

Employment Network (EN) service providers are required to complete the Annual Performance Outcome Report (APOR) on an annual basis. Below are a few frequently asked questions (FAQ) about the APOR.

About the APOR

Question: Why is completion of the APOR required?

Answer: As per the Ticket Program Agreement (TPA), Part III – Section 8 (B), an EN shall provide to the Ticket Program Manager (TPM) on no less than an annual basis, in a format prescribed by the Social Security Administration, an APOR. The APOR is to provide information on outcomes ENs achieve regarding their services to Ticketholders. Failure to submit a timely APOR could result in contract termination.

Question: The Social Security Administration (SSA) just approved our agency as an EN and we have not started providing services to Ticketholders. Do we still need to complete the APOR?

Answer: Only ENs approved as of January 1, 2022, will need to complete the APOR. If you are still unsure whether you need to complete the APOR, contact TPM at SSAENAPOR@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov. Be sure to include your PID number (formerly DUNS) in the subject line.

Question: We are a public workforce system entity operating as an EN. Do we have to complete and submit the APOR?

Answer: Yes, to comply with Pub. L. 106-170, Dec. 17, 1999, 113 Stat. 1868, known as the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999. In 2023, all active ENs are required to complete the APOR.

Question: We are a State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency. Do we have to complete and submit the APOR?

Answer: No, State VR agencies do not have to complete the APOR.

Question: How will SSA use this information?

Answer: We will incorporate data provided in the APOR into an EN Profile, as explained in Part III –Section 8 (B) of the TPA.

Question: How often does my EN have to complete this report?

Answer: The APOR is an annual requirement for ENs.

Question: What is the timeline for the APOR report? Is it only for the period of January 2022 through December 2022? Or is it further back?

Answer: Responses to the APOR should pertain to January 1, 2022, through December 31, 2022. This includes Ticketholders you are actively working with who may have been assigned prior to 2022.

Question: How long will I have to complete this report?

Answer: You are required to complete and submit the APOR by February 27, 2023. It will be available for completion on January 27, 2023.

Question: How do I obtain access to the APOR?

Answer: The Program Contact listed for your EN will receive an emailed link from the TPM via SurveyMonkey that will allow access to the APOR survey for completion.

Question: How will I know that you received the responses?

Answer: Once you submit your APOR, you will receive an automated confirmation from SurveyMonkey thanking you for completing the survey. Additionally, you will receive an email confirmation from SSAENAPOR@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov within 48-72 normal business hours of your submission.

Question: If my Program Contact cannot complete the survey, can I forward the email to someone else in my agency who can complete the survey?

Answer: Yes, the Program Contact can forward the emailed link; however, it is important to remember that we will only accept one submission from each EN. We will count the first submission as the response for your EN.

If your EN submits the survey in error, please send an email to SSAENAPOR@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov. TPM will delete your EN's response and generate a new survey link.

Question: We submitted our responses, but we now want to change some answers. Can we do it again?

Answer: ENs are encouraged to review all responses before submitting. If an EN submitted the survey mistakenly or in error, please send an email to SSAENAPOR@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov to delete the previous submission and receive a new link to complete the survey.

Question: If I have any additional questions, whom do I contact?

Answer: If you have questions regarding the APOR, you may contact TPM at

SSAENAPOR@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov. Be sure to include your PID number in the subject line.

APOR Survey Questions— “General Questions”

Question: What is a PID?

Answer: The Provider Identification (PID) number is a 9-digit number (formerly your DUNS) assigned to your EN at the time of TPA award.

Question: What if I do not know my business model?

Answer: ENs that are not sure which business model they operate under may refer to the business model submitted in their Request for Application (RFA) or you may contact ENService@ssa.gov.

Current models include:

- Traditional EN – EN that provides employment services and other support services directly to the Ticketholder
- Consumer Directed Services EN – EN that reimburses the Ticketholder for Ticket-related services purchased by the Ticketholder
- Employer EN – EN that primarily employs Ticketholders for whom it has assigned Tickets
- Administrative EN – EN that serves as the EN of record for a network of service providers who combine their resources to provide services to Ticketholders

NOTE: If your organization acquired an additional EN business model (i.e., PID number) in 2021 or prior years, your EN is required to complete a separate APOR for each of your EN business models. Your EN is not required to complete a separate APOR for any business models acquired in 2022. However, if your EN is completing a single APOR, your EN should include all active Tickets as of December 31, 2022, regardless of the business model your organization assigned the Ticket.

Question: What is a Provider Affiliate?

Answer: A Provider Affiliate is an organization or service provider that provides services to Ticketholders under the umbrella of an Administrative EN. A Provider Affiliate may also be an existing EN, but it is not a requirement.

Question: What is a (Vocational Rehabilitation) VR Vendor?

Answer: A VR Vendor is a service provider that a state has vetted and approved to provide services on behalf of that state's VR agency. A formal agreement must be in place between the service provider and the State VR agency. This is separate from Partnership

Plus agreements defined below.

Question: What is an underserved population?

Answer: The underserved populations defined are “members of religious minorities”, “members of the LGBTQIA+ community”, “persons of color”, “persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty”, “persons who live in rural areas”, “transition aged youth”, and “U.S. Military Veterans”.

- “Members of religious minorities” refers to individuals who belong to communities that face discrimination based on their religion.
- “Members of the LGBTQIA+ community” refers to individuals who belong to communities that face discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity (including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, gender non-conforming, non-binary, LGBTQ+ persons).
- “Persons of color” refers to individuals who belong to communities of color, such as Black and African American, Hispanic and Latino, Native American, Alaska Native and Indigenous, Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, and North African persons.
- “Persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty” refers to individuals who have income under the poverty line established by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and revised by the Secretary. See U.S. Federal Poverty Guidelines.
- “Persons who live in rural areas” refers to individuals who live in an area other than an area within a metropolitan statistical area or within the outer boundary of any city or town having a population of 20,000 or more.
- “Transition aged youth” refers to individuals between the ages of 14 and 25.
- “U.S. Military Veterans” refers to individuals who have served in the military forces and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.

Question: What does it mean to specifically target an underserved population?

Answer: Your organization's mission is to specifically serve one or more of the underserved populations defined.

Question: What is a Partnership Plus Agreement?

Answer: This is an agreement between a State VR agency and an EN to ensure that after the State VR agency closes a Ticketholder’s case, they can smoothly hand the Ticket to an EN to provide job retention and other types of ongoing support services. It is the Ticketholder’s choice which EN they assign their Ticket to for ongoing support services.

Question: How do we respond to the question on your ENs governing body if your EN is a non-profit with board members?

Answer: While a nonprofit organization might not have outright ownership, it does have primary control. Control of the organization is often given to the person who has the power to select board members. Because board members have the voting ability to make decisions for the company, the person who appoints them will retain the ultimate authority over the company. This person is considered synonymous with owner. If your EN does not have a primary control person, then use the board of directors as synonymous with owner.

APOR Survey Questions— “Staffing Questions”**Question: What does it mean to conduct business outside of a Ticketholder service location?**

Answer: Anywhere that staff conduct EN business that is not an official Ticketholder service location such as a place of residence. Social Security requires all staff who wish to conduct business outside of a Ticketholder service location to submit a Work from Home Request Form.

Question: How do you define “Benefits Counselor?”

Answer: Social Security considers a Benefits Counselor as any EN employee or subcontractor who has gone through, passed, and has an active certification with the Community Partner Work Incentives Coordinator certification (CPWIC) from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), the Benefits Work Incentives Practitioner certification (BWIP) from Cornell University or Benefits Information Network (BIN) Training through Indiana University.

APOR Survey Questions— “EN Service-Related Questions”**Question: How do you define “Youth in Transition?”**

Answer: “Youth in Transition” refers to assisting those with disabilities ages 14-25 transition from school to financial independence. You can find more information at this link: <https://www.ssa.gov/disabilityresearch/youth.htm>.

Question: How do you define “Career planning/ counseling”?

Answer: “Career planning/ counseling” refers to services that assist the beneficiary in planning and developing individual career goals. These services may include vocational guidance, testing and counseling done to evaluate the beneficiary's abilities, skills, interests and needs.

Question: How do you define “Job accommodations”?

Answer: “Job accommodations” refers to services that make a reasonable adjustment to a job or work environment in order to make it possible for an individual with a disability to perform job duties. Job accommodations may include specialized equipment, facility modifications, and adjustments to work schedules or job duties, as well as a whole range of other creative solutions.

Question: How do you define “Job coaching/ training/ development”?

Answer: “Job coaching/ training/ development” refers to services designed to: assess the beneficiary's interests and potential skills; analyze prospective jobs; assist the beneficiary to obtain a job; maintain a job through on-site assistance, one-on-one training on the job site, job retention services for the employer and other workplace supports; and develop a career.

Question: How do you define “Job placement assistance”?

Answer: “Job placement assistance” refers to services such as job search services, including assistance in completing applications, developing resumes, improving interview skills, making employer contacts, job or task analysis, job restructuring, reasonable accommodations, job retention counseling and other methods or services that assist individuals and employers in achieving successful employment outcomes.

Question: How do you define “Direct job placement”?

Answer: “Direct job placement” refers to having an agreement with a pool of employers to place qualified Ticketholders into potential jobs.

Question: How do you define “Ongoing employment support/ job retention”?

Answer: “Ongoing employment support/ job retention” refers to supports and services designed to assist the beneficiary to maintain his or her job. These job retention strategies may include employer training, use of a job coach and providing worksite or job accommodations.

Question: How do you define “Resume writing” services?

Answer: “Resume writing” refers to services that assist the beneficiary with creating a resume of their work experience, skills, credentials, education, and accomplishments.

Question: How do you define “Transportation” services?

Answer: “Transportation” refers to services provided to a beneficiary to assist with paying for eligible transit and parking expenses.

Question: How do you define the service of “assisting Ticketholder to report their

wages”?

Answer: “Assisting Ticketholder to report their wages” refers to providing information to beneficiary’s on how to report their wages to Social Security. To prevent overpayments from Social Security, beneficiaries should regularly report their wages within six days of the end of the month.