**All EN Payments Call**

**3 – 4 p.m. EDT**

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Operator: Ladies and gentlemen thank you for standing by. Welcome to the national all Employment Network Payment conference call.
During the presentation all participants will be in a "listen-only" mode. Afterwards we will conduct a question and answer session. At that time -- that if you have a question please press star followed by one. You may also enter questions using the chat feature in the lower left corner of your screen. If you need to reach an operator at any time press star zero. This is recorded Tuesday July 28, 2015. Janet Cousin, please go ahead.

Janet Cousin: Thanks and good afternoon everyone. Welcome to our July All EN Payments Call. Thanks again for joining us today.
This is Janet Cousin and joining me is Debbra Tennessee and we also have Natalie a member of the Social Security Administration’s Office of research demonstration and employment support that's on the line with us as well. Our focus today will be to review the most common helpdesk questions and questions that we have received in recent months. Many of those questions are related to use of the new ticket portal and others are process or policy types of questions that really haven't changed much but we want to just take some time to review those.

 We will be using a presentation for the call and that presentation has been posted on the website at your ticket to work.com if you would like to follow along there. It's under the events page. And as usual you'll be invited to ask questions at the end of the presentation. Remember to not provide any details regarding personal cases that you're working with your clients on and we will be answering those questions via the chat room as well and certainly if we're not able to answer any questions we'll have someone follow up with you to address those at a later time. We have a lot of information to cover so let's go ahead and get started. All right so our agenda again we're going to be focusing on some key portal process issues and items that we think will be beneficial for review for those of you that are portal users and then we're going to take some time to review the non-portal processes as well. There's a couple of key things there that we want to make sure are clear and understood. The other thing that I want to take a few minutes to review is the outreach process that we use for requesting information based on work cases that we have in the system. Then lastly we'll review some common reasons for denials. We want to make sure that you're clear on what the requirements are for submitting payment requests and how to avoid having work cases denied.
And then we'll also provide an update on the expanded e-pay process which we've mentioned previously. All right so first step is to look at some of those key portal processes for all of you current ticket portal users.

 The first thing is to talk about the focus of the portal and the ticket portal is designed around two main lists. We have the beneficiary's currently assigned to me and beneficiaries formerly assigned to me. If you plan to take an action on a specific beneficiary the easiest way to get to that option is to navigate to the beneficiary from one of these two lists. We've had a few calls this month related to ticket assignment and these two screens are the best ways to verify the ticket assignment status prior to submitting your payment request.

 So again portal users you should see these from the main menu on the portal and on the left side here you have the currently assigned to me then formerly assigned to me where you can review and research beneficiary detailed information. Now the new ticket portal also checks to see if there are sufficient earnings in SSA's records each time a payment request is initiated. If there are sufficient earnings you will receive a message as shown in the center there TWP earnings already established for the claim month. And you do not need to provide any evidence in these cases. If earnings at SGA or above were not found for the claim month you will receive a message in the example in the top there indicating that you must add earnings by clicking the yes radio button u under the add earnings option. There's lots of different messages that the system may display when you're submitting your payment request and the key message here is to look for that important information box or as in the example on the bottom that message indicates that a payment has already been made for the claim month that was requested.
Again these messages are very important in guiding you through the payment request process and directing you on what action you should take. Another nice feature that was introduced with the June release of the portal is the ability to generate an additional fax cover sheet. You may need to generate an additional fax cover sheet if for example you deleted the original cover sheet form that was generated, you need to send in additional documents after you faxed in the original set of documents for your request. You may have a coworker who created the initial fax cover sheet and now they're on vacation and they forgot to fax in the documents and you need the documents in before the diary expires so there's various reasons why you may need to generate an additional fax cover sheet and there's an easy way for you to do so. It's accessible through the action screen which is from the view pending payments for me screen and it will also prompt you to select the type of document you plan to fax in. So the first screen shot with the red arrow is indicating the more actions list where fax additional information is an option and the second window on the lower right is the next screen you'll see where it's asking you to indicate which type of document you plan to send in. Once you make these selections you will be given the option to -- well a new fax cover sheet will be generated and you can save that fax cover sheet and print and fax in your documents with it or again an pend it to your electronic files and use your e-fax solution to send that fax in. Please, please, please ensure that the bar coded fax cover sheet that is generated is the first page of the fax transmission when you send in your fax request. You should not use a business cover sheet when transmitting these faxes. If the fax -- the bar code fax cover sheet is not the first page then our fax server will not be able to receive and automatically update and associate your fax to the work case. So it's very important to ensure that that bar coded fax cover sheet is the first page of your transmission. You can include multiple faxes with one transmission. So you processed two payment requests for example. You have two different fax cover sheets. You have two documents for the first fax cover sheet and you have three documents for the next fax cover sheet. So you have a total of seven pages. You can certainly take all seven pages, put them together with the fax cover sheet and the documents behind them and transmit all seven in one transmission. Our fax server will recognize the bar coded page and process the two documents behind it then see the second bar coded page and process that with the documents behind it. So there is a lot of logic there and you're welcome to do that if that's what's best for you. All right so the last key feature that we want to mention today is the show fax status feature. This also came in the June release and it gives you the ability to check the status of those faxes, those bar code faxes that you sent in. So again from the pending payments for me screen you can click on that actions link that we've mentioned before and one of the options there is to show fax status as we see in the first screen shot where the red arrow is. Once you choose show fax status the next screen below is display. And again in the case of a coworker that's on vacation this screen will indicate the date the fax was requested, who requested that fax and if it was transmitted and received the receipt date will be filled in.
If it's blank then you know that we haven't gotten it yet. So this is a good way for you to check the status of those faxed transmissions. All right so another question that we have received is associated with how to check the status of your payment request. Now in the new ticket portal there's actually two separate screens available to you that will provide that status. The first one and this is a screen shot of the main menu of the portal. Under the payment section the first two options here are those status report options. So the very first one is view payments already made to me. This option will include all payments that have been processed. So either they've been paid to you, they're in the process of being paid or they have been denied.

 And so you'll see all of those closed and completed work cases listed through that menu. The other option is to view all pending payments for me and this one is just that. It includes all payments that are still open and being processed and it includes all of those that may have a diary status with some information that we're still waiting from you with details associated with that. All right so from those two status report options the other common question that we've received is associated with well how do i download this information. Both of those reports do have an option to download the entire list to an excel file. Now this is a configuration setting and while most users should have this visible to them we have had a couple of instances where people have reported that it's not visible to them and we have to go in and do a change on their user settings. So if you do not see this feature please give a call to our system's helpdesk or send an email message to them and we'll be happy to check those settings for you. But you should be able to download your reports using this feature and there's some other options here that you'll see associated with help screens and printing options. Again if you're in the pending payments for me and there's a yes under the diaries column, there's a diary code list that's available and certainly if there's a denial code indicated for denied claims then you can see that code and identify the list of denial codes through this screen as well. So these are the key features that we wanted to review quickly with you and make sure that you're familiar with and are utilizing. They're very good features for you. They're helpful for you to become self sufficient but certainly if you have any questions or need any help don't hesitate to give us a call to either the payments helpdesk team or the system's helpdesk team. I want to also put a plug in right now in regards to the weekly portal orientation sessions that we have been hosting each Wednesday since the launch of the new portal. We will have another session tomorrow afternoon at 3:00 eastern time. Now this is exclusively for current portal users so you can attend as many sessions as you like and it is -- all of the details on how to participate in this orientation session are available on our ticket portal training and resources secure site which you have access information that was included in your welcome email message. It includes ticket portal features, details. There's the self-paced training module out there and there's other support materials like a detailed user guide. So please plan to participate in that session if you haven't already done so. All right so the next thing that we'll take a few minutes to talk through are these non-portal processes and for those non-portal users what steps you need to take. So in regards to split payments. We've had a few calls associated with, well how do I send in my split payment documents through the new portal and as of right now the only option available for faxing in documents is for the 1401 split payment request document. So a few slides ago when i showed you how to generate an additional fax cover sheet one of the document types there was the 1401 split payment request form. So if you have an existing work case and you've been notified that there's a potential split available and you were asked to complete a 1401 you do have the ability to generate a fax cover sheet and send that 1401 in using the fax cover sheet. However the other documents that are required for split payments the service records, the acknowledgement of the split decision agreements, those documents must be faxed into the operation support manager fax line. And then any manual payment request forms do need to be faxed into us as well. So neither of these scenarios can be processed through the ticket portal at this time. So let's look at how to submit those manual payment requests. So again the preferred method of submitting payment request forms is to use the ticket portal which actually the portal doesn't even require you to complete a form. It's all on-line and through the various screens. So we certainly want you to take advantage of the stream line processing and real-time updates. However if you are not able to use the new ticket portal for any reason then you also have the option to complete a payment request form manually which is available on our website under the forms tab in the payment section. And once that form has been completed you can fax the form in with your evidentiary evidence and documentation to the operation support manager fax number as shown here. You can also mail that completed form to us at the PO box that's included here.
Now again we do need to have a completed payment request form for these manual requests and certainly as on the previous slide if you're sending in any split payment documentation you can just include a fax cover sheet of your own business fax cover sheet with those split payment documents and fax those into us. Now the last bullet is explaining how if you need to check the status of your manual request you can certainly contact our payments helpdesk team. We do need to have a few business days to process those requests and certainly if you're sending in the details including an SSN number we need to have the email message encrypted to prevent any confidential information being shared. All right. So now let's take a look at these outreach requests that i mentioned earlier. When you have a work case that we have placed in a diary status and again you'll see that in the pending payments for me screen or when you receive manual payment requests and there's information that the payment specialists need from you then we will send out an outreach request for information to the contact for your EN via email. These email messages do -- are important. They're time sensitive because our diary period is a nine business day period and certainly if we do not hear from you within that period the work case will be denied. So we do want to make sure that you review these messages in a timely manner, pay attention to what information is missing or what information is requested. We are now including the detailed steps on how you can go about generating that additional fax cover sheet so that if you do need to send in documents then you have the steps on how to go in and generate a new cover sheet to do so. So please pay attention to these and respond to them as quickly as possible. All right so the next thing that we would like to do is take a few minutes to just cover common reasons for denials, why are so many claims being denied? And actually that has improved somewhat. But let's take a look back at fiscal year 2014. I've used this in a previous presentation but this does show the top five reasons payment requests were denied in 2014. And halfway into 2015 the top reason for denials are still because the EN is requesting outcome payments for a beneficiary that is receiving cash benefits. So if an EN requests outcomes for a beneficiary that's in current pay status either receiving federal cash benefits the payment request will be denied.

 And as you can see for fiscal year 14 that was 44 percent of the denials that we had thus far. While this may not be something that you have complete visibility to you're welcome to call us if there is a situation where it's denied and you need clarification on that. And the payment helpdesk team can provide that confirmation for you. The second most common reason for denials is due to prior earnings. So social security administration takes into consideration the earnings a ticket holder receives prior to ticket assignment. And as it states in the RFQ 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 ticket assignments. A common practice to recognize a prior earnings denial is to use the 18 month lookback tool. The tool can be downloaded from the ticket to work website if you go again to the information center and look under the forms sexual find the tool which is a spreadsheet there. And you can plug in information and determine if the 18 month lookback is in effect or not. Phase 1 milestone payments may not be available to an EN if the beneficiary achieved that milestone within that most recent 18 month period prior to the ticket assignment.

 So again this is just a review of an existing tool that still may be helpful for you. Now the new ticket portal does do that check for you and you may receive an actual message in that information box letting you know that the claim month that you're requesting is not available due to 18 month lookback. All right now the third most common reason for denials in 2014 were related to the earnings amounts not meeting the specific criteria for payment. Now 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 i.e. they were working at the time the state rehab agency successfully closed the case. So the best way to avoid this type of denial is to properly calculate the beneficiary's earnings for each pay period. And again we have this earnings estimator tool that's still available for you through the website and it can be used to help determine when a beneficiary's earnings might qualify for payment under the ticket program. So again under the information center resource document section on our website you can find this tool. Now with the programmatic check of earnings that the ticket portal is doing automatically at this time a payment request is submitted this hopefully won't be a top reason for denials anymore because our system is programmatically checking for qualifying earnings. All right so during intake with ENs we do highly recommend that you ask beneficiaries about any prior history of receiving VR services and whether they are working at the time of their VR case closure. ENs can also check the secure provider portal by selecting under the assignments area and that also includes information on prior VR services and successful closed VR cases.
This is something that the portal also checks programmatically each time a payment request is submitted.
So if there is a successful closure that's detected on file the portal will not provide the phase one milestone payments as an option for you to choose when you submit your payment request. So again this is one of the denial reasons that we've had last year and hopefully again moving forward with a lot of the automation this may no longer be the case in the future. All right so here's some general information about how to avoid these payment denials. First request pay stubs and employer earnings statements from your beneficiaries when you're performing your intake or once the ticket has been assigned to you. And this will give you an idea of if any of the milestones are available to you. The other option is to check the ticket portal. So again if you're a registered user of the ticket portal you can log in and check for VR closure status if the ticket was previously assigned to VR. So to check assignability you can go to the individual ticket status and use history page by clicking on the check assignability by SSN link from the main menu. And this page will allow you to check the assignability of a single social security number and you can enter that SSN to review history and use and current status.
This screen is also the first step for assigning any new tickets. And in the new ticket details there you'll see the ticket number, the mail date, termination date if it's applicable and the ticket status whether it's in use or not in use. The last payment on the ticket will also be displayed.
So you might see that it indicates there's no ticket payments yet, the last ticket claim month paid was say the month and year and the phase one milestone or what have you.
That's also displayed there. So based on the earnings and SSA systems the last 24 months will display. If the ticket was previously assigned you can see the name of the organization by clicking on the EN or the SVR hyperlink. The SVR closure status has two possible options/

 It will say yes for successful closure or n for unsuccessful closure. And if the ticket is assignable you will see the assign a ticket button and that which is shown here in the middle of the screen is the option you have to assign a ticket. So again it's another key feature of the new portal that allows you to verify this information prior to submitting.
So that's the final page of our denials review and some tips and tricks on how you can avoid denials, ways that you can improve your processes. All right. So let's talk about the new e-pay process. Last month we reviewed this during our call. There was a July second announcement sent out also indicating the details associated with the expanded e-pay process. And just before this call probably an hour and a half ago we have an additional GovDelivery announcement that was sent out to everyone with some additional details. So just to review this new e-pay process is beginning at the end of July. Actually this week we will be running this new expanded e-pay process for the first time. It will replace all existing e-pay processes. So in the month of June we did run for the last time those current e-pay processes including UAP, the WIB process which is NYESS and the VREM process. All of those were run for the last time in June. The key exciting thing about this new process is there's no sign up. No sign up, no forms to fill out. All active tickets will be considered as part of this process. Initially it will be a monthly process where we'll be checking the system for earnings and we'll create a file for all beneficiaries that qualify you for payment. We'll analyze those cases and process payments for each case where a payment is qualified. And with this expansion of e-pay and it being available to all ENs there really is not going to be any need for certification payment requests. So I encourage all of you to check your email if you haven't yet today. Look for that more detailed notice that was sent out today that does speak to this updated process, does confirm that we will be running the very first expanded e-pay process this week. Again for all Employment Networks.

 And there will be no longer a need for certification requests and those will -- we will no longer accept as of July 31st. So this week we will no longer at the end of this week accept any certification payment requests. So that's it. Those are the key things. There was a lot of information that we reviewed today and we would like to accept any questions that you have about any of the topics that we covered. Shai if you can go ahead and remind everyone how to request or submit a question and open up the lines for us.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen if you would like to register a question please press the star followed by the one on your telephone keypad. If your question has been answered and you would like to withdraw your registration please press pound. One moment please for the first question. And the first question comes from Eugenia Cox.

Eugenia Cox: Hi, this is Eugenia from Oregon VR. I put a question on the chat that hadn't been responded to with regards to when you go into the first two lists in the portal, the tickets assigned to you and the tickets that have been past assigned to you. And our ability not to be able to look somebody up by name or social security number and first of all I want to know why because what's happening -- what's going to happen to us is when we pull lists there's going to be over a thousand people so we have to exam sport that list and highlight the ones for TPR then go in and scroll and look for those people.

Debbra Tennessee: This is Debbra. I had responded to that by basically saying we would take your ticket assignment questions and pass it on to the appropriate staff because we really aren't able to address ticket assignment issues on this call. But because that is a concern and I've seen a couple other ENs identify some ticket assignment issues we're going to take those questions that you submitted and we're going…

Janet Cousin: This isn't a ticket assignment issue?

Eugenia Cox: This is about just being able to look up a person to take any actions.

Debbra Tennessee: Okay.

Eugenia Cox: Because we don't have the ability to do that in either one of those lists. Now you do for payments when you go down, you know, you can actually enter a social security number but there's no ability to look somebody up on your list, just an individual person.

Debbra Tennessee: Now are you -- so just so that I'm understanding your question. You initially mentioned that from the main menu are you referring to the view pending payments for me and the view payments already made to me?

Eugenia Cox: No. The first section.

Debbra Tennessee: Okay. In the assignment list. Okay. Okay. We'll send that up to the system staff at SSA. I don't believe anyone is on the phone from SSA who can deal -- we had a system's person on some of the calls who is dealing directly with social security system staff who are working on the portal. So we'll take that issue back directly to social security and see, you know, what they can do with that.

Eugenia Cox: And anybody, you know, that has to pull up individuals just to see, you know, check or do actions with the person is going to have the same problem.

Debbra Tennessee: Okay.

Eugenia Cox: I'm saying it because we're a State VR agency so we will have a lot more folks.

Debbra Tennessee: Actually right after you submitted your inquiry into the portal a couple other ENs did come back and said they had that issue as well.

Eugenia Cox: Yeah. Then the other thing is you said all ENs will go under the E-PAY. Are you including the state agencies acting as ENs?

Debbra Tennessee: Yes. We have them identified. It's ongoing support for phase one only milestones VRENs you're all included under e-pay.

Eugenia Cox: Oh cool. That means our quarterly payments will now be monthly?

Debbra Tennessee: Whenever Social Security has earnings right now the file will be run monthly. Hopefully one day soon it will be a daily process. But for right now it's monthly.

Eugenia Cox: Cool. Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of Mark Marsh. Mark your line is open.

Mark Marsh: Thank you very much and good afternoon everyone. I actually have two questions. The first one is regarding SEI, Self-Employment Income. How do we process monthly Self Employment income payment requests? Does the beneficiary have to go to the social security office and provide proof of earnings and related expenses at the beginning of the month following the self-employment income month?

Debbra Tennessee: Let me tell you. Very, very, very rarely do we see self- employment monthly income posted to any Social Security system. The way self-employment runs right now is it used to be under the certification payment request where an EN would submit their SEI forms and the beneficiary would list gross, expenses and all that, the net income. That information will come into us and if social security does not have annual earnings for that individual we wait until we receive that information from the IRS divided by 12 and come up with an estimated monthly amount.

Mark Marsh: So in other words there will be no payments to the EN for self- employment beneficiaries until after they have filed their income tax return?

Debbra Tennessee: If there is a self-employment beneficiary that does have monthly earnings posted that satisfies a payment type yes we will pay you for that. That's why we're saying we no longer need certification requests because most SEI cases there are no earnings, monthly earnings posted. We have to wait for the annual report. But there are times if the earnings are there we're going to pay you under the e-pay expanded ePay process.

Mark Marsh: Okay. Okay. That will work. And the other question was on a case closure for the state VR if I have a beneficiary who started working while his ticket was assigned to a VR and got a job for four hours a week and is unhappy with the service being provided by the state VR. So he wants to request his ticket be unassigned or case be closed and I guess that would be unsuccessful closure which would then make his phase one payments be available to the EN. He hasn't worked in the past 24 user months. He hasn't worked at trial work. The individual started working four hours and want to assign their ticket to our EN and leave the state VR. So I guess the question is can the beneficiary request case closure and would it be considered unsuccessful if that person is working, but below trial work?

Debbra Tennessee: I'm not sure for the -- I thought and maybe someone from SSA is on the phone. I believe that successful just means they are working. I don't think that it is given a dollar amount for that. I know for lookback earnings they have to be at trial work level but for the VR closure if someone who is at -- SSA can confirm this I believe it shows they have to be working.

Natalie Sendledorfer: This is Natalie. Let me try to get clarification on that quick.

Debbra Tennessee: She is with Social Security. She's going to try someone from the VR team.

Mark Marsh: Thank you.

Debbra Tennessee We might have to come back to that answer because she has to get someone. But as soon as she does we'll come back to that question.

Mark Mash: Thank you.

Operator: And your next question comes from the line of Sarai. Your line is open.

Sarai: Hi good afternoon. So in regards to the email that was sent today about the e-pay we will no longer be able to send QBER requests?

Debbra Tennessee: There is no such thing. We're not producing those anymore.

Sarai: Yes I understand that you're not producing them but we have printed one out before it was taken down from the portal and we were told that's okay for us to continue submitting requests with this information.

Debbra Tennessee: The information you have in your QBERs that you have old ones social security has it in their records, in their earnings records. So those beneficiaries will be identified in the E-PAY process.

Sarai: Okay.

Janet Cousin: To answer your question directly Sarai, effective Friday the 31st we will no longer accept any certification requests payments which includes those that you were submitting using that QBER report. But what Debbra is confirming is the expanded e-pay process is using that same resource that the QBERr report is generated and will be able to identify payments for you that you qualify for as part of the expanded e-pay process.

Sarai: And is there a time frame then? The email says if you have tickets that you do not receive payments you may request evidentiary payments on them.
Is there a time frame we should wait for before we can submit our own evidentiary payments for those people?

Janet Cousin: We're going to run out e-pay file run this week. Over the next two weeks you should get the results of our e-pay file either payment or you don't get a payment. I would wait until after that two week period because social security again has all those earnings captured in their database. Now it's possible you may not get a payment and the earnings are there. Earnings is not the only criteria for making a payment.
It could be a payment status issue or the beneficiary as entered the outcome period at one point and gone back into current pay. There are a number of reasons other than earnings that you may not be eligible for a payment. However after that two week period if you believe that there's some claims you have not been paid for you do have to submit primary evidence which means pay stubs, work number or earnings preparer statements.

Sarai: Okay. What you just said we have been noticing the work number is -- a lot of the employers have not showed the net amount.

Janet Cousin: That amount is an optional field in the portal so if you don't have the net amount then you can still submit your payment request. The required fields are the dates and the gross earnings.

Sarai: Oh, okay. All right. Because we received an email letting us know they would not accept that because they didn't have the net on them.

Janet Cousin: Yeah we do need to know what withholdings are made. I think maybe in that particular situation -- then we do receive supplemental earnings statements with some of those that doesn't have all the information listed.

Sarai: So in your case the key things to understand is first of all the portal doesn't require net earnings as a field that you must provide with each submission. However the rules associated with payment request process are still in place. So if the pay stubs or the work number report does not include any withholdings then that may be the reason why an outreach request was sent to you to say, hey we need to have you complete a self-employment income -- i'm sorry a supplemental earnings statement or employer prepared statement that provides that level of detail in order to process your payment request. Is that clearer?

Sarai: Yes.

Janet Cousin: Okay.

Sarai: And I also had one question that I asked on the chat and I was told to ask it over the phone. In regards to denials -- the EN trying to request outcome payments.

Debbra Tennessee: Okay for an outcome payment the criteria for outcome payment the beneficiary must have earnings at a substantial gainful activity level SGA or greater. And they must be in a nonpay or suspense payment status. If they're in current pay we cannot make outcome payments.

Sarai: Correct. Yes. But it's specifically for SSI beneficiary. Sometimes a lot of times beneficiary fail to report their income to their local offices and when they have made over that SSI cap amount to figure out their benefits and they're still being in current pay and we have clients that they're still in current pay for years and still having earnings over that cap for like years and they're still receiving their check. So I don't understand why those payments are not honored to the ENs when we have proof that they're making over the SSI cap even though they're incorrectly receiving their SSI check.

Debbra Tennessee: Whenever you send in any pay stubs if you have the extra ones here we keep that information in social security's system so at some point they do get that information. So whether the beneficiary reports it or not if you send pay stubs we do keep those earnings.

Sarai: Okay but we're being denied those payments even though we're showing that they're over the SGA amount for SSI beneficiary.

Debbra Tennessee: I understand. But we can't make those payments until social security field offices make the change to place the beneficiary into a nonpaid status.

Sarai: Okay. On the last orientation call that was made on July 22 somebody said -- they didn't mention their name but I'm quoting, all of the needs you're submitting to us verified by our payment specialists and updated into the system. It is the same system that the local field offices rely on to verify earnings.

Debbra Tennessee: Let me say one thing. MAXIMUS does not verify earnings. What they do is look at the primary evidence that comes in and we make an evaluation whether or not it is acceptable. Meaning that it's a valid pay stub, meaning it looks like it's a valid employer who has taken withholdings or whatever. Then we key that information into social security's systems. Now social security performs their own verification from that process.
They verify earnings but MAXIMUS does not.

Sarai: Okay. So when we send to MAXIMUS then Social Security's verifying that information and eventually it will get updated in Social Security system?

Debbra Tennessee: Yes. Yes. They'll switch it from an alleged to a verified earnings. Yes

Sarai: Okay. So we should -- i mean if we get denied for those payments you're saying we should maybe try a later time maybe a couple months later?

Debbra Tennessee: Yes. And you can even contact maybe the field office but again it's something that social security field offices -- it's an action they have to take. It's outside MAXIMUS’s control.

Sarai: Okay. Would ENs be able to report earnings for beneficiaries?

Debbra Tennessee: I'm told some ENs have attempted to do this at field offices and they may have problems since they're not the beneficiaries but again ENs do send us proof of earnings into MAXIMUS and we do keep those earnings. Now we key them into the social security system.

Janet Cousin: Are you maybe dealing with a timing issue whether it's something that you guys are sending into us, we are keying it into the SSA database and, you know, versus the timing of when the beneficiary is reporting it to the local field office and local field office is keying it in and it's being verified. I'm not really sure but as Debbra mentioned and, you know, what was shared in the orientation session is that we are entering information that you send to us into the SSA system and it is the same source that the local field office should be keying in information and eventually will be verified by SSA in that same system. So, you know, whether there's a delay with the beneficiary reporting and the local field office updating or the timing of us rekeying in what you send to us again the commitment for processing payment requests is the 30 day turn around with the automation that's occurred we're actually processing payment requests a lot faster than that.
So that information is keyed into SSA systems with each payment request that we are reviewing for payment. I hope that's helpful.

Sarai: Yep. It is. Thank you very much.

Operator: And your next question comes from the line of shelly. Shelly your line is open.

Shelly: Hi. I am calling about the recent breach that's occurred and just wondering if there's any notification that's going to be sent out to ENs. I'm looking at a website opm.gov and it says those that were included in background investigations -- sorry investigation records of current, former and perspective federal employees and contractors and i believe that was the title of some of the stuff we filled out doing our background checks was part of the breach that they discovered in June of 2015. So I'm wondering especially since we access our SSA records then through us we get to the portal which then accesses all of our beneficiaries. Are we hearing anything, you know, as far as a notification, as far as what maybe we should be doing or anything like that?

Janet Cousin: Well Shelly thank you for bringing that to attention. I know it's an important concern of everyone's. Now unfortunately in this form we're focused on payment related issues and questions so we don't have a specific answer for you.
However there was a recent GovDelivery announcement with an update to that. I would strongly suggest if you have additional follow up questions related to that you can certainly follow up with your account manager. I believe it also was discussed during the all EN call and that may be a more appropriate forum.

Shelly: I'm just not able to -- next week I'm not able to get on to the EN call that's why I jumped on to this one.

Janet Cousin: Well okay. You know take a look at that other GovDelivery announcement sent out I think it was yesterday and you can certainly follow up with your account manager and they may be able to provide additional details for you.

Shelly: And you said there was something possibly on the previous en call?

Janet Cousin: I'm not sure. You know but that's the forum where this would be -- that would be addressed. You can certainly check the your ticket to work event page and the transcript and the agenda for the all en -- well all of the national calls are posted there. If you're not able to join next week you can certainly follow up after the call and check for that -- those details on-line as well.

Operator: And your next question comes from the line of Karen. Karen your line is open.

Karen: Actually Scott on our team is going to ask the question so...

Scott: I just got a quick question about the faxing and a lot of what you said has been reiterated in previous calls so I don't want to reinvent the wheel here. In the event we ever have to fax anything over now we're on e-pay so it's most likely improbable but you said on this phone call that through the portal you can get a status update on whether or not that was received or not. The question that I have is if we send it on our fax machine and get a confirmation how long does it typically take turnaround time for you guys to receive that and process that? What would be a reasonable time to do follow up in the event we did have to fax anything over whether it's for earnings or any further ancillary documentation regarding an open ticket?

Janet Cousin: Well probably the time that it takes for you to walk from your fax machine back to your desk and log in and check the portal fax status. It really is literally a matter of minutes.
When you fax in your transaction and you receive confirmation of completion that means your machine talked to our machine and our machine has received it.
You can go immediately to the pending payments for me screen, click on the actions tab and check the fax status at that point. And it should indicate right there the receive date of today. Immediately.

Scott: Okay. So if there was like a bad fax transmission it would say something like that on the portal?

Janet Cousin: No. Unfortunately it doesn't tell you if we didn't receive it. It only indicates if we have received it. If that receive date field is blank that's your indication that it was not received and processed.
>> what if it was just like a bad fax like it didn't come out or something -- whatever -- anything that could possibly go wrong with sending a fax. It was received but maybe it wasn't -- maybe you didn't have all the necessary documentation you needed. That's all.

Scott: Okay so just to be clear when you -- let's say you have ten pages. You sent your transmission. You received confirmation that everything was okay. That means the actual technical transaction of faxing from one machine to the next occurred successfully. When we received it however the last two pages of those ten pages were not clear. Let's say the font was too small or the print was too light and so by the time we received it was updated into our system. It's not legible.

Janet Cousin: The payment specialist reviewing your work case will have to send one of those outreach messages to you letting you know that, you know, the last two pages of your transmission were not legible and we need to have you resend additional pay stubs. If for some reason you had three payment requests that you're working on and somehow you mixed up, you know, pay stubs for the first one with the second one and somehow the documentation doesn't match the work claim for that fax cover sheet. Again they'll be an outreach if the same payment specialist is not reviewing those work -- those multiple work cases they may figure that out themselves and be able to adjust the supporting documents with the appropriate work case and fix it for you but if not again we'll have an outreach message sent to you to say, hey, it looks like you included the wrong evidence with the wrong work case and we need to have you resend it to us.
So, you know, whether the issue is a technical issue or the transmission was not sent correctly or the issue is related to the fact that we did receive something it's just not the right something, um, we'll send a follow up. So the fax status is simply to let you know that we did receive something and that fax status screen is showing the date that we received something and if that date field is blank then we didn't receive anything.

Scott: Okay that answers my question. Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of Eugenia. Your line is open.

Eugenia Cox: Hi again. I just wanted to respond to the questions with regards to VR closure.

Janet Cousin: Okay. Great.

Eugenia Cox: When, you know, our role of VR is to help people go back to work, basically whatever work means to them. So whether we're employing somebody full-time, half time, two hours a week, um, and we put them in employment status in whatever work they're doing we're required to monitor them on the job for at least 90 days. After the 90 days mark they can continue monitoring them and keep the case open or they usually close the case and that would be closed successfully after that 90 day.
It doesn't matter how much they're working. It just matters that they're working.
So that person's question was does it matter how much they're working if that determines successful or unsuccessful.
That has no bearing. So it's the successful closure if we close them employed after the 90 day monitoring period.

Janet Cousin: Thank you.

Eugenia Cox: If they're closed prior to that 90 day monitoring period then that case is considered unsuccessful.

Janet Cousin: Okay.

Eugenia Cox: Regardless of whether they're working or not.

Janet Cousin: Thank you. I thought that it was not a matter of how much but the period I guess, the 90 days is the issue here. How long they've been working. Okay thank you very much.

Eugenia Cox: That makes it difficult for us to hand off quite a few of our clients. They may be working two, four, you know, five hours a week and that might not be anybody that an employment network would want to take on. So that's why it's got to be somebody that's closer up there to the levels they need to be able to do a partnership.

Janet Cousin: Okay.

Eugenia Cox: Okay?

Janet Cousin: Great thanks again for that clarification Eugenia.

Operator: Your next question comes from the line of Bernard. Bernard your line is open.

Bernard: How y' all doing. My question is actually pretty simple about the e-pay. This goes into effect on the 29th. Does it actually automatically check both outcomes as well as milestones to determine if any payments are due?

Debbra Tennessee: Okay what we're doing right now beginning in July the system will be looking basically for earnings and create a file for us to work. We will be looking at phase one, phase two milestones as well as outcomes.
The system will also automatically process r reconciliation payments after outcome number 12. So in answer to your question e-pay will cover all payments.

Bernard: Okay. So in response to that we still need to put in a payment request, do we not?

Debbra Tennessee: No. When we do e-pay you do not have to do that at all. If we have earnings posted to the system and the beneficiary meets all the other requirements we will make a payment. You do not have to make a payment request.

Janet Cousin: What you will see is in your reports through the portal you will see claims, work cases for payments that were processed through the e-pay review process.

Bernard: Thank you. That actually solves a merriad of problems from my end of things.

Janet Cousin: Yes. It's automation at its best we hope and that's the plan. Make it easier for you, easier for us. And, you know, allow you to focus on assisting beneficiaries.

Bernard: Great. Thank you so much. I appreciate it.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen as a reminder to register for an audio question press the star followed by one. At this time there are no further audio questions.

Janet Cousin: Okay. Well Debbra are there any questions in the chat room that we can discuss and address until someone else has an audio question?

Debbra Tennessee: There is a question from Lisa. If we have a consumer that we haven't gotten payment on since august 2014 because they will not provide pay stubs the earnings are not established in the portal and there are no earnings on the work number will we get paid on it with the new e-pay process?

 Lisa what I can tell you is if the earnings are in any social security system and the beneficiary meets the requirements or the criteria for the next payment that should be available, yes we will make the payment through e-pay.

 The other question came from Judy. Why are so many Social Security offices telling beneficiaries they don't have to report monthly. We are told to tell beneficiaries to report to their local field office to help alleviate the beneficiaries getting into over payment situations. Judy I cannot answer that question. I know we've heard it over and over again from a number of ENs which is why we invite ENs to submit any pay stubs or whatever into MAXIMUS and we will key that information into the social security system because you are absolutely correct. Especially for SSI. They do need to report those earnings. The only way social security knows what earnings a person makes is pretty much the first source is through the individuals. Of course if beneficiaries file income taxes at the end of the year we get that information later by way of IRS and there's some information that employers report. But really the beneficiaries to avoid over payment situations they really do need to report monthly.

Janet Cousin: Okay excellent. Those were good questions through the chat room. Anything else that we haven't addressed in the chat room Debbra?

Debbra Tennessee: No I think that's pretty much it. We had a few questions about SEI -- not about SEI or employer prepared statements.
So those are -- basically the ENs wanted to know whether or not they could get a spreadsheet from an employer with the earnings listed and I said that's fine but we still need -- the employer's name needs to be listed and the employer needs to sign off on it or a representative, a payroll clerk or someone from a company and they also need to make the statement and affirm that all the withholdings required by law have been made. That way we know the regular employer is not a contractor or possible SEI case and we can process that.
So that was the question.

Janet Cousin: Great. Okay Shai do we have any additional audio questions at this time?

Operator: You do have another question from the line of Eugenia. Your line is open.

Eugenia Cox: I bet you're sick of hearing from me. I just wanted to put in a plug for the national employment network association coming up in September. We're going -- there's going to be several VR agencies that are going to be there. So I saw some questions about whether they were doing partnership plus and things like that. We'll talk about those kind of things and it's a good conference to meet other employment networks and also connect with state VR agencies. September 9, 10 and 11 it's in New Orleans and if you want more information on the conference you can go to ninaticket.org.

Janet Cousin: Okay good plug. Thank you for that. Ninaticket.org for more information about the conference in September on the 9-11 in New Orleans. That's a nice place to be that time of year. Okay anything else Shai?

Debbra Tennessee: I have one question in the chat. It says i have two beneficiaries who would like to work in the mmj industry which is cash only. How do i get paid and how would you find payments?
First of all there should be no employer giving cash only out because that employer is not making the required withholdings. It's not the
beneficiary's best interest because if fica taxes are not with held and they are working that reduces their retirement benefits and any other benefits.
Really it's illegal. So really you should not -- not that you are but try to encourage these beneficiaries to find other sources of work, legitimate work where they're getting a pay stub, where they're having withholdings made so their social security and medicare taxes are being paid on their behalf.

Janet Cousin: Very good. Thanks for that clarification. Shai are there any additional audio questions?

Operator: There are no further audio questions at time this.

Janet Cousin: Okay. Very good. All right.
And there's no pending questions in the chat room so at this point then I want to take the time to just thank everyone for joining us for today's call. We do hope that the information shared was helpful for you. We thank you for all of the great questions that you've asked through the phone line and in the chat room as well.
Certainly if you have any follow up questions or suggestions for future topics for our call please send those to the EN payments helpdesk at your ticket to work.com and we will certainly consider those for future discussions. Next month -- well let me share a couple of additional things.
Next week Tuesday our ticket training Tuesday session on august 4 at 1:00 eastern time is open to all ENs and VRs if you would like to join us. We will be providing more details on how to submit a payment request, via the ticket portal as well as another review of the manual process. So please join us next Tuesday for that session. It is a repeat of the session we did earlier this month and again there's a lot more details there on how to use the ticket portal to submit your requests and review of the manual processes.

 Our next all EN payment call will be on Tuesday august 25th at 3:00 eastern time and we hope that you join us next month as well. Again thanks everyone and have a great rest of your day.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen that does conclude the conference call for today. We thank you for your participation and ask that you please disconnect your line.

CALL ENDED