

Introductions and Updates

Robert Pfaff (SSA)

- Rob addressed the executive changes at SSA/ORDES. David Weaver, Associate Commissioner, left ORDES in mid-October for a role in the Congressional Budget Office. Susan Wilschke is Acting Associate Commissioner. Jeff Hemmeter, Manager of Research and Development, has assumed Susan's former position as Acting Deputy Associate Commissioner. A search is underway for a new Associate Commissioner.
- National Employment Network Association (NENA): Rob was pleased to participate along with Hy Hinojosa, who represented SSA field operations. SSA provided program data updates and discussed various new initiatives.
- Summit Meetings: SSA has completed two Ticket Partner meetings (Los Angeles and most recently Denver) bringing together local SSA stakeholders including Field Operations staff, WIPA projects, PABSS programs, and EN and State VR agency service providers. The purpose was to create awareness of the Ticket to Work (Ticket) program and promote collaboration. Pending budget, there will be more events in 2017. Information will be shared as available.
- SSA shared some information on FY changes to date from 2015-2016.
 - Ticket assignments are at 58,752 to ENs—a 14% increase from previous year.
 - Beneficiaries with earnings that generated payments to ENs are at 52,932—a 39% increase from previous year.
 - Number of beneficiaries with EN support for which disability payments were not made due to earnings increased to 17,835—a 35% increase.
 - Payments made total \$85,430,435—a 73% increase from previous year.

Felix Stump (TPM)

Felix welcomed Pat Van Nelson as new Director of Marketing and Communications. Pat will concentrate on beneficiary outreach including directing social media efforts, blog posts, success stories and other content in order to increase program engagement and familiarity for beneficiaries. Pat previously worked under the BASS Contract.

Denver Operations Summit

Mark Green (SSA)

Regarding the Denver Ticket Partner meeting, Mark stressed that participants were very pleased for the opportunity to get together in person to hear and meet people they deal with. The meeting was very worthwhile.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)

Mark Green (SSA)

The WOTC is available to employers who hire individuals from certain target groups who have faced significant barriers to employment. Since 2005 MAXIMUS has provided free verification of an individual's participation in either the Ticket program or Vocational Rehabilitation to allow companies to qualify for the tax credit. For SSI beneficiaries, the requests have gone through the Workforce Agency (not MAXIMUS) with a fee charged. Going forward all SSI cases will go through MAXIMUS and no fee will be charged. This is big news and opens up more opportunities for employment for SSI beneficiaries.

Mark also announced his retirement after 42 years, effective January 3, 2017. He thanked and expressed pleasure for the experience of working with everyone.

Plan to Achieve Self Support (PASS) Presentation

Margery McIver (SSA); Matthew Angel, (Mental Health Association of South Central Kansas)

Margery discussed PASS as a Work Incentive. PASS allows individuals receiving disability to set aside funds to help them achieve work goals. SSI excludes the income set aside. PASS is unique as it reflects individual choice. Examples of the use of PASS were provided such as an auto mechanic buying tools, employees buying uniforms, and students buying text books. Beneficiaries must apply for PASS in writing and have a clear work goal that will generate earnings towards self-sufficiency.

Matthew discussed the benefits of PASS for SSI beneficiaries and provided more examples.

Site Visit Updates

Cara Caplan (SSA)

ENSB conducted site visits with over 40 ENs. SSA is 80% finished with reports. SSA appreciates the hospitality. Most corrective actions concerned suitability. It is a requirement, and the law, that all staff handling PII, not just one person within the organization, must have suitability. Contact Cara for any questions concerning site visits.

Beneficiary Satisfaction Survey

Michael Greenberg (TPM)

The Beneficiary Satisfaction Survey is conducted periodically by SSA as a source of program-wide data about beneficiary Ticket program experiences with ENs. The survey began September 16 with postcards mailed to selected beneficiaries to complete the survey online. Paper surveys were sent on October 3 to the non-responders. The survey will close November 30. Data analysis will begin after data collection and then the survey report will be generated. ENs were asked to encourage beneficiaries who received a survey to respond to it.

Virtual Job Fair

Ana Morales (TPM)

TPM is in the process of tracking employment outcomes for all three (3) Virtual Job Fairs (VJFs). Collectively, 54 employers participated and a total of 759 beneficiaries attended who represented 109 ENs and 41 State VR agencies. Outreach is being conducted with beneficiaries, employers and service providers. EN Development Department staff began outreach to service providers this week and will continue until November 16. Service providers were encouraged to respond.

Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS)

Adelle Barr (TPM)

TPM will launch the next phase of Blackboard implementation at the beginning of March. Training material will be hosted in Blackboard for service providers to conduct new staff training or refresher trainings on Ticket program material. A GovDelivery message will be sent regarding this implementation. Service providers were thanked for responding with their Learning Management System Point of Contact (LMS POC). A further request was made for ENs to submit the LMS POC by November 25 or the EN Primary Contact will be designated.

Systems Updates

Katie Striebinger (SSA)

SSA is currently investigating an issue with the Ticket Portal. In rare instances, the Portal is incorrectly allowing ENs to assign cases when the beneficiary is not in current pay status. These are invalid assignments and SSA will remove these assignments from the record after we resolve the issue. SSA will notify ENs when the problem is fixed. In the meantime, if you submit a payment request for a beneficiary whose case was incorrectly assigned, please be aware that your payment will be denied with the reason "Ticket assigned in error."

Proof of Concept Updates: Benefits Planning Query (BPQY), Marketing and Wage Reporting

Gary Rauch (SSA)

- BPQY: To date SSA has responded to 20,582 requests and filled 18,860.
- Wage Reporting: TPM Payment Specialists will verify and enter wages. The pilot has begun with one TPM staff member working with two service providers. Twelve work reports have been completed. The work will be expanded to off-site Payment Specialists as progress is made.
- EN Marketing: For the first phase, 22 organizations have participated and data files have been sent to 14 of the 22. Others are in the process of being completed. Individual file preparation takes a large amount of time. After creation, distribution may be carried out on an ongoing basis. There is a positive outlook for this effort.

Questions

No questions.

Closing

Gary Rauch (SSA) congratulated Mark Green on his retirement and professional contributions.

- ▶ The full transcript and audio from the Quarterly All EN Call are available at <https://yourtackettowork.com/web/ttw/events-archive>.
- ▶ The next Quarterly All EN Call will be held **February 16, 2017 at 3 p.m. ET**.