**All Employment Network Payments Call**

**3 – 4 p.m. EST**

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Operator: Welcome to the national All Employment Network Payments Call. Afterwards we will conduct an answer and question section. If you have a question press star one on your key barred. If you need to reach an operator at this time press star zero. This call is being recorded Tuesday, April 28, 2015. Please go ahead Ms. Janet Cousin.

Janet Cousin: Good afternoon and welcome to the Ticket to Work Program monthly EN Payments Call. Thank you for joining us today. This is Janet Cousin. I'm the supervisor of the payment helpdesk team. Joining me is Debbra Tennessee, manager, Ticket Operations Department, for the program and Kathy Dyson, consultant and training coordinator with Ticket operations. We also have Katie from the Office of Research Demonstration and Employment Support with us. We will be using the presentation for today's call and that presentation has been posted on the yourTickettowork.com website on the events page. You can look under today's date and see that and follow along or we are sharing it via the web.

 This will be an interactive session and you will be invited to ask questions at the end of the presentation. Please do not provide any details regarding your personal cases when you're asking questions due to confidentiality requirements. You can also ask questions in the chat room. And if we're not able to address any or all of your questions during the call or the chat room we will certainly follow up with you and make sure we get an answer for you at a later time. So without further delay let's get started with our presentation.

 Today's agenda again our first topic today is to focus on reviewing common payment denials. We want to identify the most frequent reasons why payment requests are denied, provide some recommendations on how to avoid denials altogether and then just talk through some of those details. The second item that we'll be discussing today is when to use these two forms. What is the employer-prepared earning statements? What's the supplemental earnings statement?

 And when should you use one versus the other? And then lastly we're going to do some follow up Q&A for our new Ticket portal presentation that was given last month. So we're going to review a couple of payments questions that were asked during that session and talk through the answers for those. Just so you're aware the Q&A document from last month's call has been posted online under the events page and you can find it there and review all of the questions and the answers that have been provided for you.

 And once we finish that we'll open up the lines and we'll take your questions. All right so let's take a look at common payment denials. Here we see the five top reasons why payment requests were denied in 2014. We'll review what steps can be taken to avoid these situations.

 If an EN request outcomes for a beneficiary that is in current pay status which means they're receiving federal cash benefits the payment request will be denied. As you can see from the red section of the pie chart here it represents 44 percent of all payment denials for 2014. That's our biggest chunk there.
Moving on to the next page the second most common reason for denials is associated with eligibility due to the Lookback earnings. The Social Security Administration takes into consideration the earnings a Ticket Holder receives prior to Ticket assignment. As it states in the RFQ, Phase 1 milestone payments may not be available to an EN if the beneficiary achieves that milestone within the most recent 18 month period prior to the Ticket assignment.

 A common practice to recognize a prior earnings denial is to use the 18-month Lookback tool. This tool can be downloaded from the Ticket to work website. You can go to the Information Center tab and then click on the form section to find the tool. Phase one milestone payments may not be available to an EN if the beneficiary achieved that milestone within the most recent 18 month period prior to the first Ticket assignment. Now let's break down those milestones for a quick review.

 So the Phase 1 Milestone 1 requires earnings at or above the Trial Work Level for one month. Phase 2 Milestone 2 requires earnings at or above the trial work level for three months within a six month period. Phase 1 Milestone 3 requires earnings at or above the Trial Work Level for six months within a 12-month period and then Phase 1 Milestone 4 requires earnings at or above Trial Work Level for nine months within an 18 month period. That's a lot to remember and understand and utilize each and every time you're submitting requests. So the Lookback Tool has become a very good resource for ENs in calculating eligibility for payments. Our next and third most common denial reason is related to a prior VR assignment. What does that mean? So no phase one milestone payments will be available to an EN if the beneficiary previously was served by a state vocational rehabilitation agency and was rehabilitated. For example the beneficiary was working at the time the SVRA successfully closed the case. All right so how can you anticipate this situation and avoid it? Well during intake ENs should ask beneficiaries about any prior history of receiving VR services and whether they were working at the time of their VR case closure. ENs can also check the secure provider port alibi selecting beneficiary Ticket history from the main menu under the assignments tab. This includes information on prior VR services and successful closed VR cases. So even if a beneficiary has a history of prior VR services and a successful case closure the Ticket still has significant value. Total value remaining in 2015 for example after phase one milestones for SSI is over $18,000. And for SSDI beneficiaries it's over $19,400. So keep two things in mind when trying to determine whether phase one milestones are unavailable based on a beneficiary's prior VR history.

 First the definition of successful closure simply means the beneficiary was working when his or her VR case was closed.
There's no requirement that the beneficiary was working a certain number of hours a month, per week or had earnings at a set level. For example trial work level or substantial gainful activity. Second the prior VR services phase one milestone exclusion applies to all beneficiaries with a successful VR case closure after January 2002. Many beneficiaries exiting VR services in employment have earnings at or above the substantial gainful activity or SGA level. So for these beneficiaries the EN can begin billing for phase two milestone payments the month following the month the EN secured the Ticket assignment. Beneficiaries exiting the VR system with earnings below SGA may or may not be good candidates for the Ticket program. So again during intake these beneficiaries should be screened to determine if they are interested in working above SGA with the goal of eventually earning enough to eliminate the need for disability benefits. All right so moving on. The fourth most common payment denial is when earnings amounts do not meet the criteria for payments. So in 2014 nine percent of all denials were in this category. The best way to avoid this type of denial is to properly calculate the beneficiary's earnings for each pay period. There's a great tool available to all ENs called the monthly earnings estimator.
Now this tool can be used to help determine when a beneficiary's earnings might qualify for payment under the Ticket program. It's also available on our website at yourtickettowork.com under the information tab under the resource section. The next slide will help demonstrate how to manually calculate payments for both SSI and SSDI beneficiaries if you choose not to use this tool. Okay so the Social Security Administration considers earnings differently depending on the entitlement receiving. When calculated earnings submitted by ENs along with the payment request. So if a beneficiary receives supplemental security income or SSI via Title 16 the operation support manager will calculate earnings based on the payday. Even if a pay stub shows that the pay period overlapped into the following month social security considers the entire gross earnings as earnings for the month in which the check was received. Now if a beneficiary receives social security disability insurance or SSDI via Title II then operation support manager calculates earnings by what is earned during the month.
So for example from the first day of the month to the last day of the month regardless of when the beneficiary is actually paid. If the evidence of earnings for the claim month requested overlaps into the following month those earnings amounts will be pro-rated for each month based on the extent of the overlap. And lastly if a beneficiary receives both SSI and SSDI they're considered concurrent then it's based on both pay date and pay period.

 Operations Support Manager will then use which ever earnings that enables the employment network to meet earnings criteria for a specific payment type. All right so the last reason for a payment denial is when a duplicate request is submitted and there's usually two reasons why this may occur and can result in extra work for the EN that really can be avoided. Let's look at those two scenarios a little more closely. So the first reason a payment may be denied as a duplicate request is when an EN submits multiple payment requests for the same claim. A helpful way to avoid this is to refer to the EN payment status report on the secure provider portal. This report will display all of the payment requests you submitted within the last 363 days. This information can be filtered in various ways and sorted in order to focus in on the particular information, by SSN, by date range, et cetera. And you can look for a specific, you know, again date range or unique SSN and this will allow you to identify specific payment requests you've made so you're not submitting any kind of duplication of effort. Secondly when ENs submit payment requests for beneficiaries that have already been registered on the universal auto pay program a denial will occur if we've already made that payment for that auto pay cycle. Remember once registered and the auto cycle begins you do not have to submit individual payment requests going forward. All right so here's some general information about how to avoid these payment denials. So first we want to request pay stubs and employer earnings statements from your beneficiaries. You can request previous pay stubs or employer earnings statements as either part of the intake process or once the Ticket is assigned to you. And this will give an EN an idea which if any milestones they can submit.
Secondly you can call the integrated voice response system or the IVR. That number just as a reminder is (866)949-3687. And there's some simple prompts you can follow along thereafter choosing one. You'll be able to access previous assignability and remember you may select beneficiary Ticket history from the main menu under assignments to see information on prior VR services and successful closed VR cases via the Ticket portal.

 And lastly check the Secure Provider Portal if you're a registered user of this secure provider portal, the current portal you can log in and check for VR closure status if the Ticket was previously assigned to a VR. Well that sums up our discussion associated with common payment denials. Let's take a look at these two different forms. The supplemental earnings statement form and the employer prepared earnings statement which was mentioned in the previous discussion regarding denials.
Now both of these forms ask for similar information but are used for two different purposes. Do you really know when to use one versus the other? Often times we will receive one form when we really need to have the other form to support your payment request. So let's take a closer look at each document. All right so looking at the supplemental earnings statements the primary reasons you may want to use this form is let's say the pay stubs provided by the beneficiary are missing required information or they're just not legible. And as a reminder all evidentiary evidence must include the pay period beginning and end dates, the pay date and the total gross earnings. The form is shown here on the slide and this form can be accessed and completed on-line via the secure provider portal. It's also available in the form section of the Ticket to work website if you want to fill it in and print it off or download it to submit electronically.
Now you must submit the supplemental earnings statement with the pay stubs. This cannot be submitted by itself to meet the evidentiary evidence requirement. And when do you use the provider prepared earnings forms? If you're not able to obtain any earnings documents from the beneficiary and earnings information is not available via the work number then you may want to use this form. Maybe you've received those earnings documents that are not legible because they've been faxed multiply times or copied repeatedly. If you have the employer contact information you can ask them to complete and submit this signed form as a source of primary evidence. It provides confirmation from the employer that all withholdings were made. For example FICA, Medicare, withholdings taxes, et cetera. So these withholdings also confirm the beneficiary as not a self-employed person. All right so here we are we have an example of the form and what it looks like. Like the other form the preparer earnings statement does require all the employee information at the top and payment detail including the beginning and ending pay period dates, pay date, hours worked, withholding amount and gross earnings. However this form must be completed by the employer and must include the employer representative's name, the employer name and address and signature of the employer's representative. The employer must also check the box shown at the bottom that says by checking this box and signing below the employer attests that all withholdings required by law have been made from this employee's earnings. Now this form does serve as confirmation of payment by the employer and can be submitted by itself without pay stubs or other earnings documentation. All right so let's take a few minutes to just recap all of the information that's been shared thus far. All right so we talked first about common reasons for payment denials and these are the most frequent ones. Benefits are suspended or terminated due to work, not eligible due to Lookback earnings, VR services phase one is not available based on the VR closure, and earnings amounts do not meet the criteria for payments. , there's duplicate requests submitted so we're denying that duplicate and again we compared the forms that look a lot alike but are used for different purposes. Both of these forms may be used if there's missing information or if they're ill legible. So again the stubs may include pay date and beginning ending pay period but -- I'm sorry maybe missing -- let's say the beginning date of the pay period may only have the pay date and the ending date of the pay period. But one of those components are missing. Now the SES can be submitted with the pay stubs to supplement the information that's available on those stubs while the employer prepared earnings statement must be signed by an employer, must include all withholdings details and it can be submitted by itself as your primary evidentiary evidence. Both forms again are available on our website, on-line under the forms section of the information center tab. All right so that was a lot of information. I kind of trucked on through there to make sure we had enough time for questions. So let's take a few minutes if we can open up the lines and take a couple of questions.

Operator: As a reminder if you have an audio question press star one on the keypad. Once again that's star one. Question from Peter.

Peter: I've got a beneficiary who is self-employed and she gets a 1099 form from her employer. The employer basically writes a check that has the company's name on it but it looks very much like a personal check and just basically pays her the same amount of money over SGA for each month. How would you suggest that I submit that payment?

Debbra Tennessee: Peter that's considered an SE earning beneficiary. For SEI claims the beneficiary has to fill out a form that shows the gross earnings, expenses and the net amount. Whereas the net amount has to be at trial work level or SGA level or above those levels to satisfy any of our payment requirements. Since the beneficiary is not actually working as a self-employment individual don't sound like but is a contractor at that point we can only process a payment request once that individual has filed their income taxes and social security receives a record of their annual earnings.
There's no other way for Social Security to receive that information.

Peter: Yeah so she has submitted her -- actually for 2014 and is currently working. So that's been done. So could we -- if she completed that form and showed earnings above SGA could we submit with that?

Debbra Tennessee: You can submit the form really is what we're interested in because we're going to look at the earnings on social security's record. A number -- and the reason why we have to do this because a number of times we receive that SEI form and there are very little expenses deducted and the net amount is equal to or above or equal to trial work level or equal to SGA or above but once the beneficiary files their income taxes their expenses increase so that their net amount becomes much lower so they have to pay less taxes. So we use the information based on what the beneficiary has filed on their income tax. Since he or she has already done that that form can be sent in. They can estimate whatever expenses they had for a particular month and if the net amount is SGA or trial work level whatever type of payment request you're submitting we will then compare that information to what's posted to social security's records for what the IRS has submitted to SSA.

Peter: One more question. Is Social Security going to average her earnings over the course of the year or is that going -- or is there a way to figure out how much she earned per month?

Debbra Tennessee: Normally their method of determining monthly earnings for SEI is over the 12-month period.

Peter: Yeah she really didn't work the full year. So there wouldn't be a way to document this in real-time?

Debbra Tennessee: The only way that would be is if the beneficiary had gone into the social security office and reported monthly earnings.
Sometimes SEI beneficiary we do see monthly earnings posted to a beneficiary's earnings record after they've gone to the social security office and whatever documentation they had to take in to show whatever their net earnings were, you know, they had to show something. But sometimes we actually see monthly amounts posted but if the beneficiary hasn't done that the only way we have of knowing or trying to figure out monthly income is to use the -- you know the averaging.

Peter: She actually has been reporting. So how do I get the SEI form?

Debbra Tennessee: The SEI form is also posted on the Ticket to Work website.

Janet Cousin: This is Janet. You can go to the website and click on the information center tab on the top and then on the left hand side click on forms.

Peter: Okay great.

Janet Cousin: When you scroll down you'll see the payment section and all the payments forms are right there together.

Peter: Okay.

Zaberina: The payments can come a little bit quicker outside of getting in the -- what's it called? The universal auto pay. Provided everything is the same, same employer, same -- nothing has changed in terms of the personal information on the paycheck. So I'm just wondering why does it take anywhere from 15 days upward for us to receive a payment? As far as turnaround is concerned.

Debbra Tennessee: Okay let me answer. You have two questions so let me answer that first before I forget your first question.

Zaberina: Sorry about that.

Debbra Tennessee: Okay. This is Debbra Tennessee again speaking and let me tell you about the rules for universal auto pay. We have two files for universal auto pay. The first file are for beneficiaries where we will assess a payment for the current attainment month or the current month where an EN would be eligible. And to give you an example what I mean by that we're in the month of April and the latest month or the current month we can make a payment for is March. If there's April earnings we can't make until May. So the current is March.

 However those beneficiaries that are listed on a UAP file we only process those current attainment months’ payments if the EN has received 12 outcomes or more for that particular beneficiary. Now if the EN has received less than 12 outcome payments for a particular beneficiary we do not process an outcome payment for the current attainment month. We process an outcome payment prior, four months prior to the current attainment month and the reason for that is this. Social security needs to have time -- a number of times beneficiaries will go from suspense back into current pay and we don't know about it and by the time we do know about it we may have already issued some outcome payment. Outcome payments under universal auto pay process are not like other payment processes and you mentioned earnings and why this takes so long.

 Universal auto pay payments are processed based on persistent earnings, not on earnings we might see for a particular month. To give you an example for the month of March when we received our first universal auto pay file it may had been the first week of the month or second week of the month. There are no earnings posted on social security records for March then.

 So nobody would get a payment then. However if we have records for quarterly earnings, annual earnings we see that a beneficiary has been working consistently above SGA level, they have not received any unemployment income and we don't see any type of termination on that record then social security believes -- and after 12 outcomes consistently there's been SGA level for at least 12 months SGA believes that beneficiary is consistent and it sounds like they have a solid job. So we make an assessment to pay those beneficiaries for the current attainment month.

 Those beneficiaries where there are less than 12 outcome payments it's a possibility that they could go back on current pay and it takes about three months for social security field offices to update records and to change that beneficiary status.
So it's the fourth month and unless -- let me make this clear. We talked about denials for duplicate payments. If you don't get a payment and you know that you have let's say pay stubs for one of those beneficiaries where we're making a payment for you in the fourth month if you have pay stubs for the last three months send those in. The reason we did not do that before is because ENs did come to Social Security and complain they could not get evidence of earnings from beneficiaries who had gone into suspense and it was hard to get in touch with them so a number of times they couldn't get any type of evidence or any type of earnings from these beneficiaries. However if you can get primary evidence or pay stubs from beneficiaries less than 12 outcome claims paid under their social security number you can submit that primary evidence and if all other criteria is met we can make those payments.

Zaberina: Okay. Great. I have a situation that I just resent a payment in because the consumer missed the SGA threshold by a dollar and 37 cents. So you can imagine how disheartening that was and it was certainly my fault because I just wasn't paying attention when I submitted the payments to see that he was missing it by that little amount. But has it ever been that social security has made a payment or pay out on a claim that was like less than $5 or less than $2 or $3?

Debbra Tennessee: If we did it was a mistake. But we have to follow the rules to the letter.

Zaberina: Next question. I have a consumer I'm taking on and he has a successful VR closure.
After questioning him quite thoroughly he explained to me that the only thing VR did was transportation assistance while he was in school which was about 50 to $60 a month. My question is if he was not employed and he did not make trial work level or SGA or any of those things why would his phase one milestone payments be off the table for the employment network that's taking him on?

Debbra Tennessee: Well I can tell you what the rules are. The rules are there was a successful closure because he was working at the time the case closed. Now he might have been going to school but was he working too?

Zaberina: No he was not working. He was in school full-time.

Debbra Tennessee: I guess that's something I will have to ask someone from IVR, what recourse therefore that is there for that beneficiary. The rules are to close a case as a successful closure if the beneficiary is working.

Zaberina: I questioned him -- I said are you sure you weren't working. No I was in school full-time. He got certified and licensed and no he was not working. The transportation assistance was for him to go to school. I found that quite puzzling as to why they would close the case successful based on transportation assistance.

Debbra Tennessee: That's not according to the rules. That shouldn't have happened. What EN are you with?

Zaberina: Self -sufficiency through employment out of Birmingham, Alabama and New Orleans. Those are the two main offices.

Debbra Tennessee: Do you know who your account manager is?

Zaberina: David Jones. The best account manager there is.

Debbra Tennessee: Okay. We’ll tell him to get back to you on that.

Zaberina: Okay excellent. Thank you all so very much and you all have a wonderful day.

Janet Cousin: Thank you Zaberina. Good questions. Thank you for your participation today.

Operator: Next question comes from Nicole.

Nicole: So I have a question on the difference between the phase two and the outcome payments when somebody switches from phase two milestones to outcomes. I have a beneficiary who was in phase two and then they denied my payment saying he was ready for outcomes. He was making over SGA but he was still receiving federal cash benefits because of like the subsidies and different things he could claim. So I don't understand how or why they would move him from phase two to outcome payment then deny my payments then he's still receiving federal cash benefits. Why do they do that?

Debbra Tennessee: Do you know if he received the maximum phase two payment for that beneficiary? SSI or SSDI beneficiary? Do you know if you received a maximum number of phase 2-2-milestones for that beneficiary?

Nicole: We received seven.

Debbra Tennessee: Send that request to our EN payment helpdesk and they can check that for you to see what's going on with that. And the denial reason you received is that -- did it say?

Nicole: It said he was ready for an outcome payment then I did that then it said because of the federal cash benefits.

Debbra Tennessee: Send that and we'll analyze that particular denial and see
what's going on with that.

Nicole: Okay. All right thank you.

Janet Cousin: Great. Thank you. If there's any additional questions what I would like to do is -- (speaking at the same time). If we can take one of the questions from the chat room.
Kathy we have a question?

Kathy Dyson: Yes this is Kathy and let me see if I may read a very interesting question. This is from Cynthia.

 Cynthia's concern is he's an EN that has done everything she needs to do to obtain earnings information from the beneficiary. She called, she emailed but to no avail. During the time of intake the Ticket holder refused to sign a release that the EN can speak with the employer to obtain employer's information. The EN also noted that the Ticket holder wages are not posted to the work number. And so she's asking what else is there for her to do. Is there any other recourse? Any input or intake from somebody maybe from social security administration?

Debbra Tennessee: That's really pretty hard issue in the sense that the beneficiary -- it seems the beneficiary does not want the EN to know what the earnings are by not signing that form and basically if you cannot get -- if the EN would know let's say the place -- they can't go back to the employment agency. The only thing I can think of -- there's some queries out and I'm not sure of all the information on these queries that ENs can look at for certain information when there's serving beneficiary, BPQY. Maybe there are earnings there somewhere but you basically covered everything that we could think of that would have been either recent contact with the beneficiary for them to tell you that they are working at a certain level and to give you their employer's name. But since you can't contact the employer that's out.
The work number doesn't have any record of it and maybe the beneficiary isn't working -- maybe the beneficiary isn't working somewhere where withholdings are made. I'm not sure but the only thing I can think of maybe checking with the field office.

Kathy Dyson: Thank you so very much Debbra.

Janet Cousin: Okay. Very good. What I would like to do if there's other callers on the line what I would like to do is we've got 15 minutes left of the call. Let's move on and anyone who is waiting to ask a question please send that question to the EN payment helpdesk at your tickettowork.com. I would like to do follow up from last month's new Ticket to work presentation that was given.
There was a lot of excitement around the new Ticket portal that is currently in test mode with pilot ENs and we had a number of questions that were asked last month related to the presentation that was given and I want to make you all aware that again the q & a document from last month's call has been posted on our website. Again from the information center tab you can click on the event archive link and look on the calendar under EN payments call and see that Q&A document. So there's a couple of questions that we wanted to just talk through today and the first question I will ask to Debbra Tennessee and she'll provide an answer for you. So the first question we have here that was asked last month is for phase one milestone two, milestone three and milestone four payments three months constitute one payment. Do we have to submit three payment requests for the same payment since we can only type in one month at a time? And let me clarify that question again as a refresher from the presentation. You may remember that the new Ticket portal has a payment request screen that requires ENs to enter the SSN number of the beneficiary and one claim month for each payment request.

 That's a little different from the current experience on the secure provider portal where you can enter multiple and with the form that you can submit for multiple. So in the new Ticket portal you'll be submitting an SSN with one claim month for each payment request. And the phase one milestones do verify earnings for three consecutive months. So they're asking which months they should use when they submit the payment requests in those c cases. What's the correct answer here?

Debbra Tennessee: I will try to clarify the question a little bit more for those listeners on today's call.

 And I believe what the EN was asking in the situation when they mentioned three months constitute one payment it's not really three months that constitutes one payment. I think what they mean is when they go from a phase one milestone two to a phase one milestone three that in a phase one milestone two you need three months of earnings to get a milestone three you need six months so that would be three more months if previous three months had been there. And the same situation for milestone four. If you received a phase one milestone three you have six months of earnings so to get milestone four you would only need three more months to make up that nine month period. So the answer to that is you only need to submit one payment request for each payment or claim. For phase one milestones you will use the attainment or qualifying month as the month of the payment request. For example payment request for phase one milestone two will use the third month the beneficiary had earnings at trial work level which is the attainment month or the payment month. This is consistent with the payment month you see in your current payment status report available on the secure provider portal.
To give you an example you are submitting a payment request for phase one milestone two. The phase one milestone one was paid in October and for the phase one milestone two their earnings above trial work level for November and December as well as October. Well since the attainment month for phase one
milestone two would be December you would submit your came for phase one milestone two for the month of December. Now if you have earnings -- evidence of earnings or pay stubs you would enter those earnings for November and December because we would need that information.
But you only are supposed to submit a payment request or a claim for the qualifying month you want to get paid.

Janet Cousin: Great thanks Debbra. That is a little different from the current portal experience but again it's a great scenario and a great question for the new portal process. All right so our next question, will the payments data include payment history from before the transfer to the new Ticket portal.

Debbra Tennessee: The answer to that is yes.
All payment history will be available via the new Ticket portal. There are two screens that provide payment status similar to the current EN payment status report that's available on the secure provider portal. All payments in progress at the time of your transition will be visible on the pending payments for me screen. Now when I say pending payments that could be a claim that was received or that could be a claim that's possibly in a situation where we're waiting for additional information from you, we may need you to update your status in SAM. All closed completed and paid payment requests will be visible on the payments made to me screen in the new Ticket portal. Remember the new Ticket portal provides real-time updates so all new payment requests will be visible as work cases and the pending cases for me screen immediately after they are created.

Janet Cousin: Great question again and a good answer. Again that's one of the key features of the new Ticket portal is that the information is going to be provided real-time. There's no delay in processing and updating of the information on the portal site. All right so our third question does each pay stub need to be added separately or can we enter an entire month at once?
So again let's just clarify this a little bit. The new Ticket portal allows ENs to enter in their earnings information through the portal screen.
That's not something that you can do on the current portal but it is something that's available to be done in the new portal.
Debbra.

Debbra Tennessee: Yes you will need to enter each pay stub separately. The system will allow you to enter earnings for five pay periods when you enter earnings in the Ticket portal for each payment request. And that's the limitation. However there are no limit to the number of documents you submit with the fax cover sheet. And I think some ENs have asked this question because we're seeing payment requests submitted to us where ENs will add up everything and just give us a total for the month and say post the monthly earnings are the total amount.
However they will show pay dates and four month and different dollar amounts for the four dates. That tells me the beneficiary or the EN has access to pay stubs and these are perhaps for different pay periods. In this situation we would need -- if we don't have all the information SES statement which Janet talked about earlier along with those pay stubs or you need -- if you have the pay stubs for the four weeks just enter each week separately because we need to see each pay period entered.

Janet Cousin: Okay very good. Another good question. Now the other thing to be aware of is the project team is working on expanding the number of entries that are available in that screen. So it's currently limited to five pay periods and you can enter pay stubs, you can enter work number earnings, you can enter that employer prepared earnings statement information but that will be expanded in one of the future releases. All right so our last question here is using the new portal do we need to make a request for all payments we wish to receive?

Debbra Tennessee: Janet the answer to that is ENs should submit a separate payment request for each claim month and type of payment. For example if an EN wants to request three outcome payments for January through March 2015 the EN must submit a separate payment request for the claim month of January and that should say 2015 and the type of claim outcomes for the claim month February and that should say 2015 the type of claim is an outcome and for claim month march 2015 the type of claim is outcome. The benefit of doing this in the new Ticket portal is that with each submission an individual work case is automatically created and assigned to a payment specialist for processing and with the real-time updates you have visibility of the work case on your pending payments for me screen immediately. While the current process by way of the secured provider portal and faxing allows you to include multiple claim months on each payment request form the Ticket operations department of operation support manager has to manually create each separate claim for each month before reviewing the documents for each and making a determination. The new Ticket portal automates those steps so the work case is automatically created for each claim and the documents submitted for each are automatically associated to each case. This will result in faster processing and review and processing time and a reduction in payment denials for duplicates. So as soon as you enter a payment request in the new Ticket portal automatically a work case is created and that goes into a processes cue. Once you send in your evidentiary information, your pay stub the system automatically associates those -- that evidence with your work case. I mean this is all in real-time and you don't have to worry about two days later if I don't see on my EN payment status report a receipt you will see that information immediately. That information or that work case will be created immediately. Now in today's environment the current process there may be three hands or three steps that need to take place before a work case even gets into a processor's cue. So this will really cut down on our processing time.

Janet Cousin: Excellent point. Excellent.
Yes. We're all excited about the new Ticket portal, the automation associated with it and really looking forward to working with you and partner with you on that transition. Okay guys we had a lot of good discussion here, a lot of information shared today.
What I would like to do is go ahead and open up the lines again to ask -- take additional questions before we wrap up for the day.

Operator: Okay your next question comes from the line of Brian.

Brian: Hi, this is Brian Harmen. I'm a national wide employment network. I sent a payment request for an evidentiary payment request for phase one milestone one, milestone two, milestone three, milestone four and my payment request was denied saying I didn't have -- there's no record of earnings in the SSA or system. How can that be possible if I submitted evidentiary payment requests?

Kathy Dyson: Brian this is Kathy speaking. When you stated you submitted an evidentiary payment request that consists of different types of primary evidence. Do you recall what type of evidence?

Brian: Pay stubs.

Kathy Dyson: They were pay stubs?

Brian: Yes.

Kathy Dyson: Okay. Now if the pay stubs were -- had qualifying amounts and the information on the stubs were legible and it had all the details that's required then that may have very well been a mistake. What you can do is outreach to the helpdesk with that specific beneficiary's information and we'll be happy to take a look at it. Mistakes happen. Most of the payments are made by specialists and so whenever there is an error we always go back and fix it once it's brought to our attention.

Janet Cousin: Certainly would be helpful Brian, this is Janet speaking, if you have the work case numbers that are referenced in the EN payment status report that is referring to the denials we'll be happy to take another look at that. Pay stubs certainly are primary evidence f for evidentiary payment request and if they were including and meet the work trial requirements et cetera we can certainly take another look and make sure we review those claims once again.

Brian: Okay. Maybe another question or suggestion. I know at least in the disability adjudication cases a what report is submitted for each beneficiary or each applicant's case file. I didn't know if that is something that could be available to the ENs to help us verify earnings in the new Ticket system.

Debbra Tennessee: I'm not -- that's something that we're not familiar with at all. They're saying it's a d disability case file folder?

Brian: Well you know in the new Ticket portal we're going to be able to submit for example IWPs and things directly with a bar code and scan into the beneficiary file. So when I testify in the Social Security disability cases we're able to submit the same type of evidence and sometimes in those same cases the evidence of the earnings can be reviewed by the judges. I didn't know if that information would be available to Employment Networks as well.

Debbra Tennessee: You're talking about information in social security's databases?

Brian: Yeah. Actually I think it's provided by IRS.

Debbra Tennessee: Okay. No that information is not provided to ENs. I can tell you that it's not right now. The closest we had provided is with any type of earnings information is the one time when the QBER information was posted and the secure provider portal and Social Security found out from the general council that they should not be doing that. So as far as I know there's no earnings information coming directly from social security systems that are being provided to you.

Brian: Okay. Well we'll have to do our best to get the evidence from their beneficiaries then.

Debbra Tennessee: And if not the beneficiaries then again the third parties like the work number

Brian: Yeah. Very good. Thank you very much.

Operator: Next question is from Elisa.

Elisa: I'm sorry I had done the question thing a long time ago.
It was really based on that wage release information. Can I ask about that or should we let that go for now?

Debbra Tennessee: You’re talking about the QBER information?

Elisa: No basically trying to get somebody's stubs.

Janet Cousin: Sure. Any question you have we'll be happy to answer for you.

Elisa: Thank you. I just have a concern. I mean everybody signs that employer wage release when they come in when they sign the plan but I just have a real -- I don't know I’m just really nervous about contacting employers especially with these people with severe disabilities.

 The one most of mine have mental health issues and I really don't want to do that to the beneficiary. I know I have the release and I know that I can send in the employer -- what you said today that form, the employer prepared earnings statement. But then I'm divulging this person has some type of an issue. I don't know I feel funny about it and I just wanted to get feedback on how to proceed because I know -- I have two guys who are working.

Debbra Tennessee: Okay. You have two guys working. Can you get pay stubs from them?

Elisa: No that's the issue. One was sent to truck driving school.
We spent quite a lot of money on him. I was sent letters to him and emailed him and talked to his wife. They keep saying they're going to send them going to send them and they won't.
Flat out won't.

 And I have the -- I was on the chat room saying that the ui information does show that this guy is working. He's making money. But we're not going to get paid and again I guess it is my fault because I just have hesitation to send that to an employer. I don't want them to turn around and fire him because of his mental health disability and I know they can't do that but they do. They do. And -- yeah.

Debbra Tennessee: Go to the work member and try to get that information from there. You said you have talked to his wife and him and they have promised you the documents but they haven't. Ask him who he is working for.

Elisa: I know who he is working for.

Debbra Tennessee: Okay if you ask him that -- let me finish. If you know who he's working for and he -- if we can just tell you his earnings are above a certain amount or at a certain amount the trial work level if it's for phase one milestones or SGA whatever those dollar amounts for years you're interested in what you can do is send in a payment request called a certification payment request that says recent contact with beneficiary, you list the employer's name and address and just put a statement beneficiary is working above trail work level.

Elisa: That's the problem. What I have in the unemployment insurance thing that we have is -- unbelievable. He began according to his wife he won't talk to us but according to her he started working like the third week of December. She says she doesn't know what he's getting paid so the UI information for the last quarter includes literally eight days in December. So we're six months behind as well with the wage report.

Debbra Tennessee: Okay.

Elisa: I guess I can also just wait till you guys do the information for I guess in May since we're on auto pay or e-pay and maybe you can capture it? Does that happen?

Debbra Tennessee: It can happen but you still could go to the third party -- try to go to the work number.

Elisa: We don't have access to it.
I've pushed for it and I'm waiting on them to see if they will approve it. I can't even access it.

Debbra Tennessee: Your company hasn't approved it?

Elisa: No we don't do the work number.

Debbra Tennessee: Well at this point since you don't take that option to use the employer prepared statement that's one of those options Social Security came up with because of situations where people cannot get either information, pay stubs or information. So at this point until we go to e-pay if you're not going to use any of those other avenues out there then e-pay would be it for you I think.

Elisa: Okay. Well we're on ePay so I’ll wait until the earnings come in then.

Debbra Tennessee: Excuse me. Are you with work force investment board?

Elisa: Workforce connections.

Debbra Tennessee: Okay, yeah.

Elisa: I've presented it to my supervisor and he presented it to the director so I'm waiting to see what happens with the work number.

Debbra Tennessee: Yeah and also the quarterly earnings because if it wasn't on -- he started work in December which would have been fourth quarter of 2014.

Elisa: Correct.

Debbra Tennessee: Yeah. It's going to be a while before the first quarter 2015 is posted. Okay.

Elisa: Yep. Yeah. All right well thank you.

Debbra Tennessee: You're welcome.

Janet Cousin: Okay. We have one question in the chat room then that Kathy is going to share with us.

Kathy Dyson: This question is just pertaining to the portal training. The actual EN missed the training and they just would like to know when the next training is scheduled.

Debbra Tennessee: We don't have a copy of the training schedule right now but we do know that our training group here is working on some tools for another training session and once they have that schedule together that will be transmitted to the ENS

Janet Cousin: And this is Janet. I just want to clarify last month we didn't actually do a training session. It wasn't a general training session for all ENs.

 What we did was take some time during each of the all calls to provide a presentation really which was an introduction to the new portal. So we shared some of the screens, some of the current functionality that's being tested. But that presentation was not shared publicly as a training package because there are additional changes and enhancements and new features that are being planned and being tested currently and once the final roll out to the general EN audience occurs it will be different. So one thing for everyone to be aware of and know is that once your registration information has been validated, you've met all the requirements to join the new Ticket portal and that all that information requirements for registration is also available on our website under the information center tab that's really what you should be focusing on now is preparing yourself for registration and access to the new portal and then once you're confirmed and the deployment begins you'll have complete training with materials and reference documents for your deployment.

 Anything else that we can check on the line? Any other calls?

Operator: There are no other questions at this time.

Janet Cousin: Okay great. Well thanks everyone for joining us today.
This was a really good session.
A lot of good questions and interactions. I want to just remind everyone that, you know, again we'll have notes from -- recap from today's call. We'll document all the questions and the answers for those questions and post those on our website within the next few days. And for next month I want to give you a heads up. The last Tuesday of next month is the day after memorial day so we will be scheduling this meeting for the week prior which will be May 19 and that will be from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. eastern time. Again thanks everyone for joining us today. We do appreciate your participation. This call is for your benefit and we hope that it's been helpful for you.
Enjoy the rest of your day.

[Call ended]