portal, but we got a denial. And then we requested, you know, Phase 1 payments; but now that was denied as well. And now we're getting Phase 2 payments, even though the Portal shows non-pay. So that was a little confusing. And another example I want to give is a Ticketholder is still enrolled in Ticket, even though they have received termination of benefits notice. And so we're not sure what do we do? Do we request a payment? Do we not request? So, if you could, kind of shed some light on this.

**Nicole Black:** Thank you for your question, Ruchi. And so, just to restate your question just to make sure I'm hearing it the right way, you are encountering obstacles with the information that you're seeing in the Portal not being reflective in the outcome of the payment request that you are submitting due to the benefit status. Is that correct?

**Ruchi:** Yes.

**Nicole Black:** Okay.



**Ruchi:** That's correct. Yeah.

**Nicole Black:** So, again, this is something similar to Michael's, that this is Ticketholder specific. So what I would ask you to do is send an email to the Help Desk. Please put it to my attention, to Nicole Black, so that I can take a look at this. And then we can let you know how to move forward. And you only need to include one reference number of your latest denial, and then we can take it from there. And tell me, Ruchi, what's your EN?

**Ruchi:** Full Circle Employment Solutions.

**Nicole Black:** All righty.

**Ruchi:** Nicole, just so you know, that we're getting Phase 2 payments, even though the Portal shows non-pay.

**Nicole Black:** Okay.

**Ruchi:** But we can talk offline.

**Nicole Black:** Okay. Yeah. Send me a reference number, and I can take a look at it. And then I can get back with you.

**Katie Seymour:** And hi. Nicole, it's Katie Seymour again.

**Nicole Black:** Yes, ma'am.

**Katie Seymour:** I know you know I was going to jump on. We have said several times, I think on one of these calls, talked about removing that entire chart from the Portal. And we were asked to keep it there. Please do not use that chart to determine what payment you should request. That chart is not meant for that purpose. That chart is just trying to show an assignability history. If it does continue to cause confusion, we'll just remove it from the screen. But please do not use that chart when it's in the Portal. When you check Ticket assignability, it'll show the assignment history as well. There's a little chart there that tells you whether or not they were in current pay as of a certain date in a box. Please do not use that box to determine what payment request you should be doing. It is not going to match, and you will get a denial. So please don't use that as a determination. The only way you can find out if your Ticketholder is in current pay is to submit the request and have us take a look at it.

**Nicole Black:** Thank you, Katie. I appreciate that.

**Alexis Thomas:** Hi, Nicole. This is Alexis.

**Nicole Black:** Yes, ma'am.

**Alexis Thomas:** The caller had a second question about the termination of benefits and still getting paid. Termination of benefits and termination of Ticket are two separate things. If the



Ticket is terminated, you would not be receiving benefits after the termination date or payments after the termination date. If the benefits are terminated, depending on the termination reason of benefits, then you can still get payments.

**Nicole Black:** Thank you, Alexis. Ruchi, did that help?

**Ruchi:** Yes. I think so for that second one with the termination. So if, in the Portal, it's showing it's not terminated, then we can request a payment is what I'm understanding.

**Alexis Thomas:** Yes. Until that Ticket terminates, you can still get payments. And those would be considered Outcome payments if they're not receiving Federal cash benefits. And that just depends on the reason for the termination. So, you could get denials depending on the reason of that termination. But that would be determined by requesting the payment. Until that Ticket terminates, you can still request your payments.

**Ruchi:** Okay. Thank you so much.

Alexis Thomas: And you would see the Ticket termination in the Portal as well.

**Ruchi:** Okay.

**Nicole Black:** All right. Thank you, Alexis. Thank you, Katie. Rebecca, who do we have next?

**Rebecca:** Next we have 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:** Yes. Hello. How do I bill using a beneficiary's 2025 1099?

**Nicole Black:** Hi, Samantha. Thank you for your question. So your question is, how do you request a payment for a Ticketholder who is 1099.

**Samantha:** Correct.

**Nicole Black:** So, with a Ticketholder who's 1099, they are considered self-employed. And you would need to wait for their earnings to update in SSA's earnings database so that we can then make a payment determination from the data that we receive.

**Samantha:** So that would be done through ePay? So I can't use the 1099 that they provided to me to bill?

**Nicole Black:** Correct.

**Samantha:** Thank you very much.

**Nicole Black:** You're welcome. Rebecca, who do we have next?



**Rebecca:** Next we have Samantha from a FCES. Your audio and video are active. Please click your microphone to unmute, activate your video, and ask your question.

**Samantha:** Yes. Hi. I'm going to ask in just relation to Phase 1 payments. Sometimes, when you request a Phase 1 payment, it might be denied, and the denial will show it's under a different claim month. You know, for example, maybe you requested for December. And they deny it and say you should request for June. But, if you go back to the Ticketholder and they say that they didn't have any earnings for those months, how would you prove that?

**Nicole Black:** Hi, Samantha. Thank you for your question. So your question, just to restate it, is you submit based on the information that the Ticketholder's provided you. However, we deny that payment request for an earlier attainment month, and the Ticketholder is stating that there are no earnings at that time that should be on record. Is that correct?

**Samantha:** Yes. That's correct.

**Nicole Black:** Okay. So, with that, we are making our payments based on the earnings that are on record. If the Ticketholder has some type of discrepancy that those are not earnings, those earnings may come from a long-term disability or short-term disability and you have some type of documentation to verify that, I would recommend reaching out to the Payments Help Desk in those situations just to get clarity on what the denial was for. And then, at that point, we can point you in the right direction on what it is that you can provide for us to not count those earnings because they would not be due to work. They would not be work earnings at that time based on what the Ticketholder is sharing with you. But we do have to make the payment based on the earnings we have on record.

**Samantha:** Yeah.

**Nicole Black:** Okay. All right.

**Samantha:** Yeah. And is it possible or would they be able to tell us, like, any extra information of, like, how much it is that, you know, that they're seeing on record, like the earnings, amount, if it would help jog the client's memory?

**Nicole Black:** Unfortunately, we cannot share that information. That is something that the Ticketholder would need to provide. And, as I would just say, really, try to get the Ticketholder to remember if they may have had a job or some type of employment that just lasted a short period of time that they blocked from memory or that they've just forgotten about. We've all had those situations happen. We're like, gosh. I can't believe I worked there. And, when that happens, that may help them to remember. But it was short lived, which would put the earnings on record for that month. A good question to ask them is, did you receive any type of disability benefits? Did you have a windfall? Did you get a large sum of money that was not directly related to work that would explain what it is that we have on record?



**Samantha:** Okay. That makes sense.

**Nicole Black:** All right. Thank you. Appreciate your question. And, Rebecca, who do we have next?

**Rebecca:** Next we have Bridget. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone to unmute. And activate your video, if you like, and ask your question.

**Bridget:** Hello, there. We are currently processing a January 2026 ePay File. Is there an estimated completion date for this file?

**Nicole Black:** Hi, Bridget. Thank you for your question. I can say that we are almost there. We should be wrapping up very soon. And, as soon as we are complete, you will receive a GovDelivery notification letting you know that the EN portion of the ePay File has been completed.

**Bridget:** Okay. Thank you.

**Nicole Black:** You're welcome. And, Rebecca, who do we have next?

**Rebecca:** Next we have Sandra. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone to unmute. And activate your video, if you like, and ask your question.

**Sandra:** Thank you. I just have a couple, two questions. One, I have a couple of beneficiaries who are seasonal workers, and so they may work from May to October. But then they're off again to the next year, starting back up in May. And so, when I tried to bill, they're telling me that I have to have so many months. How can I say it? Or the months, I should say, that they're saying that I need to include, they're not working. So the question is, because of the fact that they're working seasonal, they're only working maybe four to five, six months a year but then there's a lapse between the previous year and the new year where they start up again. Is there a way that I could bill for those?

**Nicole Black:** Thank you for your question, Miss Sandra. So to make sure that I'm hearing it or interpreting it properly, you have a Ticketholder that's seasonal. So they're not working 12 months a year, but you're unable to bill for the gaps. And are you saying that they make enough money annually to where, if it's annualized, it would give you the earnings you need each month?

**Sandra:** So you're saying for the months that they're not working, if I take the total amount that they already made and divide it by 12?

**Nicole Black:** Right. So if there's somebody, they can make \$60,000 in six months and they're off the other six months, are they doing that? Or is it something where they're making just enough to hit Trial Work Level in that six-month period, and it's not enough to get you your additional Phase 1 payments?



**Sandra:** Yes. It's the second. They're making maybe 1,500.

**Nicole Black:** Okay. So, in those situations, unfortunately, in order to meet the requirements for your Phase 1 Milestones, you do have to have the consistency in their monthly earnings over the course of the time frame that's necessary for the Phase 1 that you're requesting. So, in those cases, we wouldn't be able to give you all four of your Phase 1 Milestones if the Ticketholder is not able to consistently meet the Trial Work Level requirements within the time span necessary.

**Sandra:** Okay. If I'm understanding correctly, I take the amounts that they've already made and divide it by 12 and they satisfy the Trial Work Level SGA, then I can bill?

**Nicole Black:** So, again, it has to be within the necessary timeframe. So the reason I was asking was just to get an idea of what earnings amount you were looking for. This does sound a little bit more specific. So, if you want, you can email the Payments Help Desk. And we can take a look at this Ticketholder for you so that we can see what it is we have on record and what it is you submitted to give you a more concise answer.

**Sandra:** Okay. And thank you so much. And then my second question is, what is the difference between Phase 1 and Phase 2?

**Nicole Black:** Phase 1 Ticketholders, they're Ticketholders who you're trying to reach Trial Work Level earnings, and they're in current pay. Your Phase 2 Ticketholders are still in current pay, and they are at or above SGA earnings.

**Sandra:** Is that for concurrence? I guess I'm not understanding what is Phase 2. I understand the Phase 1. I mean, how does a person go from Phase 1 to Phase 2?

**Nicole Black:** Phase 2 Ticketholders are making at or above SGA. So your Phase 1 Ticketholders are in current pay, and they are making at or above \$1,210 a month. And then Phase 2 is an earnings step. They're making more money per month. And so your Phase 2 Ticketholders must still be in current pay, but they're now making \$1,690 a month for SGA or blind SGA at \$2,830. So it's more so about an earnings level for them, if that helps.

**Sandra:** Kind of.

**Kimberly Cutler:** Hey, Nicole. This is Kimberly Cutler.

**Nicole Black:** Yes, ma'am.

**Kimberly Cutler:** Great explanation. I just want to explain too. Another way you can look at it is, of course, just remember that the Ticket to Work Program is with the goal is to get all Ticketholders off of the benefits, right, off of receiving SSI and/or SSDI. So there is a progression. So we start out with your Phase 1 Milestones. Like Nicole said, that's when you're going to earn at least Trial Work Level. So that Phase 1 Milestone period is getting your



individuals back into the workforce or entering the workforce at first. So they're kind of like — that's why we call it Trial Work Level or Trial Work Period — but we don't want them to stay there, right? They start out at a certain amount. And once they meet, because it's a possible four milestones within that period, so the goal is you want them to continue to work. You want them to increase their earnings so that they can eventually come off of the roles. So we move, and we start with Phase 1. And then you move to your Phase 2. So Phase 2, as Nicole said, it's an earnings step up. But it also is a step towards self-sufficiency. And that's where you want them to go because you don't want them to kind of just hang out at the Trial Work Level. You want them to grow in their position with their earnings so that can eventually become self-sufficient. So it's a progress, if that makes sense. So hopefully that makes sense too.

**Sandra:** Is it safe to say that the Phase 1 level is basically dealing with the Trial Work Period level, and Phase 2 is dealing with when they go into the Extended Period of Eligibility?

**Kimberly Cutler:** I think that kind of goes into a little bit more detail of a training opportunity. And, please, we want to make sure that you get a full understanding. We don't want to rush it on this platform. So I will ask, if you would, just send your information to the Help Desk. And then we can answer those very specific questions about the different phases because I want to make sure you get that. But, again, this may not be the platform. I don't want to rush it. So would you mind reaching out to the Help Desk, and we'll make sure to get you that clarification, a little bit more details about that process?

**Sandra:** No problem. Thank you.

**Kimberly Cutler:** All right. Thank you. Thanks, Nicole.

**Nicole Black:** Thanks, Kim. Thanks, Miss Sandra.

**Sandra:** Thank you.

**Nicole Black:** Rebecca, do we have another question?

**Rebecca:** Yes. Our next question comes from Careers Beyond Disabilities. Your audio and video are active. Click the microphone to unmute. And activate your video, if you like, and ask your question.

**Careers Beyond Disabilities:** Yes. Dealing with those individuals that are coming to retirement age, even though the documentation indicated 65, in reality, you don't force a beneficiary into retirement until their correct age. If their birth date requires that they're 100% qualified for Social Security benefits would be 67, you don't take them off of disability until 67. Is that correct?



**Nicole Black:** Hi. Thank you for your questions. So, yes. The way the Ticket Program works is you can assign a Ticket up until the age of 64, 65; but the Ticket is able to be in use until the Ticketholder reaches full retirement age, which I believe is 67.

**Careers Beyond Disabilities:** Okay.

**Nicole Black:** And someone please correct me if I'm wrong with that.

**Careers Beyond Disabilities:** And, if that's the case, we can still put in for our financial goals in and maybe even after they retire?

**Nicole Black:** As long as the Ticket was assigned to you, you can still continue to request payment. And then there are additional rules that follow Ticket unassignment based on termination, and so that would just be specific to when the Ticket is no longer eligible for use.

**Careers Beyond Disabilities:** In other words, when they are forced into retirement at the age of 67 and they've achieved the nine months and plus the three months of SGA and their check has stopped, we can still, in theory, put in for payments into the P2, P, M1, I think it's what is M0 out to whatever the number is?

**Nicole Black:** Yes. You can still request a Ticket payment, even after unassignment. But there are Ticket unassignment rules in a timeline that is specific to that, depending on the type of unassignment it is or the Ticket termination. So, like I said, it is specific. If you do have a specific example that you would like us to review, please go ahead and send over a reference number for that Ticketholder; and we can take a look at it for you. And you can put it to my attention, and I can review it for you.

**Careers Beyond Disabilities:** Okay. Thank you very much.

**Nicole Black:** You're welcome. We're coming up on the last five minutes of the call, so we will try to get through these last three questions. And, if for some reason we don't have the opportunity to answer your question, please be sure to send that over to the Payments Help Desk. You can send it to my attention, Nicole Black. And I'll make sure that I answer it and get back to you. Rebecca, who do we have next?

**Rebecca:** Next we have Amanda. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone to unmute. Activate your video, if you like, and ask your question.

**Amanda:** Hi, Nicole. It's Amanda. I will keep this short and sweet. I had a payment denied for missing documentation, and I'm wondering if there's a way to generate another fax cover sheet or if it's too late and I just need to resubmit the payment again.

**Nicole Black:** Alexis, I'm going to ask you to help with this, as I am not familiar with how the faxes are generated once the payment has been requested.



**Alexis Thomas:** Okay. Once the payment is denied, once you get a final result of a payment either paid or denied, you can no longer create new fax cover sheets. The fax cover sheets can only be created on pending or diary claims. So, if the case, as you mentioned, your claim has been denied, that means you have to resubmit the entire claim again and get a new Work Case number. And it will go back in the queue to be processed.

**Amanda:** Okay. Thanks so much.

**Nicole Black:** Thanks, Alexis. Thanks, Amanda. And, Rebecca, who do we have next?

**Rebecca:** Next we have Logan. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone to unmute. Activate your video, if you like, and ask your question.

**Logan:** Hello. Yes. So I have just two quick questions. But they're basically like boilerplate questions, you know, just sort of like a general disclaimer because I know we can't give Ticketholder information out, obviously. So one of them is sort of going back to a question that was already asked. For established earnings, when it comes to the source of established earnings, you know, it says there's established earnings on the Portal. If the Ticketholder, you know, says, hey, I was unemployed during that period. I don't know what these earnings would be. Is there like a general, like, well, the earnings could be this, or this, that type of thing. Do you understand what I mean?

**Nicole Black:** I think I'm hearing you correctly, Logan. So, basically, the system is showing that there's earnings on record. The Ticketholder is saying, No way, no how. And, like I stated for the previous EN, it could be disability earnings. It could be something that the Ticketholder may need to have their memory jogged just a little bit. So you can ask them if they received any lump sums or if they received any disability earnings to see what that may be. But just keep in mind, if we do have verified earnings on the system, that we have nothing to prove that there's something else, we do have to make our payment determinations based on the verified earnings that we have in the system.

**Logan:** Okay. Sounds good.

**Alexis Thomas:** Hi. This is Alexis. Also note, if the beneficiary is pretty adamant that those earnings are wrong, they should be contacting SSA to get those earnings corrected because this will affect them at some point later on.

**Logan:** And then I do have a second question, just a real quick question, another sort of boilerplate question. When it comes to processing time, the action date. So the action date, my understanding is when it's sent off to the Treasury for payment. So I know up until the action date you have 30 days to review it. But, once it goes to the Treasury, is there sort of a one-week to two-week turnaround time that's the expectation? Just curious on, you know, because with this government shutdown and stuff, we've had issues receiving payments— you know, like a delay in payments. So we were just curious.



**Nicole Black:** Thank you for your question on that. And, just to reiterate, all payments are processed within 30 days of receipt. And that means from a TPM perspective, not necessarily what happens on the back end. So that means if it's paid, denied, placed in diary, or awaiting additional information. And so, if none of those things have happened and it's been beyond 30 days, we recommend that you reach out to the Payments Help Desk. But whatever happens on the back end and the timing through Treasury, that is something beyond TPM's scope. And that timing does vary, and we don't know what that is.

**Logan:** Okay. Understood. Thank you so much.

**Nicole Black:** You're welcome. And this will be our final question.

**Alexis Thomas:** Hey, Nicole.

**Nicole Black:** Yes, ma'am.

**Alexis Thomas:** The timing on the back end is usually five to seven days unless they run into some kind of error, as in maybe your SAM got expired between that time frame or some other. So, if you haven't seen the payment in your bank account after 10 days, reach out to the Payments Help Desk.

**Logan:** Wonderful. Thank you so much. Our leadership team was just curious. I appreciate it.

**Nicole Black:** Thanks, Alexis. And this will be our final question.

**Rebecca:** Yes. This last question comes from Amanda. Your audio and video are active. Please click the microphone to unmute. Activate your video, if you like, and ask your question.

**Amanda:** Hi. Can you hear me?

**Nicole Black:** Yes, ma'am.

**Amanda:** All right. Hopefully this will be quick. I just want to get clarification on the Phase 1 exclusions you went over earlier because we've received multiple conflicting answers from the Help Desk in the past two months regarding the successful VR closure within 18 months prior to Ticket assignment date. So I just want to make sure across the board that it's a final answer—that that applies to first Ticket assignment date and not current Ticket assignment date.

**Nicole Black:** Hi. Yes. I do recall. Yes; it is the first Ticket assignment date.

**Amanda:** Okay. Thank you. Like I said, we received a couple of different answers. So I just wanted to make sure that I was reading it correctly and that that's the final answer.

**Nicole Black:** Yes, ma'am. That is correct.



Amanda: Thank you so much.

**Nicole Black:** You're very welcome. All righty. Well, thank you, everyone, for all your questions.

And next slide, please.

And, with that, our next all EN Payments Call will be on Tuesday May 5, from 1 to 2 p.m. Eastern. And, again, thank you for your questions. Thank you for your participation on today's call. Everyone enjoy the rest of your week.