

## All State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agency Call

### Welcome

Regina Bowden welcomed everyone to the quarterly All State VR Agency call. She welcomed Elissa Ness from the Office of Beneficiary Outreach and Employment Services, noting that this office is responsible for oversight of Employment Network (EN) contractors and Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) projects.

### Timely Progress Review (TPR)

Ness noted that TPRs were restarted on March 17 after being stopped in 2015. Due to the selection process used, the first batch of 100 TPR cases were mostly beneficiaries being served by State VR agencies in the Boston Region. Only a few beneficiaries served by ENs were included in this first batch of reviews. Ness explained that an additional 25 of the beneficiaries passed the TPR review based on information that the Social Security Administration (SSA) had in its systems. The Ticket Program Manager (TPM) already received 17 responses.

Ness stressed that the Portal is not currently open for service providers to respond to TPRs. She noted that the TPR process is a live process and that failure of a TPR review will result in the beneficiary's loss of continuing disability review (CDR) protection. For this reason, service providers are encouraged to offer assistance to beneficiaries who are responding to TPR notices.

Additionally, Ness said that the planned testing of the TPR function in the Portal could happen in the next few weeks and that SSA will contact providers for testing purposes. Training with specific details about TPR and the Ticket Portal will be available in the future. She noted that there will be no option for state VR agencies to opt out of responding to TPRs as there was in the past. State VR agencies can only submit information to support passing a TPR. She reminded everyone that beneficiaries must return the 1375 form in a timely manner.

For additional details on this discussion, read the transcript or listen to the audio recording of this call. Questions about the TPR process should be submitted to [TPRHelpDesk@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov](mailto:TPRHelpDesk@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov).

### Onsite Training, State VR Directors, New SSA Coordinators, Regional Coordinators

Raquel Donaldson noted the next onsite cost reimbursement training will be held at the SSA complex in Baltimore immediately following the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) Spring Conference on April 12 and 13. Donaldson encouraged

anyone who would like to participate in this training to reach out to the VR Help Desk (VR.Helpdesk@ssa.gov) and Linda Custis and/or Gloria Blowe will assist.

Donaldson said she sends the State VR Directory to the SSA Regional Coordinators roughly every 6 months for their review. The SSA Coordinators are asked to make updates and changes based on the most recent information they have. Donaldson stressed the importance of having up-to-date information on the VR Directors and Cost Reimbursement (CR)/Ticket Coordinators. She also noted that, on occasion, new SSA Regional Coordinators send emails with questions that could be better handled by other SSA offices or divisions. Donaldson also announced a new Regional Coordinator in Atlanta, Alberta Perry ([Alberta.Perry@ssa.gov](mailto:Alberta.Perry@ssa.gov)).

### **Work Number Verification, Denial Code 310, Payment Code 950**

Shada Roper said she would not be covering Denial Code 310 because it was covered during the last quarterly call. She referred people to the transcript and audio recording of the January 9, 2018, call for details. She instructed participants to submit any additional questions to the VR Help Desk.

In discussing the Work Number Verification system, Roper noted that the VR staff at SSA's central office no longer have access to the Work Number. If a VR agency wants to use the Work Number to document earnings, the verification information must be submitted with the CR claim. In summary, SSA is no longer using the Work Number when processing cost reimbursement claims. However, state VR agencies can still use pay stubs, an employer-signed earnings statement or Work Number verification information to verify earnings. Roper confirmed the SSA field offices do have access to the Work Number to verify information for their purposes.

There was a lengthy discussion about the 950 notices. These notices explain how much a beneficiary's claim can be and how much the VR agency receives based on the new calculations associated with savings to the Trust Fund. These calculations are not being automatically generated by the system at this time. If a VR agency needs this information or have questions about a 950 notice, email the VR Help Desk or email Roper at [Shada.T.Roper@ssa.gov](mailto:Shada.T.Roper@ssa.gov).

Raquel Donaldson noted the SSA's VR Team all work from home 2 days a week, which varies depending on the staff person. As a result, the best way to contact members of the VR Team is by email.

### **Questions and Answers**

A question and answer period concluded the call. For details, access the full transcription and audio recording of the April 3 All State VR Call by visiting <https://yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/information-center/events-archive.html>.

Regina thanked everyone for their questions and noted that additional questions not dealt with during the call should be submitted to the VR Help Desk.

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The next All State VR Agency Call will be held on  
**Tuesday, July 10, 2018, at 3 p.m. ET.**