



Ticket to Work Basics



Created by the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, the Ticket to Work is an employment program administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA). It offers individuals age 18 through 64, who are receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) based on disability (referred to as Ticket Holders), expanded opportunities to obtain services and supports to enter and maintain employment.

Under the Ticket program, SSA pays approved providers of services, referred to as Employment Networks, or ENs, for assisting Ticket Holders to attain prescribed employment-related Milestones and Outcomes after they go to work and as they move towards self-supporting employment. Thus, it is an outcome-based program rather than a traditional fee-for-service program that reimburses organizations for services provided.

The ultimate goal of the Ticket program is to reduce reliance on Social Security disability benefits by promoting increased self-sufficiency for beneficiaries with disabilities through work. Secondary goals are to increase the independence of beneficiaries and improve their quality of life.

How to Become an Employment Network

Any entity that is qualified to provide employment services, vocational rehabilitation services, and other support services to maximize the economic self-sufficiency of beneficiaries with disabilities through work can apply to be an EN. To apply to be an EN, you should:

- Obtain the EN Request for Proposals (RFP) at: www.socialsecurity.gov/work/enrpf.html.
- Contact CESSI, SSA's Program Manager for Recruitment and Outreach. CESSI Account Managers are available to provide information on how to become an EN and to provide free assistance in completing the RFP. Call 1-877-743-8237 (v/tty); e-mail application@cessi.net; or visit: www.cessi.net/ttw.
- Complete all of the required information, which includes forms to process security clearances for all staff that will be handling personally identifiable information on beneficiaries.
- Submit the completed application to SSA by scanning it and submitting it electronically to ENContracts@ssa.gov; or by faxing it to 410-597-0429. Do not mail your EN application. SSA processes and approves EN applications.

Work Incentives Seminar Events (WISE)

CESSI partners with local Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Projects to provide beneficiaries with disabilities information on SSA Work Incentives and the Ticket program, and to connect Ticket Holders with approved ENs in their local communities. Employers, ENs, State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies, Protection and Advocacy (P&A) agencies, and other employment support organizations are welcome to attend WISE events to share information about available services and opportunities for beneficiaries in the community. To find out when a WISE will take place in your community, or to register for a WISE, visit www.cessi.net/WISE/.

Assistance Continues for Approved ENs

Once an application is approved by SSA and an EN contract is awarded, an EN can start accepting Ticket assignments. After being approved as an EN, SSA continues to provide support and assistance through MAXIMUS, the Operations Support Manager for the Ticket program. MAXIMUS offers an array of training and support services to help ENs get set up and operate as part of the Ticket program. MAXIMUS:

- Handles the process of assigning and un-assigning Tickets and maintains the list of beneficiaries who have Tickets available for assignment.
- Maintains the list of approved ENs and provides beneficiaries with disabilities information on ENs in their local areas.
- Processes Ticket payments to ENs.
- Provides a wide array of training opportunities (e.g., Ticket Training Tuesdays) and support services (e.g., sample Individual Work Plan).

For more information, ENs should contact MAXIMUS at 1-866-949-ENVR (3687) and beneficiaries should call 1-866-968-7842 (v). Individuals with hearing impairments can call 1-866-833-2967 (tty). Or, visit the MAXIMUS website at www.yourtickettowork.com.

The Ticket Process

The Ticket program is voluntary and free, meaning there is no penalty for not participating and an EN cannot charge a Ticket Holder for the services she/he receives under the Ticket program. If a Ticket Holder chooses to participate, she/he can choose when to use his/her Ticket and where to seek assistance (i.e., from an approved EN or from the State VR agency). ENs have choices too. They choose what services to provide and which Ticket assignments to accept.

When a Ticket Holder and an EN agree to work together:

- They must develop an Individual Work Plan (IWP) that identifies, among other things, the beneficiary's employment goal and outlines the services and supports the EN will provide to assist the beneficiary in achieving that goal.
- The EN submits the signed IWP to MAXIMUS for approval and the Ticket is assigned to the EN.
- The EN provides the agreed upon services and, when the beneficiary goes to work, the EN submits evidence of the beneficiary's earnings to MAXIMUS with a Payment Request Form. (Note: Although there are other options for providing evidence of earnings, providing direct evidence is the fastest way for an EN to get paid.)
- If at any time, the EN or the beneficiary chooses to exercise the right to dissolve the IWP, either may do so by submitting a written request to MAXIMUS.

Beneficiaries are not subjected to medical Continuing Disability Reviews as long as their Tickets are assigned and they are progressing towards their employment goals.

To understand the effects of work on disability benefits, beneficiaries are encouraged to contact the local WIPA agency. Find local WIPAs by visiting www.yourtickettowork.com/wipas.

For more information about the Ticket program, becoming an EN, or attending a WISE event, call toll-free 1-877-743-8237 (v/tty) or visit www.ssa.gov/work.

