

Increasing Options: The Ticket to Work and Self Sufficiency Program

The *Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program* is an avenue to employment for people with disabilities who want to join or reenter the workforce. Millions of adults with disabilities receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are eligible for a *Ticket*, which can be used to access employment services, vocational rehabilitation services and other support services leading to self-supporting employment. Such services are provided at no cost to the individual.

Eligibility

Social Security's Ticket to Work Program is a free and voluntary program available to people ages 18 through 64 who are blind or have a disability and who receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.

Goals

The goals of the Ticket Program are to:

- Offer beneficiaries with disabilities expanded choices when seeking service and supports to enter, re-enter and/or maintain employment;
- Increase the financial independence and self-sufficiency of beneficiaries with disabilities; and
- Reduce and, whenever possible, eliminate reliance on disability benefits.

The beneficiary does not need a paper ticket to participate. Under this program, eligible beneficiaries with disabilities who are receiving monthly benefit payments are entitled to participate by signing up with an approved service provider of their choice. This can be an Employment Network (EN) or a State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency. The EN/State VR agency, if they accept the ticket assignment, will coordinate and provide appropriate services to help the beneficiary find and maintain employment. These services may be training, career counseling,

vocational rehabilitation, job placement and ongoing support services necessary to achieve a work goal.

What are the Advantages of the Ticket Program

While participating in the Ticket program, beneficiaries can get the help they need to safely explore their work options without immediately losing their benefits and find the job that is right for them. Beneficiaries also can use a combination of Work Incentives to maximize their income until they begin to earn enough to support themselves. Therefore, the individual can:

- Go to work without automatically losing disability benefits;
- Return to benefits if he or she has to stop working;
- Continue to receive healthcare benefits; and
- Be protected from receiving a medical Continuing Disability Review (CDR) while using the ticket and making the expected progress with work or educational goals.

For a complete guide to the Work Incentives, go to: www.ssa.gov/redbook

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