

What is Social Security's Ticket to Work Program?

Social Security's **Ticket to Work** (Ticket) Program supports career development for people ages 18 through 64 who receive Social Security disability benefits (SSDI/SSI) and want to work. If you qualify for this free and voluntary program, you will work with service providers to receive the supports and services you need to find and maintain employment.



How Does it Work?

The Ticket Program is a good fit for people who want to improve their earning potential and are committed to preparing for long-term success in the workforce. The Ticket Program connects you with free employment services to help you decide if working is right for you, prepare for work, find a job and be successful at work. Authorized Ticket Program service providers, such as Employment Networks (EN) or your State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency, provide services such as career counseling, vocational rehabilitation, job placement assistance and training. The service provider you choose will serve as an important part of your "employment team" to help you on your journey to financial independence.

Here are the types of service providers that can assist you:

- **Employment Networks (EN)** are private or public organizations that can help with career counseling and assistance



with job placement, including helping you understand how working may affect your benefits. Many ENs serve the communities and states in which they are located. However, others provide services to people in multiple states. Working with an EN depends on the specific organization, but can be done in person, over the phone or even virtually. ENs can also provide long-term support to help you find, keep and advance in a job. If you decide to receive services from a particular EN and they agree to work with you, you will work with that provider to complete an **Individual Work Plan (IWP)**. Then you sign the IWP and "assign" your Ticket to that EN for the time that you are receiving services from them.

- **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)** agencies usually work with individuals who need more significant services to return to work or to work for the first time. In some states, this includes intensive training, education (sometimes including college courses), medical treatment and rehabilitation services, durable medical equipment or vehicle modification or repair. They may also provide career counseling, job placement assistance and counseling on how working may affect benefits. If you want to receive services from your state VR agency, you work with the agency to complete an **Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)**. When you sign the IPE, this puts your Ticket "in use" with the VR.
- **Work Incentives Planning & Assistance (WIPA)** projects are organizations familiar with programs in your community. These organizations are authorized by Social Security to provide free benefits counseling to eligible Social Security disability beneficiaries to help you make informed choices about work.


 VR


 WIPA

- **Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS)** organizations represent eligible beneficiaries to remove barriers to successful employment and will help you understand your rights regarding conditions of employment.



Am I Qualified?

People who are ages 18 through 64 and receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits because of their disability are eligible to participate in the Ticket Program. Participation in the Ticket Program is free and voluntary. You may have received a paper Ticket in the mail, but you don't need a paper Ticket to participate! The service provider you select will verify your eligibility. You can also find out your eligibility status by calling the Ticket to Work Help Line at 1-866-968-7842 or 1-866-833-2967 (TTY) Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET.

Where Do I Start?

If you decide to participate, getting started is easy! First, call the **Ticket to Work Help Line** at 1-866-968-7842 or 1-866-833-2967 (TTY) to verify your eligibility. Our customer service representatives will explain how the program works and answer your questions or address concerns you might have. They will also offer to send you a list of service providers, or if you prefer, you can use the **Find Help tool** to get a customized list of providers that are available to help you.

The next step is deciding what kind of service provider is right for you. You may work with either an EN or your state VR agency, depending on your



needs. The "**Finding an EN and Assigning Your Ticket Worksheet**" can help you keep track of the ENs you are interested in and provides important questions for you to ask them. These services can also work in succession with one another. If you started your employment journey with a state VR agency and have found a job, your state VR agency may close your case approximately 90 days after you start working. Many people find they need continued support once the state VR agency closes their case. That's where an EN may be able to help by providing the continued support you need. This arrangement is known as Partnership Plus.

You can learn more about how to choose a service provider that's right for you at **Your Path to Work: Ready to Work**.

If you're looking for more information about working, earning more money and how working may affect your benefits, the in-depth counseling that a WIPA project provides may be a great place to start.

if you face any disability-related employment concerns along the way, a PABSS advocate can provide the legal support you need to help remove barriers and reinforce the protections provided to you.

Although we often talk about WIPA project and PABSS organizations in the context of the Ticket Program, eligible beneficiaries do not need to participate in the Ticket Program to access these services.

What's Next?

Here are 6 actions you can take right now to learn more about the Ticket Program and other Social Security's Work Incentives:

1. Call the Ticket to Work Help Line to get answers to your questions about Ticket to Work and other Work Incentives, working while you're receiving

benefits and reporting your wages to Social Security. You can reach the Help Line at 1-866-968-7842 or 1-866-833-2967 (TTY) Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET.

2. Learn more about **Social Security Work Incentives** available to you.
3. Read our **Frequently Asked Questions** about the Ticket Program.
4. View **success stories** of beneficiaries who have used the Ticket Program to improve their lives and achieve financial independence.
5. **Sign up for a free WISE Webinar** to learn more about the Ticket Program and other Work Incentives.
6. Opt in to receive information via text about the Ticket Program by texting the word "TICKET" to **474747**. You can opt out at any time.

Follow the Ticket Program's Choose Work on social media!



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To view online and access the resources linked in this fact sheet, please visit:

<https://choosework.ssa.gov/library/fact-sheet-what-is-social-security-ticket-to-work-program>

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