



Ticket Work

The Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program

Employment Network Handbook

Reference Guide for Employment Networks and State Vocational
Rehabilitation Agencies

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Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program
Employment Network Training—Employment Network Handbook





Employment Network Handbook

This Handbook provides Employment Networks (ENs) with a quick reference to the procedures and processes of the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program that are important to an organization’s functioning as an EN. This guide provides information about Ticket assignment, Ticket management, developing your Individual Work Plan, and payment information. Please note that most references to ENs include State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies functioning as ENs unless otherwise noted. We encourage you to copy and distribute this Handbook to individuals within your organization that will be working closely with the Program.



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PART I - BENEFICIARY PARTICIPATION

What information does the beneficiary receive?

Beneficiaries eligible to receive a Ticket under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program will receive Ticket packages from the Social Security Administration headquarters in Baltimore, Maryland.

The package includes:

- an individualized Ticket to Work
- a letter explaining basic information about the Program and how to get started
- a pamphlet titled The Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program

How can the beneficiary obtain further information about the Ticket Program?

The beneficiary may call the MAXIMUS toll-free number for Program information and to obtain a list of the ENs that serve their area. The beneficiary may visit the Ticket website at www.yourtickettowork.com to research available ENs and review the Directory of ENs, or may choose to take their Ticket to an EN or State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agency.

Each person calling MAXIMUS for Program information will be provided an overview of how to get started in the Ticket to Work Program along with a list of contact information for the ENs and State VR Agency in their area. Each beneficiary will be encouraged to contact and discuss their employment goals and the services they are seeking with the agencies on their list. The beneficiary may choose to talk with several ENs before making a decision about Ticket assignment.

When a caller has questions about how working will impact their benefits they will be provided with contact information for the Work Incentives Planning Assistance (WIPA) provider contact in their community.

How does participating in the Ticket Program affect a beneficiary?

If a beneficiary is participating in the Ticket to Work Program, the Social Security Administration will not begin a medical Continuing Disability Review (CDR) during the period in which the beneficiary is using a Ticket. CDRs are reviews that are conducted by the Social Security Administration to determine if a beneficiary still has a disability under Social Security guidelines. If the Social Security Administration finds that a beneficiary is considered no longer disabled, it may stop benefits. Beneficiaries who receive notice of a CDR before they have assigned their Ticket will be required to complete the review.

PART II - CONNECTING WITH TICKET-HOLDERS

In addition to referrals from the MAXIMUS Ticket to Work toll-free, ENs and State VR Agencies can also receive beneficiary referral lists to effectively reach out and offer services to beneficiaries eligible to assign a Ticket to Work.

The beneficiary referral list will be provided on a monthly basis. After receiving an initial beneficiary referral list upon approval as an Employment Network and after the first Ticket assignment, ENs must specifically request to continue to receive a monthly referral list.

Employment Networks and State VR Agencies agree to protect the privacy and confidentiality of beneficiary information entrusted by the Social Security Administration. Privacy Act requirements, applicable

Federal law and regulations and procedures governing the Ticket to Work Program are covered specifically in the statement of work (sections 5 and 6) of both the EN Request for Proposal and EN contract, as well as in other sections of both documents. As Federal government contractors, ENs are obligated to abide by these rules and to ensure that the employees in its organization with access to confidential beneficiary information abide by them as well. To protect confidentiality when communicating with MAXIMUS staff via email, ENs should not include both the name and the Social Security number of a beneficiary in the same email, but use one or the other instead.

PART III: ASSIGNING A TICKET TO YOUR AGENCY

In order to assign an beneficiary's Ticket, an EN will need to develop an Individual Work Plan (IWP). The IWP is a written agreement signed by both the EN and beneficiary (or a beneficiary's legal representative) that describes the specific services that will be provided in assisting the beneficiary to attain an employment goal. For State VR Agencies, the beneficiary and the rehabilitation counselor will work together to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). After the IPE is signed by the beneficiary and the rehabilitation counselor, the State VR Agency Ticket Assignment Form (SSA Form 1365) is also to be completed and signed by the beneficiary and the rehabilitation counselor and sent to MAXIMUS. The State VR Agency must indicate the payment method chosen (either Cost Reimbursement or EN Payment Method) during the Ticket assignment.

Before completing an IWP or IPE with a beneficiary, it is recommended that the EN/State VR Agency call MAXIMUS to verify the beneficiary's Ticket is available for assignment. A Ticket may not be available for assignment in such cases when the beneficiary may not be in a current cash payment status, the beneficiary is no longer considered disabled or is no longer eligible for the Program.

The EN will need to provide the following information in order to verify assignability of a beneficiary's Ticket:

- Employment Network/State VR Agency Identification Number (EIN)
- Employment Network/State VR Agency name, phone number and name of representative
- Beneficiary's Social Security number (SSN) and name

Requirements of the Individual Work Plan (IWP)

- A statement of the vocational goal developed with the beneficiary, including, as appropriate, goals for earnings and job advancement;
- A statement of the services and supports necessary for the beneficiary to accomplish that goal;
- A statement of any terms and conditions related to the provision of these services and supports;
- A statement that the EN may not request or receive any compensation for the costs of services and supports from the beneficiary;
- A statement of the conditions under which an EN may amend the IWP or terminate the relationship;
- A statement of the beneficiary's rights under the Ticket Program, including the right to retrieve the ticket at any time if the beneficiary is dissatisfied with the services being provided by the EN;

- A statement of the remedies available to the beneficiary, including information on the availability of advocacy services and assistance in resolving disputes through the State Protection and Advocacy (P&A) System;
- A statement of the beneficiary's rights to privacy and confidentiality regarding personal information, including information about the beneficiary's disability;
- A statement of the beneficiary's or EN's right to seek to amend the IWP (the IWP can be amended if both the beneficiary and the EN agree to the change);
- A statement of the beneficiary's right to have a copy of the IWP made available to the beneficiary, including in an accessible format chosen by the beneficiary.
- A statement that only qualified employees and/or providers will be used to furnish services;
- A statement that if any medical or related health services are provided, they will be provided under the supervision of persons licensed to prescribe or supervise the provision of these services; and
- A detailed listing of the specific employment goals and services with corresponding timeframes to be provided to the beneficiary

Effective Date of Ticket Assignment

An IWP becomes effective if the following requirements are met:

- It has been signed by the beneficiary, or the beneficiary's representative, and by a representative of the EN;
- MAXIMUS verifies that the beneficiary has a Ticket that is eligible for assignment or reassignment; and
- A representative of the EN submits a copy of the signed IWP to MAXIMUS (by mail or fax), within two (2) weeks of signing, and MAXIMUS receives the copy of the IWP.

Once the above requirements are met, the IWP will be in effect as of the date the IWP was signed by both the beneficiary, or the beneficiary's representative, and a representative of the EN. If the beneficiary unassigns his/her Ticket from one EN and reassigns the Ticket to another EN within the same month, the reassignment will be in effect as of the first of the next month.

PART IV: TICKET STATUS

This section is a quick reference to the various statuses of a Ticket and the process and procedure for having the Ticket status changed. Please consult the Regulations for specific and detailed explanations or call MAXIMUS. These classifications of Ticket status require action from the beneficiary and/or the EN. The first part of the section focuses on definitions for Ticket assignment, unassignment, and reassignment. The second part of the section provides the definitions for a Ticket being "in-use", "out of use", or "inactive."

Assignment

The beneficiary and the EN must both sign the IWP and copies of this document must have been forwarded to MAXIMUS for review and approval to effect Ticket assignment. A Ticket will be considered “assigned” retroactive to the date when both the EN and the beneficiary signed the IWP.

When a Ticket is assigned and the beneficiary is actively participating in the Ticket to Work Program, the beneficiary will not be subject to a medical Continuing Disability Review (CDR).

Unassignment

A beneficiary may take their Ticket out of assignment or retrieve their Ticket if they wish to receive services from a new EN or State Vocational Rehabilitation agency. Also, an EN may request to unassign a beneficiary’s Ticket that is presently assigned to them. The procedures to unassign a Ticket are described below.

The beneficiary or EN must notify MAXIMUS in writing if they wish to have the Ticket unassigned. The letter does not need to indicate a reason for unassigning the Ticket. The letter to MAXIMUS will need to include the beneficiary’s name and Social Security Number, and the name and EIN number (if possible) of the EN where the Ticket was assigned. MAXIMUS will provide written notification to the beneficiary and EN that the Ticket is considered “unassigned”.

Reassigning a Ticket

A beneficiary may reassign their Ticket to a new EN or State Vocational Rehabilitation agency (State VR). To do so, the beneficiary must notify MAXIMUS in writing that they wish to have their Ticket unassigned. The beneficiary may then contact other ENs or the State VR agency and complete a new assignment process. **The beneficiary will have a three-month period in which they may reassign their Ticket without being subject to a medical Continuing Disability Review.** This extension period is only available if the beneficiary’s Ticket was “in-use” when they chose to reassign their Ticket.

Timely Progress Guidelines

A Ticket is considered “in-use” when the Ticket is assigned to an EN or State VR agency and the beneficiary is making Timely Progress toward self-supporting employment as defined in the regulations. A brief synopsis of Timely Progress and work requirements is provided:

Initial 24-Month Period	Active participation in the work plan
First 12-Month Progress Review	3 months of work
Second 12-Month Progress Review and annually thereafter	6 months of work

Ticket Not In-Use

If a beneficiary has not assigned their Ticket, or has assigned their Ticket but is not making Timely Progress toward self-supporting employment, then their Ticket is considered to be “Not In-Use.” Specific reviews are conducted according to the time frames described above under Timely Progress if the Ticket is In-Use. If it is determined that the beneficiary is not meeting the requirements of making Timely Progress toward self-supporting employment, then MAXIMUS will notify the beneficiary and prepare to change the Ticket status to “Not In-Use.” The beneficiary may request a review of this decision. The beneficiary may request to be brought out of “Not In-Use” status and be reinstated to Ticket “In-Use” status by demonstrating the appropriate progress review guidelines.

Ticket Inactive

During the Initial 24-month Period after a beneficiary assigns their Ticket, the beneficiary may elect to place their Ticket in “Inactive” status. The Ticket may be placed in “Inactive” status if the beneficiary expects that they will be unable to participate in the Program for a period of time. This lack of participation may be due to life circumstances such as illness or hospitalization.

The beneficiary will not be considered to be “using” the Ticket, but their Ticket will remain assigned to the EN. The months in which the Ticket is in “Inactive” Status do not count toward the limitations for making Timely Progress toward self-supporting employment.

To place a Ticket in “Inactive” Status, the beneficiary must submit a request to MAXIMUS in writing to have their Ticket placed in “Inactive” Status. The written notification must include a statement from the EN that the beneficiary will not be participating in their IWP or receiving services while the Ticket is inactive.

The beneficiary may reactivate the Ticket to “In-Use” status at any time by submitting written notification to MAXIMUS requesting reactivation. After returning to “In-Use” status, the beneficiary will have three months to demonstrate active participation. MAXIMUS will contact the EN after three months to determine whether the beneficiary has been actively participating in the IWP. If the EN reports that the beneficiary has not been actively participating, MAXIMUS considers that the beneficiary is not making Timely Progress and prepares to change their Ticket status to “Not In-Use.” The beneficiary will have the right to request a review of the decision.

PART V: REQUESTING A PAYMENT

Before you submit a request for payment, you will need to ensure that the following actions have occurred:

- The EN has received confirmation from MAXIMUS that the Ticket has been effectively assigned ;
- The EN has sent MAXIMUS the Automated Clearinghouse Payment Enrollment Form (ACH) and all items have been completed and all information is correct; and
- The Ticket-holder with whom the EN is working has earnings from work that justify a Milestone payment (at Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) level), or are sufficient to reduce the beneficiary’s Federal cash benefit to \$0 in order to qualify for an Outcome payment.

Please see the **Requesting Payment** packet for required documentation and detailed instructions on submitting your Payment Request Form.