

Introductions and Updates

Cara Caplan (SSA)

Cara welcomed everyone to the call, including new Employment Networks (ENs) recently activated to serve Ticketholders.

Cara also announced that the Washington State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation recently finalized and distributed their brand new Partnership Plus agreement to Washington based ENs. Washington joins 26 other states who have Partnership Plus collaborations in place.

EN Site Visits

Social Security (SSA) is currently engaged in annual EN site visits to evaluate how ENs are doing and to offer on-site support. They have completed 29 visits so far this year, and there are 20 more to go. Social Security gives ENs 2 to 4 weeks of advance notice of a scheduled visit.

Social Security Employment Summit

SSA will be hosting an Employment Summit on June 12 and 13 at their headquarters in Baltimore, Maryland. The purpose is to engage employment experts in a discussion on effective strategies that support a successful employment program and outcomes for adult Social Security beneficiaries with disabilities. Due to the format of the event, the number of participants will be limited. However, SSA has invited a diverse cross section of ENs and state VR Agency service providers who represent an array of service models, scopes, and business structures. SSA leadership and various Ticket program stakeholders will also participate, including the Ticket Program Manager, Council on State Administrators on Vocational Rehabilitation, Virginia Commonwealth University and Rehabilitation Service Administration. SSA will share information from the Summit and share any follow-up activities with all Ticket to Work service providers.

Security Awareness and TPA Change forms

Please send updated Security Awareness forms (SSA-222) to ENService@ssa.gov.

Use the TPA Change form to let us know if your EN has moved, changed any services, has new key points of contact, etc. Submit the form directly to ENService@ssa.gov or by fax at 410-597-0429. Find the form

at: <https://yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/Assets/yttw/docs/information-center/forms/Form-1374-122017.pdf>

Ticket Unassignments

SSA has noticed an increase in Ticket unassignments and will clarify in the near future when to unassign Tickets.

EN Spotlight on America Works

Cara introduced Matthew Silverstein, Director of Public Affairs at America Works. Matthew briefly discussed a creative initiative that America Works has designed to place beneficiaries into employment.

An article in Forbes Magazine about Taco Bell's innovative "hiring party" practices gave Matthew the idea to do the same, so America Works is doing seven events nationwide today and tomorrow. Friday is "National Pizza Day" so the events will bring Ticketholders and employers together over pizza. Over 400 RSVPs have received from Ticketholders and 100 more are expected. Employers that are currently hiring will attend and a "career menu" will be provided to each participant.

Effective Practice Interview: Angel's Success Story

Rachel Hoffman (The Choice Group) and Jayme Pendergraft (TPM)

Jayme Pendergraft conducted an interview with Rachel Hoffman about Angel, a recent Ticket to Work success story.

A veteran of the U.S. Air Force, Angel experienced chronic pain from injuries sustained during his military experience and later experienced cancer. Due to his disabilities, he received SSDI, but he wanted to work to provide for his family.

Angel found out about Ticket to Work and The Choice Group (TCG) using the Choose Work website. He received benefits counseling and individualized information about the impact of work on his disability benefits, health insurance and finances. When he got a job offer, Angel had the knowledge and support he needed to make an informed decision in accepting the job.

The employer was a federal contractor so Angel chose to disclose that he has a disability and is a veteran, which moved him into a prioritized hiring pool under Section 503. This can be a great avenue for Ticketholders seeking employment. Angel started working for a Department of Defense federal contractor as an IT Network Professional.

When Angel later received notice that his SSDI cash benefit would stop due to earnings, the Choice Group's benefits advisor discovered how the VA and SSDI programs interacted and helped restore Angel's Trial Work Period. Because he was classified as a



Wounded Warrior, the pay he received while on active duty and in physical rehabilitation should not have applied to his Trial Work Period. Months later, TCG helped Angel anticipate when his cash benefit would stop.

Since then, Angel has been promoted and earns a salary that allows him to financially support and provide additional healthcare benefits for his family. He proudly tells his story to inspire others.

Greg Bell, who works for TPM now, formerly worked for TCG and was an integral part of Angel's success. He made the push to give Angel this platform to tell his story. The process was easy! Angel and TPM did the work and put together a beautiful finished product that we have been able to use for TCG's website and marketing materials.

TCG can now point people to this story to see what they do and that they work with veterans. NPR is picking up the story this month, which also increases visibility for TCG, but, more importantly, for persons with disabilities.

Outreach

Jayne Pendergraft (TPM)

Call for Success Stories

Success stories are a powerful marketing tool for service providers. Jayme encouraged service providers who have worked with a Ticketholder who has achieved financial independence through work to submit the details of their story. All success story candidates must be vetted and approved by SSA. If selected, TPM staff will work with the organization and Ticketholder to create a story for publication on the Choose Work website and promotion to other organizations. To get started, email stories@choosework.ssa.gov.

Shirley's Success Story

A new Success Story has been published. After several episodes of falling asleep without control, Shirley sought help from a neurologist who diagnosed her with narcolepsy. Shirley had to stop working and suffered from depression as she struggled to find the right treatments. Once she was ready, Shirley knew she wanted to work. Read more at <https://choosework.ssa.gov/library/shirley-success-story>.

New Resource

ENs are encouraged to share a new beneficiary fact sheet, "Presenting your Best Self to Employers". The fact sheet offers information to Ticketholders about:

- Writing about their skills and experience in a resume
- Preparing answers and questions for a job interview
- Deciding if and how to disclose a disability to a potential employer



Service Provider Social Media

Starting in May, the Ticket to Work for service providers Facebook and Twitter accounts will be shutting down. You can still find plenty of information, updates and resources by following the Ticket to Work program on Choose Work.

Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/choosework

Follow us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/chooseworkssa

Watch Ticket to Work Videos on YouTube: www.youtube.com/choosework

Follow us on LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/ticket-to-work

Other Ways to Connect

The Ticket Connection is a quarterly e-newsletter that offers Social Security policy updates, reminders, upcoming events, and tips to help your business succeed. Contact ticketconnection@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov to receive the newsletter.

WISE webinars offer service providers and Ticketholders an opportunity to learn more about the Ticket program, other Work Incentives and specific employment topics. Find out how to register at <https://choosework.ssa.gov/wise/>

Trainings from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU)

VCU offers training that ranges from refreshers on Social Security programs and rules related to disability employment to a full certification process to provide benefits counseling services. You can find the trainings through VCU's Work Incentives Planning and Assistance National Training and Data Center. Bookmark their trainings page:

<https://vcu-ntdc.org/training/initial/initialindex.cfm>

Subscribe to receive their e-Newsletter: <https://vcurrtc.org/about/enews.cfm>

Volunteer Opportunities

Write a post for the Choose Work! Blog: <https://choosework.ssa.gov/blog>

Present on a National Work Incentive Seminar Event (WISE) webinar:

<https://choosework.ssa.gov/wise>

Contact socialmedia@choosework.ssa.gov

Wage Reporting FAQ

Adelle Barr (TPM)

In follow-up to the last All EN Call, a Wage Reporting Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) has been posted on the Your Ticket to Work website. You can find it at <https://yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/web/ttw/events-archive>.



Additional Details

The full transcript and audio from the Quarterly All-EN Call will be available at <https://yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/web/ttw/events-archive>.

Next All-EN Call: August 22, 2019 from 3:00 - 4:30 pm ET

