



Ticket to Work: All EN Payments Call

Part III

Tuesday, August 27, 2013

EN Payment Rules and Application

Part I

Phase 1/Phase 2 Milestones

- Benefits
- Attainment Month
- Payment Request Form

Part II

Phase 1/Phase 2 Milestones

- Earnings
- 18-Month Lookback Rule
- State VR agency involvement
- EN Certification of Services

Part III

- Outcome
- Recent Policy Changes

Outcomes - Benefits

Outcome	
Benefits	Beneficiary's benefit <i>must be suspended</i> due to work earnings

Rules
Benefits must be in suspended status due to work earnings. If Beneficiary is receiving both SSDI/SSI benefits (Concurrent), both benefits must be in suspended status and at least one of them must be in suspended status due to work earnings.

Outcomes – Benefits (cont.)

- EN submits a Payment Request for *Outcomes for attainment months 03/13 – 04/13*. EN submitted pay stubs with earnings above Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) for 03/13 – 04/13. The beneficiary is a concurrent beneficiary (SSDI and SSI).
- **Determination:** Outcomes for attainment months 03/13 - 04/14 are denied.
- **Denial Reason:** Benefits not suspended or terminated due to work
- **Comment:** Benefits are in current pay status for 3/13 - 4/13. Outcome payments cannot be processed when beneficiary is receiving Federal cash benefits.

Outcomes – Benefits (cont.)

Explanation: The beneficiary has earnings above SGA and his SSI (T16) record indicates the beneficiary has been placed in a non-pay payment status due to work and earnings. However, the beneficiary's SSDI (T2) record indicates the beneficiary is in current pay payment status (receiving a Federal cash benefit). To be eligible for outcome payments, a concurrent beneficiary **must** be in a non-pay or suspense payment status under both programs (SSDI and SSI) **and** the reason for non-pay or suspense under at least one of the two programs must be due to work and earnings. This beneficiary had been in an outcome period (i.e. non-pay due to work and earnings) under both SSDI and SSI previously. Therefore, the only payments available for this beneficiary are outcomes. Since the beneficiary is **not** in a non-pay or suspense payment status under **both programs** (and one of the two non-pay reasons are due to work and earnings), outcome payments are not available.

Outcomes - Availability

Outcome	
Availability	Any month with earnings at or above SGA level

Rules
For ENs that choose the Outcome Only payment method, the first month available for payment is the month after the Ticket assignment date (month).

Outcomes – Availability (cont.)

The EN has chosen the Outcome Only payment method and submitted a PR for an *outcome 1 payment with an attainment month of 02/13*. The Ticket assignment date was 02/13/2013. The EN submitted pay stubs with earnings for 02/13 well above SGA. The beneficiary is an SSI beneficiary and is in suspense due to work and earnings.

Determination: Outcome #1 for attainment months 02/13 is denied.

Denial Reason: Can not pay until month after first assignment

Comment: Claim not payable until first month after Ticket assignment date.

Explanation: The EN submitted a claim for the same month the Ticket was assigned; 02/13. The first month available for payment is the first month **after** Ticket assignment. In this case, the first month available for payment is 03/13.

Outcomes – SGA Levels

Outcome												
SGA Level Amounts	2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
	Non-Blind	Blind										
	\$940	\$1,570	\$980	\$1,640	\$1,000	\$1,640	\$1,000	\$1,640	\$1,010	\$1,690	\$1,040	\$1,740

Rules

Consider the type of benefits the beneficiary is receiving (T2, T16 or Concurrent) to use the **pay period ending date** or the **pay date** to calculate/determine the amounts of earnings at SGA level.

Outcomes – SGA Levels (cont.)

An EN submitted a PR for an *outcome payment and pay stubs with earnings well over SGA (\$1240) for the attainment month 12/10*. The Ticket was assigned 06/10 and the SSDI beneficiary was in a suspense payment status due to work and earnings.

Determination: Outcome was denied.
Denial Reason: Earnings amounts do not meet criteria for payment
Comment: Evidence of earnings submitted are below Blind Substantial Gainful Activity for 2010 = \$1,640.
Explanation: The earnings requirement for outcome payments for this particular beneficiary was Blind SGA instead of normal SGA. The requirement for Blind SGA earnings is higher than non-blind SGA.

	SGA Levels	
Year	SGA Non-Blind	SGA Blind
2008	\$940	\$1,570
2009	\$980	\$1,640
2010	\$1,000	\$1,640
2011	\$1,000	\$1,640
2012	\$1,010	\$1,690
2013	\$1,040	\$1,740

Outcomes – Payment/Denial Decision

EN Payments Specialists make payment/denial decisions based on the information posted on Social Security databases at the time claims are processed. This information can change; therefore Payments Specialists save all information used (i.e., a snapshot of status, earnings and other information at the time claims processed) to make a determination.

An EN submitted a PR for *a claim (no specific type of claim) and submitted pay stubs for the attainment month 11/12*. The beneficiary had a Ticket assignment date of 06/10. The EN Payments staff created and denied an outcome claim with a Denial Reason: Insufficient earnings. The EN resubmitted the claim with the same pay stubs and EN Payments staff created a P2M10 and denied the P2M10 claim with a Denial Reason: Insufficient earnings.

The EN submitted an inquiry and wanted to know:

1. Why was the claim created as an outcome the first time and a Phase 2 Milestone claim the second time.
2. Why was the claim denied for insufficient earnings because pay stubs exceeded SGA based on her calculation of \$1,001.93?

Outcomes – Payment/Denial Decision (cont.)

Explanation: The first time the claim was correctly created and processed as an outcome claim. The beneficiary's pay status at the time the claim was processed was: Suspended Due to Work and Earnings. The Social Security field office had placed the beneficiary in and out of suspense beginning 09/11 – 12/12. For the month of 11/12, the field office posted the beneficiary in a suspense pay status due to work and earnings. This is the correct pay status of an outcome claim.

Outcomes – Payment/Denial Decision (cont.)

The second time the claim was correctly created and processed as a Phase 2 Milestone 10 claim. At the time this claim was processed the Social Security field office retroactively placed the beneficiary in a current pay payment status (i.e., receiving a monthly Federal Benefit) with **NO** outcome periods since the beneficiary's disability award was approved. The beneficiary remained in a current pay status, so a Phase 2 Milestone payment was appropriate. The last payment processed under the beneficiary's Social Security Number was a Phase 2 Milestone 9; therefore, the current claim created for a Phase 2 Milestone 10 was appropriate.

ISSUE OF INSUFFICIENT EARNINGS - EN Payments staff review of pay stubs resulted in agreement with the EN's calculation of \$1,001.93. However, SGA for 2012 was \$1,010; which was below the 2012 earnings criteria. The EN realized that she had not updated tables of earnings for 2012 and made the change.

Recent Policy Changes

Beneficiaries can request field offices to "stop" their monthly payments when they have earnings above SGA and believe the continuance of monthly benefit payments will result in an overpayment.

Recent Policy Changes (cont.)

EN Payments Staff resumed processing payment denials for Universal Auto Pay and all claims submitted by ENs. In February 2013 the EN Payments Staff stopped processing payment denials for auto pay claims since ENs did not request these payments. EN Payment staff only created and processed claims for payment from the Universal Auto Pay file. During this time, EN Payments staff also grouped denials under one work case number when a large number of denials were processed for the same reason and provided an explanation in the comments section of the EN Payment Status Report. This process made it more difficult for ENs to reconcile their account receivable balances. Therefore, EN Payments Staff resumed the process of creating payment denials for these claims in August 2013.

How ENs Can Assist Beneficiaries in Preventing Overpayments

- ENs can help beneficiaries by doing the following:
- Encouraging beneficiaries to report their earnings in a timely manner
 - Encouraging all beneficiaries that are self-employed to file their income taxes by April 15, e.g. familiarizing beneficiaries who are self-employed with pertinent tax forms (e.g. Form 1040, Schedule C, Schedule F, and Schedule SE).
 - Encouraging beneficiaries to report their earnings directly to their claims representatives and to request written documentation of their earnings as reported each month.
 - Informing beneficiaries that they may contact the Social Security field office and voluntarily request suspension of benefits to avoid or reduce a possible overpayment. This is different than just reporting earnings. A voluntary request for suspension may be processed when the beneficiary:
 - Has completed the grace period after the trial work period, or
 - Is not entitled to a trial work period, or
 - Is in the Expedited Reinstatement period.
 - If a beneficiary thinks he/she should no longer get monthly benefits, another alternative is for the beneficiary to simply keep all future checks or deposit them into a separate bank account to collect interest until it is clear whether or not benefits should have been suspended.

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Questions

