EN Payments Call Transcript

April 27, 2021

Operator: Good day, everyone. Welcome to the Quarterly All EN Payments Call. Today's conference is being recorded. At this time, I would like to turn the conference over to Kimberly Cutler. Please go ahead.

Kimberly Cutler: Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to our Quarterly All EN Payments Call. I am Kimberly Cutler, the EN Payments Manager, and I will be hosting today's call.

The purpose of today's presentation is to provide insight into the payment process on the following agenda topics. So we're going to cover ePay (stats) and ePay reminders. We have some frequently asked questions, tips for preventing denials, and we — at the end of the presentation, we will provide valuable resources or available resources to service providers, and we will also allow a forum for questions and answers at the end of the presentation.

So starting with our first agenda topic, we have the ePay file stats. TPM did complete the January 2021 ePay file earlier this month. And, as you can see here, we do have the numbers from that last ePay file that we processed.

We did process a total of 16,373 claims. And just wanted to mention that, recently, TPM started paying Phase 1, Milestones 4 via ePay. So with that change — of the 16,373 claims that were processed, 2,906 of those claims were paid from Phase 1 Milestone 4 claims.

There was a total of 4,563 SSNs paid on this last file, and 397 of those SSNs came from Phase 1 Milestone 4 claims. And we paid a total of $8,618,584 from the last ePay file. And again, since we recently added that we can pay Phase 1 Milestone 4 claims, $1,149,562 came from those claims.

So, it was a great addition to be able to pay Phase 1 Milestone 4 through the ePay file now. So that just gives you a quick glance at what we paid from our January ePay file.

And moving to our next slide. We do process the ePay. We try to process it usually on a quarterly basis. We want to make sure that we provide you with some ePay reminders, because we are expecting to start processing the next ePay file soon, and once we start to process the ePay file, there will be an announcement in the portal alerting you guys that we are processing the ePay file.

So, a few things to remember — that ENs may submit payment request through the Ticket Portal instead of waiting for ePay. And like I mentioned on the previous slide, Phase 1 Milestone 4 is now paid via ePay.

But please remember, ENs must still submit payment request for Phase 1, Milestones 1 through 3 through the Ticket Portal and you must provide Proof of Relationship. So, the addition to ePay was only for Phase 1 Milestone 4.

All right. And unassigned Tickets are not included in ePay, and ENs must have passed their annual services and support review. And the last reminder is that the ePay file is processed in order of SSNs not DUNS.

Sometimes we do get ENs that will call and ask us, you know, if they were actually on the ePay file, but just remember that it’s processed in order of SSNs not DUNS. So when we start processing the ePay file, you may receive some cases — or, I'm sorry, you may receive some payments, and then you may not receive some payments for maybe a week or two. But just know it's because we're processing in order of SSNs.

Okay. The next agenda topic we want to focus on is, we do get a lot of questions during the All EN Payments Call, during the All EN Call, we get a lot of payments centered around — a lot of questions, I'm sorry, centered around payments.

So what we've decided to do for this call is just include some of the frequently asked questions that we get. So the next four slides, we're actually going to go through some FAQs. So we’ll start with the first one.

Question, how does an EN get a beneficiary's disability date onset or the DDO? So, the EN can obtain the DDO by requesting a BPQY, which is the Benefits Planning Query, and by requesting the BPQY and submitting two Consent for Release of the Information forms.

So that's how, as an EN, you would be able to get the DDO date. Because you want to — you want to make sure that when you're completing for your Phase 1 Milestones, you want to make sure you're completing your 18-Month Look Back Tool.

And so, having your DDO date will be helpful because you would be able to plug that date into your Look-Back Tool. But again, you have to request the BPQY in order to get that DDO date. That is not information that can be shared through the EN Payments Help Desk.

So, next question, can you submit multiple or bulk payment requests via the Ticket Portal? No. Claims must be submitted one at a time via the Ticket Portal. However, ENs may receive additional Phase 1 Milestone 4 claims, Phase 2s and Outcome Payments.

And what this simply means is that SSA will make all payments (for in) SSN if, at least, one payment is requested through the Ticket Portal. So even though you're not able to submit your payment request, like bulk or multiple payments at one time, once you submit at least one payment request, SSA and TPM will make all available payments, as long as the criteria — (as long as) criteria are met, we would be able to make those additional payments.

But you must submit at least one via the Ticket Portal. You're not able to kind of (bulk) it all together. So one of the questions that we get a lot is how they can submit those payments.

So, earnings are already proven in the system. What is needed for Phase 1 Milestone 1 through 3? ENs must submit pay stubs, or a completed proof a relationship, also known as the PoR Form, with detail services provided to the beneficiary for the requested milestone period.

So whenever you're requesting your Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3, whether earnings are already proven or not in the system, please remember that you must provide Proof of Relationship. And that Proof of Relationship is established by pay stubs or a completed PoR form. But those are the two things that are required, because, in addition to earnings, you must have your Proof of Relationship.

If the EN is reporting wages in the portal, do we need to send them to the local SSA field office? Yes. Please report earnings to the local SSA field office as well. We just want to make sure that all the earnings that your clients or your beneficiaries are making, that that information is reported properly to SSA field office.

We do not want any overpayments for the beneficiaries, and we just want to make sure that we're covering all bases. So, even though you're (answering) them in the portal, please make sure you're sending them to the SSA field office as well.

All right. Is there a time limit to submit for a payment? Yes. And EN shall request a payment no later than 24-month following the month the Ticketholder’s work and earnings meet the criteria for SSA to make the payment. SSA will not accept payment request for periods outside this 24-month window.

Now, we do know that there was an exception made that we would - we made an exception to that 24-month rule when it came to Outcome Payments. So that is something that was in place, and I think it ends this — the Ticket may end next month, May 2021. But the rule of thumb for the time limit for submitting a payment, just remember, that it must be submitted within that 24-month window. So there is a time limit.

Now, how long does the EN have to (fax) evidence of earnings after requesting payment? So to answer this question, ENs have nine business days. Now, you will need to use the fax cover sheet provided via the Ticket Portal to submit evidence of earnings.

So, again, we do get — you know, we (talked) about - we're going to talk about this a little later on in the call about preventing denials. But you do have nine business days to submit that information to TPM to complete the processing of your payment request.

Okay. Continuing with our FAQs on slide seven. If a beneficiary is laid off and receives paid vacation and sick time, can we submit those as earnings for payments? The answer to that question is, no, vacation and sick time do not qualify as earnings for payments. Please remember that payments are based on work and earnings. That is how we process the payments with TPM and SSA. It is based on work and earning.

Is the PoR or Proof of Relationship required for Phase 2 Milestones or Outcomes? The answer is, no. Proof of Relationship is only required for Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3. And remember, that is required even if the portal gives you the note (earnings are) already proven or earnings already established. For Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3 ENs must provide Proof of Relationship, again, which is your pay stubs or the completed Proof of Relationship form.

So do ENs have to sign up for ePay? That is a question that we get. The answer is, no. ENs are eligible for ePay, as long as they have passed their annual service and support reviews, not on hold or terminated.

So there's nothing that — you know you don't have to do anything to be on ePay. But, if you're not meeting certain requirements, such as not passing your annual service and support reviews, that will prevent you from being eligible for ePay.

Okay. So those few slides just talked about the frequently asked questions. We know that you guys probably have a lot more. But again, at the end of the presentation we will have a session for questions and answers.

So the next few slides we're going to talk about tips for preventing denials. Now, I just wanted to mention that, over the last few months, there has been an increase in the number of denied cases.

We see a lot of different reasons, but we wanted to just provide just some — a few tips to help prevent such denials. We do have information available on the Ticket to Work Web site that you will be able to look and find some of these tips, or tips for all of the denials. But because we've seen an increase in the number of denials, we figured we just wanted to share some tips with you all to help to decrease that number, so we're not seeing so many denials.

First, we want to make sure that you review all relevant materials. Make sure you're reading the GovDelivery messages that come out. Make sure you attend calls such as this one, the All EN Payments call.

If they're held on a quarterly basis, the last Tuesday of the month — of the quarter. So if you are unable to attend the call, please make sure that you visit your Ticket to Work events archived on the Ticket to Work Web site. There, you'd be able to find the presentation and the recap from the calls. But these are very informative calls. So, the calls can help you prevent denials as well. So you want to make sure that you attend these calls as much as you can.

Review the Ticket to Work website content. Read the payment denial reasons under the Ticket to Work Program for a complete list of payment denials with explanations and tips. That's what I mentioned earlier. You can go under the Payments and now reasons and you can see a list of denials. It explains what that denial means. But it also gives you the tips to prevent such denials.

Your Ticket an assignment, confirm that the beneficiary's Ticket was assigned to the requesting EN during the claim month or period. So, you know, these are all part —this is all a part of helping prevent the denials. Of course, you want to make sure that the Ticket is assigned to your agency. So you want to make sure that you're checking that.

You want to check for the first available claim month. So you want to confirm that the first claim month submitted is the month after the EN's Ticket assignment date. You cannot receive payment for claim months prior to Ticket assignment.

And please remember, the EN Ticket assignment date is the same date as the beneficiary's Ticket assignment date unless the EN transmits the Individual Work Plan or the IWP more than 14 days after the latest signature date. Then, if that happens, if the EN submits it 14 days after the latest signature date, then the EN Ticket assignment date is the same date TPM receives the IWP.

And so, here, we have an example. So EN and beneficiary signed the IWP on February the 12, 2020. But the EN submits the IWP to TPM on March 3, 2020. Because it's outside of the 14 days when the EN submitted the IWP to TPM, the EN Ticket assignment date is now March 2, 2020.

So what we've done is, even though the EN and the beneficiary signed it - signed the IWP in February, the EN didn't send it to us until March outside of the 14-day window, now, the Ticket assignment date is going to take effect the date — that's going to be an effective date that we received it, which was the March 2.

So, in other words, whenever you — whenever the EN and the beneficiary sit down, and you go through your Individual Work Plan, and you discuss your short-term and your long-term goals, and the services that you, at the end, are going to provide to the beneficiary, when you sign the IWP, which means you are in agreement of working together, you're going to help the beneficiary, (have) — they have identified their short and long-term goals and what services they need, you as the EN have provided the services you're going to provide.

Once you go through that and you both signed the IWP, go ahead and send it in — go ahead and send it in, so that your Ticket assignment date will be the same as the signature date on the IWP. And the beneficiary Ticket assignment date, that's the latest signature date on the IWP. So again, just making sure that once you sit down with the beneficiary and you go through the Individual Work Plan, that it is signed, and it is submitted in a timely manner.

Okay. Prior VR services, you want to check the Ticket Portal to determine if the beneficiary's current Ticket has a previous history of working with the state VR agency, and that it was — they were working with them after January 2002, or simply talk to your beneficiary.

These are things that you want to — maybe during your intake process, these are the questions that you want to ask your beneficiary and just finding out if they've had previously or they’ve previously worked with the state VR agency.

Because you want to know that, if prior VR services were provided under the VR Cost Reimbursement program, and the case was closed with a successful closure status within 18 months prior to the Ticket assignment date, Phase 1 Milestones are not available to any EN, or a state VR agency acting as an EN that subsequently received the Ticket assignment.

So that's huge. So you — this will help you prevent the denials of your Phase 1 Milestones1. Or — let me say this. It will help you know that you're not eligible for Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 4. Let me say it that way. So you — these are the things that you want to check when it comes to your prior VR services. Okay?

All right, moving right along. This still talks about the —on the next slide, slide 12, we're still talking about prior VR services. The key thing here is the date. If prior VR services were provided under the Ticket program and the VR received the Cost Reimbursement payment after January 2002, Phase 1 Milestones are not available to any EN or state VR agency acting as an EN that received a Ticket assignment.

So the key thing to remember, when you're checking for your prior VR services, is checking the date. So you want to make sure — you know, you want to check to see if there was a Cost Reimbursement payment, you want to check to see if the successful closure was within 18 months. You're looking at all of these factors for dates after January 2002.

All right, continuing with tips for preventing denials. The 18-month Look Back. Earnings at the Trial Work Level, or TWL level, or TWL, during this period, may impact the availability of some or all Phase 1 Milestones for that beneficiary.

So, just remember, the 18-Month Look Back does not automatically deny all Phase 1 Milestones. So, all of them could be denied, or some of them could be denied, but you want to make sure that you're completing your 18-month Look Back Tool that's available on the website.

Now, be aware that Social Security database is a living database. This simply means a beneficiary's earnings can appear at any time, and usually, months, and occasionally, years after their earnings occur.

So, you're going to complete your 18-month Look Back Tool to the best of your ability, you're going to — you're going to complete the 18-month Look Back Tool using the information that you have, you know, whether you talk to the beneficiary, and they let you know when they were working, and how much money they were making. So if it was a Trial Work Level, so you're going to use that information.

And when you submit that information and you submit for payment, the reason we mentioned that SSA's database is a — is a living database, is because the earnings that you may have those earnings, but, when you submit for payment, there may be additional earnings in SSA's database that we will also use to complete the 18-month Look Back Tool. But just make sure you're doing your due diligence before submitting for your Phase 1s.

ENs, occasionally experienced overpayments because of the late posting of earnings information. So that's why we wanted to mention, it's a living database, and there are different periods of time when those earnings can post.

Now, the look back period for earnings is a maximum of 18 months prior to the Ticket assignment date. However, the look back period is for months between the date of disability onset and the beneficiary's Ticket assignment date. So this period could possibly be less than 18 months.

And I mentioned — about a few slides back, I did mention about how you can obtain the DDO date, because that — this is where it applies when you're completing your 18-month Look Back Tool, if you have access to that information.

And one last slide for tips for preventing denials. Documenting earnings, check available sources of information on earnings to document the beneficiary's earnings during the claim period or claim month for which you are seeking payment.

Please make sure you're using the available resources that we have on the Ticket to Work Web site, the payments at a glance, that, actually, will tell you what's required for each payment, so you would know if you're submitting for Phase 1 Milestone 1, that you need one month of earnings at Trial Work Level.

So, you want to make sure that, whatever your request the claim month is or claim months are that you have checked all of your available sources for earnings information and making sure that you're meeting the requirement for earnings before submitting for your payment request.

So whether — you know, if it's Phase 1 Milestone 1, you're looking for your Trial Work Level earnings, and if it's Phase 2s and Outcomes, you're looking for SGA level. So you want to make sure that you have the correct earnings amount before submitting for your requested claim month and payment type.

So those are just a few —a few tips for preventing denials. As I mentioned earlier, we do encourage you to check the Web site, check the denials, look at what each denial means, check to —you know, go down and take a look at the tips that are provided there.

There was a recent change where, as ENs, you now can see the comments, that once we deny a case, you guys now have the ability to actually see what the denial comments are. So please make sure that you're paying attention to those.

If you're not completely sure, that's what I would encourage you to go to the website and look up on the denial reasons and the explanations to make sure you're very clear on why your case was denied.

So that, in the event — when you resubmit, if you actually see that your case was denied because there was some information missing or the earnings amount did not satisfy the payment, that will help you. So that when you submit your next payment, you will make sure, like, okay, I know that I have to have, if my case was denied, because I didn't have enough earnings, so I know that when I submit again, I need to make sure that I have the earnings.

So it's really good tool and document to just look to make sure. Because, of course, the goal of TPM and SSA, we want to make sure that you guys are paid for the services that you are providing to the beneficiaries when the beneficiary reaches certain milestones. So we try to give you as much information as we can to help prevent the denying of your payment request. So please take a look at those and gain as much information as you can.

So, we're almost done with the — with the presentation piece of the call today. But I wanted to make sure on slide 16, that you guys are utilizing the contact information here. We do have the resources if you have payment related issues, if you have issues related to Ticket assignment, the service provider Web site, you know, or the Ticket Portal, those phone numbers and email addresses are there for your use.

Please make sure if you have questions that you're reaching out through the help desk Monday through Fridays, 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., that's Eastern Standard Time, and you can see the toll-free number with the options, depending on what your call is about or what you need help with, you see the options there.

And you can also email us your issues. Please remember that you cannot send any type of PII via e-mail. The thing that you can do when you're reaching out, especially, for payment related issue, is just send us your work case number. We can look up the information via the work case number.

Okay. So this completes, like I said, the presentation portion of today's call. Now, what we will do is we will open the line for questions. I just want to do a quick reminder that questions related to specific SSNs may require assistance from the Payments Help Desk.

So if you have an SSN that kind of gets into the weeds very specific, then you might want to just reach out to the to the help desk, because we do not have all of the information without able to look at the details of the case, so we may not be able to answer that. But I just want to kind of put that reminder out.

But at this point, (Nicole), if you don't mind, do we have any - we can open the lines up for questions, please?

Operator: Absolutely. Ladies and gentlemen, if you'd like to ask a question over the phone today, please press “star” and then “1” on your touchtone phone. Again, that is “star,” “1” if you would like to enter the queue to ask a question over the phone today. And we'll pause for just a moment to give everyone a chance to signal.

Adelle Barr: Hi, Kim. This is Adelle. I think there's a - we do have a few chat questions, but I think we want to clarify. Because we did indicate to send in an IWP, and I think that's for new (EN) ((inaudible)), and most of the time they're doing it through the portal, isn't that right?

Kimberly Cutler: I do believe that's right. So what was the question, because ((inaudible))?

Adelle Barr: Right. It’s - we've been in this game for a little while and we're used to when (ENs used) send it in. So I could see how that can happen.

Kimberly Cutler: Well, I'll change it and take out send it in. I will just say, make sure when you are assigning the Ticket to your agency, because we want to make sure that ((inaudible)). As soon as you, I said meet with them, and you have the agreed date that you're sending it in within the 14 days.

Adelle Barr: There you go.

Kimberly Cutler: Sorry.

Adelle Barr: Thank you.

Kimberly Cutler: Sorry for the confusion. Yes. That was a little old school on my behalf. (Sorry).

Adelle Barr: Yes.

Kimberly Cutler: Okay. (Nicole), do we have any calls on the line? (Are there any other) questions on the …

(Crosstalk)

Operator: We do. We do. We have a question from Natalie Harrison from Lighthouse Louisiana.

Natalie Harrison: Hi. Good afternoon, everyone.

(Crosstalk)

Natalie Harrison: My question is regarding work in earnings. I submitted for payment for beneficiary who was in Phase 1, and she received a $1,500 bonus from — because she worked during COVID at a school, and the payment was denied for Phase 1 and they automatically paid out (Outcome) and then her status went back to current pay.

So I'm just a little confused on, you know, first, the bonus amount, the $1,500 bonus that count as work in earnings, and then I'm confused as to why would she be (in non-pay), and then the very next month back into current pay.

Kimberly Cutler: Okay. So let me — so the bonus comes from your work in earnings, correct? SSA, you can jump if I'm wrong. But I wanted to just explain that - the second part when you mentioned that you submitted for Phase 1 Milestone 1, but then they paid (Outcomes).

So at some point, the beneficiaries - the benefits went into (suspend). So in other words, they would not — according to what we could see in our system, the beneficiary —for whatever (your request) the claim month was, the beneficiary was no longer receiving a federal cash benefit.

So at that point, we can no longer pay Phase 1 Milestone 1s. So that would explain - I just wanted to explain that's why you received an Outcome versus the Phase 1. And also, but if they went back into current pay the very next month, that is — that is something that's handled on the back end with the field offices.

When it comes to payments, what we do is we just check the benefit status. We don't — we don't control whether the beneficiary is receiving — you know whether they're current pay or they're not, we just make a payment based on whatever is in the system. So that's why you receive the outcome and not the Phase 1. But, I do believe that that $1,500 bonus was due to work in earnings. Am I correct with that? Anyone from SSA?

Patrice: You know —actually, this is (Patrice), and I just wanted to clarify the question. So the bonus came — was it like a COVID related bonus, or was it like a regular bonus? Can I have a …

Natalie Harrison: No, it was …

(Crosstalk)

Natalie Harrison: It was a COVID related bonus. If I can just back up a little bit, just a quick bit. We (billed) for Milestone — Phase 1 Milestone 1 and we received the payment. When it came up for Phase 1 Milestone 2, I always use the portal, the Ticket assignment screen, to check to see the current pay status before I submit billing, because that's my goal to, like, reduce denials.

So, when I checked the portal, she was —it was eligible to bill for the Phase 1 Milestone 2. But when I submitted the check stubs, and they saw the check stubs, they went and made her (non-pay) for March, and put her back in current pay for April, denied the Phase 1 Milestone 2, immediately paid out the Outcome.

So that's where I'm confused, because it was showing that she was eligible for us to submit for billing. I don't know. I'm probably taking too much time, but …

Patrice: (Oh, no). (Okay). So, Kim, I can — I can say we would — we would — we did make — SSA made the decision to count that as earnings, like a COVID related bonus, we would use that as earning, so it would count (toward the) payment.

(Crosstalk)

Patrice: Kim, if you could respond to the intricacies of whether maybe should have or shouldn't have pushed them into Outcome, that part, I can't really respond to.

(Crosstalk)

Debra Tennessee: This is (Debra). Can you hear me? This is (Debra).

Kimberly Cutler: Yes, ((inaudible)).

Debra Tennessee: Hello? If that was — if that was included toward earnings and you said it's (non-pay), and of course, we will have to get more information from you. But what it sounds like to me, if you say (non-pay), is this an SSI recipient?

Natalie Harrison: Yes.

Debra Tennessee: Okay. Then what happened was, that $1,500 ((inaudible)) what earnings and the benefits went into (non-pay) due to (worker) earnings. (Patrice) and (Katie), and this is just for SSA and TPM staff, they went into it (NO1 one staff) payment - you know, of payment status of (NO1), which is (non-pay).

When you're in (non-pay), you're not eligible for Phase 1 Milestones. You're eligible for Outcome. So what happened was, the next month the beneficiary's earnings dropped, came back to less than SGA, because that $1,500 sound like it put them over SGA. Next month, they went back to whatever their current earnings were, and that put them back into current pay.

Once you're in an Outcome status and you do the (worker) earnings and you go back to - (or) receiving a federal beneficiary — excuse me, a federal benefit payment, you cannot receive any milestones. The next payment you will be eligible for is when the beneficiary goes back into the outcome status of (non-pay) due to (worker) earnings.

So that's what happened in that case. The earnings pushed the beneficiary's earnings level over Trial Work Level to SGA, and they were placed into a (non-pay) status due to (worker) earnings.

Natalie Harrison: For that one month and because of that bonus?

Debra Tennessee: Yes.

Natalie Harrison: Okay. Thank you.

Debra Tennessee: You're welcome.

Natalie Harrison: Thank you. Thank you, (Patrice). Thank you, Ms. (Tennessee).

Debra Tennessee: You're welcome.

Female: (Sure).

Female: All right.

Operator: And we have a question from Jamie Head from Full Circle Employment Solutions.

Jamie Head: Hey, guys. I have a couple general questions, I hope. But one question I know, really, you had mentioned, you know, the portal is a living portal and things constantly change.

So we had a question, if we get Phase 2 payments, and then we move into Milestone Outcome Payments for a beneficiary, and then, later on, after we've gotten some of those Milestone Outcome Payments, Social Security does a work review and they find, oh, this person has a subsidy or (airways), and they retro the subsidy or (airways) back to a certain date that it puts them back under SGA and back into pay statues.

For those months that we got milestone Outcome Payments for, do we get overpaid then for those Milestone Outcome Payments?

(Crosstalk)

Debra Tennessee: This is (Debra). Do you want me to answer that, Kim?

Kimberly Cutler: I'll take a stab and then I'll let you go.

Debra Tennessee: Okay, (go ahead - go ahead).

Kimberly Cutler: You may - you may have to clean up ((inaudible)). So, I want to say the answer is, no. Because, whenever — if you — when we made the payment, we make the payments, like I said, based on the benefit status at the time.

So, if I'm understanding the question correctly, you — like to say you received Phase 2 Milestones and then you moved into the Outcome stage, but then SSA updated or retroactively updated — corrected the record to now back in current pay.

So it wasn't the EN's fault. It was just — (they) retroactively updated. So you would not be charged with an overpayment. It’s just that, if you were receiving your Outcomes, and now, they're back in current pay, you will no longer be able to receive - you know, you won't receive any other payments.

Because, now, like Ms. (Tennessee) mentioned on the question before, once they enter the Outcome status, you cannot go back and receive Milestones. Did you want to add …

Debra Tennessee: Sure.

Kimberly Cutler: Ms. (Tennessee).

Debra Tennessee: That's correct. We will not charge you an overpayment. That's why one of the things we do when we work these cases, we take a snapshot of what the beneficiary’s record look like at the time we made a decision to pay or not to pay.

So, if the benefits status was current pay at the time that we made the payment, and later SSA changed it to (suspend due to worker) earnings or place the beneficiary (in an) Outcome status, we do not charge you an overpayment for that.

Female: Yes.

Jamie Head: Okay. That's really good to know. So, if we are getting overpayment notices for those scenarios, is there a way that we can — what would be our best recourse to follow-up with that?

Kimberly Cutler: I would suggest, like I said …

(Crosstalk)

Kimberly Cutler: … in that case, if you say you're receiving overpayment notices, I will just tell you to respond to the team that actually sent you the overpayment notices, because it could be that it's an overpayment for a different beneficiary and they're doing a recoupment.

But, unfortunately, I wouldn't be able to answer, because, again, that's one of those cases where the details we would need to see. But I would — my suggestion to you is to just respond when you receive the overpayment notices, just respond to that — to that team and just let them know your concerns there, so they can, maybe, provide a little bit more detail about what exactly your overpayment is for.

Jamie Head: Okay. Fantastic. Thank you. And is it okay if I ask another question?

Kimberly Cutler: Sure.

Jamie Head: Okay. (But) my other question is, so for Title II beneficiaries, I know that their Ticket can remain assigned to an EN, even if they work through their EPE, and now, they're terminated because they're above SGA, we can keep their Ticket assigned up until we exhaust all payments.

Is it true with — or, is it the same way with the SSI benefits? So if they — if somebody is already assigned to us and their SSI completely terminates, because they're over those 16-19-day threshold, can their Ticket also stay assigned to us until we exhaust payments?

Kimberly Cutler: Let me just to make sure I understand. So, you have an SSI client — SSI only and then their Ticket — and the Ticket terminates?

Jamie Head: Correct. Not the Ticket terminated. No, the — their SSI terminated, but their Ticket is still assigned to us, like it's still showing that they're assigned to us.

Kimberly Cutler: Okay. (I'm just trying to) ((inaudible)) (now).

Jamie Head: So their Ticket hasn't terminated with us, and we're confused, because we were thinking under the impression that, once their SSI terminates, that their Ticket would terminate, but that doesn't seem to be the case.

Kimberly Cutler: Ms. (Tennessee), you want to take that one?

Debra Tennessee: You know, I'm going to have to fall back on SSA. But I think it's the Ticket (that we'll) have to terminate before we would stop making the payments. And a number of reasons why there are terminations for SSI. There are different codes. So, I think this will be an issue for SSA to respond to.

Because, from what I see (and) making payments, we normally pay the Ticket out, unless ((inaudible)) (terminate) or there's some other reason that we're given not to pay. And, I don't think it's just the regular (terminations) — again, SSI (has a) number of termination codes.

Kimberly Cutler: Right.

Debra Tennessee: So this would be something that we would have to have SSA respond to.

Jamie Head: Okay.

(Crosstalk)

Kimberly Cutler: Hi. And this is — this is (Katie Striebinger). Right. Without the specific SSN you're talking about, you know, Tickets do not terminate if the beneficiary's benefits cease because of work or earnings, right, because the point is that they are participating in the Ticket to Work Program, and we would not close their Ticket, because you're obviously helping them.

If you have a case where the Ticket terminated for some other reason — not the Ticket, their benefit terminated for some other reason, but they have an active Ticket believe they should have, you can report it to us and we could take a look.

But, you know, the programming has been out there for 20 plus years, and I am not aware of a current issue where things aren't working. As long as they have an active Ticket, you can receive payments.

Jamie Head: Okay.

Katie Striebinger: (Did) that make sense?

Jamie Head: Okay.

Katie Striebinger: Yes. If you look at the portal (and it looks) —you know, they have an active Ticket, they're still assigned to you, right, then, yes, everything's good. There's nothing you should have to worry about.

Jamie Head: Okay. Great. Thank you.

Katie Striebinger: (Yes).

Kimberly Cutler: All right. Thank you — thank you, Ms. (Tennessee). Thank you, (Katie). Okay.

Operator: And we have a few more questions in the queue, but would you like to take some from the chat?

Kimberly Cutler: Yes. We'll take one more (for) the phone, and then we'll move to the chat.

Operator: Okay. We'll take a question from Robert Perkins from Heart of Worship.

Robert Perkins: Good afternoon, everyone. When the Phase 1s are not available due to the 18-month Look Back, does ePay automatically take those payments off the table, or should we still continue to submit manually?

(Because I've) seen a lot of payments that maybe 1 and 2 was available, but 3 and 4 is off, and then I'll have to take a screenshot and still (sending) the manual fax way, instead of it automatically just being denied when the Phase 1 and 2 is process?

Kimberly Cutler: Okay, so a couple of things. So, Phase 1 Milestones 1 through 3 are not paid via ePay. So if — and because of the Look Back Tool and we talked about it earlier, when - due to look back earnings, some or all of the Phase 1 Milestones may not be available.

So, if the - if the (case is) where you submit for a Phase 1 — a Phase 1 Milestone 1 and 2 are not available, but you can get 3 and 4, then you would have to submit for Phase 1

Milestones 3 and 4. Now, you mentioned a screenshot through the portal. So I think what - another issue is - and so, is it that the portal is not allowing you to submit for those Milestones …

Robert Perkins: Correct.

(Crosstalk)

Kimberly Cutler: Okay. So — yes. So, right now, the way the portal is set up is that - sometimes they will not allow you to request Phase 1 Milestones because it's pulling earnings - the portal is pulling earnings from a verified source, right? So what happens is you have to submit those requests manually.

So, if you submit for a Phase 1 Milestone 1, what we're going to do — TPM, we're going to do - even if you submit your 18-month Look Back Tool, we're still going to do our due diligence and we're going to submit - I mean, we're going to complete our Look Back Tool.

So if our Look Back Tool, based on the earnings that, either, (use) — you know as an EN submitted it — submitted, or earnings verified in SSA database, or a combination (of), we're going to use those earnings.

So whatever milestones are excluded based on those earnings, we will deny those in-house, so TPM will deny those. So, in the — in the event that — let's say, that you can't get Phase 1 Milestone 1 and 2, but you are eligible for 3 and 4.

I know it's frustrating, and fingers crossed, that's going to change in the future. But what will happen is — as of right now, even though you took the time to submit for your Phase 1 Milestone 1, we denied 1 and 2, you still would have to then submit for your Phase 1 Milestone 3.

You would have to - yes, you would still have to submit it manually. But like I said, hopefully, that's going to change in the near future, that you will not have to go through that process. Fingers crossed. But, for right now, yes, you would have to go through that same process again and submit it through the portal. I hope that's what you …

Robert Perkins: Okay, thank you.

Kimberly Cutler: … were asking. Did that answer your question?

Robert Perkins: Yes. I've just seen a lot of people that are coming in lately have some work in the previous 18 months, and so I know we're kind of scattered. So I was trying to see if there was — because they —I used to get them denied when the Phase 1 - payment 1 and 2, they were just denying because they weren't available.

But now, they're still in the system, so I have to wait three extra months or six months, before I can get it denied to go on to the Phase 2.

Kimberly Cutler: But I would like to take a look at that case, because that's not how it should be. It should be — like I said, whenever you submit for a Phase 1, we check, we — you know, based on 18-month Look Back, and if you —if you're not eligible for one or all of them, then we deny them.

And we do that so that you guys don't have to wonder, you know, oh, I'm going to submit for Phase 1 Milestone 1, you know, and then we don't just, oh, you can't get Phase 1 Milestone 1 and we deny that one, and we — you know, like, oh, well, we didn't (deny 2), and then you request 2 and then (it's denied), at least not for look back earnings.

So that's why I say, we should just make sure that I take a look at that case, because that's the process. Once you submit for Milestone — Phase 1 Milestones, we will deny - if there are any exclusions, right, we would deny the ones that you aren't eligible for.

But if that's not — if that's not what's going on where we're denying, say, a Phase 1 Milestone 1 and 2, and then you wait 'till you meet the requirements and submit for Phase 1 Milestone 3, and then we deny that, that's normally not how it works, but it could be something else that is being denied for, or, at the time, when we denied your Phase 1 Milestone 1, we denied it based on earnings that were in the system and that you could get 3 and 4.

But by the time you submit for 3 earnings or, you know, could have updated and that could have caused us to deny the case. But that's one of those cases that we would need to look at the details to see.

Robert Perkins: Okay.

Kimberly Cutler: Yes. So I would just encourage you to contact the help desk with that one, and hopefully, that will explain what's going on with that case.

Robert Perkins: Okay, thank you.

Kimberly Cutler: Yes. Okay, thanks, (Nicole). And what we'll do at this point is, Adelle, we have some questions in the chat?

Adelle Barr: Yes, (ma'am), and let me apologize ahead of time if you have a little bit of background noise. We have a few beneficiaries who are no longer receiving Social Security benefits, but continue to be in the Ticket to Work program. Could we still request payments for them?

Kimberly Cutler: Okay. So in this case, I'm thinking if they're no longer receiving a federal cash benefit due to work or earnings, and they have, at least, SGA level earnings, then, yes, you could possibly receive Outcome Payments.

Adelle Barr: Okay, appreciate that. (Yes). If an EN submits a request for payment, but does not have the history of prior earnings or prior payments to another EN, will the system correct request to the correct milestone and make the payment?

Kimberly Cutler: If you're requesting for Phase 1s and you do not have - make sure I understand it. If you're requesting for Phase 1 Milestones and you do not have any history of prior earnings, once we receive that request, we will — we, TPM/SSA, will complete an 18-month Look Back based on the earnings information that we have. So if we have earnings that will exclude those payments, we will deny those payments.

As far as prior payments to other ENs, again, we will use the available resources that we have, the information that's in SSA's database, so that if we do see the Ticket was previously assigned to a different EN, then we look at the details of the case. It could be a possible split payment between the current EN and the - and the prior EN.

But again, that's very — those are details that we would look at. But, yes, so even if the EN does not have access to prior information, we will use what we have to determine the proper payment.

Adelle Barr: And just a follow-up (too) that would be — alternatively, will the EN be advised that the correct milestone to request payment, and does the entire (documented) request with the pay stub have to be resubmitted?

Kimberly Cutler: Well, again, it's — we would have to see the details of the case. But, if it's denied, now, that's something new ENs can actually see the comments. So the EN would be able to see why the case was denied, and they'd be able to move forward at that point. And, yes, if it's denied — completely denied, the EN would have to resubmit their payment request.

Adelle Barr: Okay, thank you for that. I think I have one more here. One moment. What circumstances would there be when a recoupment would occur for an overpayment?

Kimberly Cutler: Repeat the question, Adelle?

Adelle Barr: What circumstances would there be when a recoupment would occur for an overpayment? (I'm figuring) they're asking, what would happen?

Kimberly Cutler: Yes. So anytime there's an improper payment made, then SSA will initiate a recoupment of payments. So if — we do talk about — we talked earlier - (EN) asked, if they received Outcome Payments, and then SSA updated the system to current pay, would they be responsible for an overpayment, and the answer is, no.

So, if SSA's database set up corrects or retroactively corrects benefits status, then the ENs are not charged with an overpayment. If at any time, and I mentioned this earlier that SSA has a living database, so there may be times an overpayment would occur when earnings update, and usually it applies to the 18 months prior to Ticket assignment.

So that's — so that when an overpayment would occur, whenever there's an improper payment made. But, the system updating the benefits does not —would not cause an overpayment, and if an EN (has incurred an) overpayment, they will be notified of which SSN the overpayment is for and how much, and that information will be sent to them.

So it's only if there's an improper payment made that we would initiate a recoupment of the money. All right. Hopefully, (you're good), Adelle? (Did) that answer the question?

Adelle Barr: Yes, ma'am. Thank you.

Kimberly Cutler: Thank you so much. And so we have about one minute left, so, (Nicole), I would like to take if we have any one more question from the phone line?

Operator: Okay. We have a question from Cindy Newton from North Central County Consortium.

Kimberly Cutler: Okay, go ahead.

(Crosstalk)

Operator: … (we're) unable to hear you. Please check your mute function.

(Crosstalk)

Cindy Newton: Can you hear me?

Female: Yes, ((inaudible)).

Female: Thank you.

Cindy Newton: Okay. I'm sorry. I had put it on the chat, so I didn't think you would get to me, so. So, we're kind of new with this, so bear with me with the questions. So, one of the things we're having problems with questions on some of our Ticket holders that we should probably be getting some payments on.

What unique identifier are we supposed to use to (ask) about somebody we don't find any unique identifier, other than Of course, there's (no query) number which we can't use, can't use their name, to indicate to Social Security who we're talking about?

Because the only numbers we found are on some of the reimbursements, but the Ticket —the numbering that's on there is the same for everybody.

Kimberly Cutler: Okay …

(Crosstalk)

Cindy Newton: We don't see any (portal) that tells us how we communicate with Social Security (about) who we're talking about.

Kimberly Cutler: Okay. So, also, this is directly for SSA — are you talking about just payments questions? If you have questions about payments, how do you let us know who you're referring to?

Cindy Newton: Yes.

Kimberly Cutler: Okay. So if it's a question about payments where you've already submitted a payment request, then you can e-mail us the work case number that's going to be associated with your case in the portal. If not …

(Crosstalk)

Kimberly Cutler: … (if you haven't) generated - okay, go ahead.

Cindy Newton: Where is that number? Because we — because (my staff) number (it bills) with the portal, so she does not see any number that is unique to an individual ((inaudible)).

Kimberly Cutler: Okay. So, (Katie), can you …

(Crosstalk)

Female: … looking.

Kimberly Cutler: So, (Katie), did you want to jump in? Like, she's asking where would they locate the work case number?

Katie Striebinger: Sure. So, (right), we're making the assumption here that you have requested a payment, have you requested a payment …

Cindy Newton: Yes.

(Crosstalk)

Katie Striebinger: … on the portal?

Cindy Newton: Also, we've also had some difficulties requesting (payment), and I'm getting error messages and don't really understand what they mean.

Katie Striebinger: It does sound like you might need some (handholding) — you know, some extra help with navigating through the portal, you know, I would recommend contacting the help desk, (so) someone could walk you through it.

But there are two different links for EN payments, their payments — their pending payments and payments already made to me. So if you requested a payment and you have a question about the payment you requested, (in) that pending payments, you will see a work case number associated with your pending payment. That's how we keep track of all the requests that you send in. They get a unique work case number.

But if you have any problem getting to that point where you've made a work case in our system that has a unique number, (you) only have to get to — you do that step first.

Cindy Newton: Yes, I'm not quite sure if we know how to get to pending payments.

Katie Striebinger: Right. It (does sound) — you know, I guess, I would recommend calling to help desk and getting help with navigating the portal, making sure you have all that correct. And making sure — you should have a copy of the Ticket Portal User Guide that would also help you that walkthrough (too) how to do everything. It does sound like you need some — you know, some startup help?

Cindy Newton: Yes, I don't know if we've received that Ticket (Holder) User Guide.

Katie Striebinger: Yes, the Ticket Portal User Guide. Yes. So I would — I would definitely recommend contacting the help desk.

Cindy Newton: Now, what causes some people to drop off? Like, we've had people on a list that we're trying to request payments, and then they — then some people's drop off. So, are they supposed to drop off after you get (three milestones) and Outcome Payments, (or) …

(Crosstalk)

Katie Striebinger: (So we have two different lists) — so we have (list — you know, different) ways to keep track of your payment request, and then we have two different ways to keep track of the Tickets assigned to your EN.

There's beneficiary is currently assigned to me, and then previously assigned to me. So if a beneficiary was assigned to you, like — today, assigned to you, you'll see it on that list. But if something happened, say the technology —I mean, it's possible the Ticket holder (unassigned) the Ticket themselves, they - you know, you wouldn't know about it, but you would see them then move to the other lists previously assigned to me and you can find them there.

And you can still request payments on Ticket holders who have unassigned (the Ticket) from you. So it does sound like you need some help navigating the portal.

Cindy Newton: Yes.

Katie Striebinger: Those are like the four big links ((inaudible)). Those will help you navigate who your clients are and where to find them, and then you can navigate from those lists currently assigned to me and previously assigned to me. You can navigate from there also to request payments as well.

Cindy Newton: Okay. How far back can you report wages?

Kimberly Cutler: Okay. So in order to receive (from) payment purposes, you have to — you have to submit your payment request within 24 months of when the beneficiary actually earned the money to satisfy the payment.

Cindy Newton: Okay. So you have 24 months to report those earnings?

Kimberly Cutler: Yes.

Cindy Newton: Okay. All right. And if people (are) — we have a self-employed truck driver, he was one we were having trouble getting — the screen would not — there was some sort of error to try to report ((inaudible)) to put his earnings in.

So there's no stipulation (he) can't be self-employed, is that correct, or — we have (wage) — we have ((inaudible)) payments for him, you know, check, you know, they're not — they're not working for a regular employer. (Is) that allowable?

Kimberly Cutler: Yes. For some reason, like you were — you were kind of going in and out. But, what I would just suggest is, whenever you run into problems with the portal, and (Katie) just mentioned this, when you're — when you're submitting for payment requests, I would always encourage you to reach out to the Payments Help Desk.

They will be able to guide you through. Like, if you're — unfortunately, you know, I'm not able to see what you see or what you're going through, but if you reach out to the Payments Help Desk or the EN Systems Help Desk, they will be able to walk you through.

Because if there's something that you're — you know you're coming about or coming across just (once) that maybe it's just that particular client, but if it's something that's a little bit more (involved), I would just suggest reaching out. That way, they can take the details of what you're seeing and be able to provide you guidance from there.

Cindy Newton: Okay. And then we have to assign at least two Tickets a year, is that the criteria to say as an active EN? I'm trying to remember what we were told.

Kimberly Cutler: ((inaudible)) — so, because this is the payments call when it comes to Ticket assigned, unfortunately — unless someone from SSA can chime in …

Cindy Newton: Okay.

Kimberly Cutler: Yes. But again, just reach out to the help desk.

Cindy Newton: Okay.

Kimberly Cutler: And even if you have question — once you reach out to the Payments Help Desk, if it's questions related to Ticket assignment and things like that, they would be able to guide you in the right direction, because we want to make sure that you get your questions answered. But when it comes to Ticket assignment, this wouldn't be the, you know, ((inaudible)) …

Cindy Newton: Yes …

(Crosstalk)

Kimberly Cutler: All right, okay.

Cindy Newton: All right, thank you.

(Crosstalk)

Kimberly Cutler: Thank you so much. Thank you for your questions. Okay. And we are about seven minutes past the hour. So I want to thank everyone for participating in today's call. Thank you for your questions via the phone, via the chat.

And I just want to say enjoy the rest of your day and I hope everyone will join us for our next call All EN Payments Call that will be held at 1 o'clock on July the 27. So until then, please take care and enjoy the rest of your day. Thank you.

Operator: And once again, ladies and gentlemen, that does conclude today's conference. We appreciate your participation today.