

## CHAPTER 12: TICKET TO WORK PROGRAM

### BACKGROUND—TICKET ASSIGNMENTS AND PAYMENTS

#### 12.1 Overview of Ticket Cases

- A. Ticket Selection and Mailing Process
- B. Beneficiary Participation Is Voluntary
- C. Linking Up With a Provider Via MAXIMUS
- D. Developing a Plan for Self-Supporting Employment
- E. Payments Options Available to State VR Agencies and ENs
  1. Payment Options Available to an EN (Including a State VR Agency Functioning as an EN)
  2. Payment Options Available to a State VR Agency
  3. When a State VR Agency's Payment Options Will Be Limited

#### 12.2 Overview of Pipeline, New, and Non-Ticket Cases

- A. Pipeline Cases
  1. Definition of a Pipeline Case
  2. Beneficiary's Options in a Pipeline Case
  3. State VR Agency's Payment Options in a Pipeline Case if the Beneficiary Decides to Assign the Ticket to the State VR Agency
  4. State VR Agency's Limited Payment Option in a Pipeline Case if the Beneficiary Does Not Assign the Ticket to the State VR Agency
- B. New Cases
  1. Definition of a New Case
  2. State VR Agency May Not Be Paid in a New Case if the Beneficiary Is Not Eligible to Assign/Reassign the Ticket
  3. State VR Agency Payment Options in a New Case if the Beneficiary Is Eligible to Assign/Reassign the Ticket
- C. Non-Ticket Cases
  1. Definition of a Non-Ticket Case
  2. State VR Agency Can Claim a Cost Reimbursement Payment in a Non-Ticket Case
  3. Point at Which a Non-Ticket Case Becomes a Pipeline Case

### 12.3 Overview of Ticket Assignments

- A. Initial Assignment of a Ticket
  - 1. How to Determine if a Ticket Is Assignable
  - 2. Definition of "Assignable"
  - 3. Definition of Being "Eligible" to Assign a Ticket
  - 4. Proof of a Beneficiary's Decision to Assign a Ticket
  - 5. Effective Date of a Ticket Assignment
  - 5. Role of MAXIMUS and SSA in Providing Confirmation of a Ticket Assignment
  
- B. Taking a Ticket Out of Assignment
  - 1. When a Beneficiary Can Retrieve a Ticket
  - 2. When a State VR Agency Can Take a Ticket Out of Assignment
  - 3. Effective Date of Ticket Unassignment
  - 4. Role of MAXIMUS in Providing Confirmation That a Ticket Is Unassigned
  
- C. Reassigning a Ticket
  - 1. When a Beneficiary May Reassign a Ticket
  - 2. Effective Date of Ticket Reassignment
  - 3. Role of MAXIMUS and SSA in Providing Confirmation of the Ticket Reassignment

### 12.4 Overview of the Two EN Payment Systems

- A. General Description of the Two EN Payment Systems
- B. Outcome Payment Months
  - 1. Definition of an Outcome Payment Month
  - 2. Definition of a Beneficiary's Outcome Payment Period
  - 3. When a State VR Agency May Be Paid for an Outcome Payment Month
  - 4. The Day on Which a Beneficiary Attains an Outcome Payment Month
  
- C. Milestones
  - 1. When a Milestone Occurs
  - 2. Maximum Number of Milestones
  - 3. The Earnings Requirements for Each Milestone
  - 4. When a State VR Agency May Be Paid for a Milestone
  - 5. The Day on Which a Beneficiary Attains a Milestone
  
- D. Definition of the SGA Threshold Amount

## 12.5 Overview of the Payment Rates Under the Two EN Payment Systems

- A. Basis for EN Payments
- B. Payment Rates Under the Outcome Payment System
- C. Payment Rates Under the Outcome-Milestone Payment System
  - 1. Milestone Payment Rates
  - 2. Outcome Payment Rate
  - 3. Reduction of Outcome Payments Because of the Receipt of Milestone Payments

## 12.6 Overview of How a State VR Agency Elects an EN Payment System

- A. Initial Election of an EN Payment System
- B. When a State VR Agency Can Change Its Elected EN Payment System
- C. Effect of a Change in a State VR Agency's Elected EN Payment System

## 12.7 Overview of Limitations on Payments

- A. Splitting EN Payments
- B. Adjustments to EN Payments
  
- C. Restriction Against Paying Under Both the Cost Reimbursement and EN Payment Systems with Respect to the Same Ticket
  - 1. General Restriction
  - 2. Which Provider SSA Will Pay When We Get a Cost Reimbursement and an EN Payment Claim for the Same Ticket
  - 3. How to Determine if Payment Options Are Limited With Respect to a Ticket
    - a. Payment Options When a Ticket Was Not Previously Assigned
    - b. Payment Options When a Ticket Was Previously Assigned and Payment Has Been Made
    - c. Payment Options When a Ticket Was Previously Assigned But No Payment Has Been Made

## 12.8 Acceptable Evidence of Work or Earnings Required for an EN Payment

- A. General Requirements
- B. Sufficient Evidence of Work or Earnings for a Milestone Payment

- C. Sufficient Evidence of Work or Earnings for an Outcome Payment
    - 1. Entitlement Has Not Ended
    - 2. Entitlement Has Ended Because of Work or Earnings
  - D. Type of Evidence Needed to Establish Work or Earnings
    - 1. Primary Evidence
    - 2. Critical Information
    - 3. Secondary Evidence
- 12.9 Overview of When a Ticket Terminates and the Effect of Such a Termination
- A. When a Beneficiary's Ticket Terminates
  - B. Effect of a Beneficiary's Ticket Terminating
  - C. Eligibility for a New Ticket

#### PROCEDURES—TICKET ASSIGNMENTS AND PAYMENTS

- 12.10 Getting a Ticket Assigned/Reassigned
- A. Pipeline Cases - Beneficiary Decides to Assign a Ticket to the State VR Agency
  - B. Pipeline Cases - Beneficiary Decides Not to Assign a Ticket to the State VR Agency
  - C. New Cases
- 12.11 Requesting That a Ticket Be Unassigned
- A. Actions Required
  - B. MAXIMUS' Numbers and Address
- 12.12 Requesting a Payment
- A. Requesting a Cost Reimbursement Payment
  - B. Requesting an EN Payment
    - 1. EN Payment Request Form
    - 2. Evidence of the Beneficiary's Work or Earnings
    - 3. Forward to MAXIMUS
- 12.13 Requesting Reconsideration of an EN Payment Decision

#### OTHER TICKET ISSUES AND PROCEDURES

- 12.14 Handling Disputes with Ticket Beneficiaries

- 12.15 Referrals of Ticket Beneficiaries from ENs
  - A. Referral Agreement
  - B. Handling an Attempted Referral Without an Agreement
  - C. Handling Disputes that Arise Between a State VR Agency and an EN
  
- 12.16 Suspension of Medical Reviews for Beneficiaries Who Are Using a Ticket
  - A. General Exemption from Medical Reviews
  - B. Definition of Using a Ticket
  - C. Timely Progress Reviews
    - 1. Initial 24-Month Progress Period and Review
    - 2. Subsequent 12-Month Progress Periods and Reviews
  - D. When the Reviews Will Stop
  - E. Effect of a Ticket Moving into "Not In Use" Status
  
- 12.17 Annual Periodic Reports from MAXIMUS

EXHIBITS

- Tab A - Sample Ticket Certificate (Form SSA-1359)
- Tab B - Ticket to Work Phase-In Locations
- Tab C - Form SSA-1365 (Front/Back) - State Agency Ticket Assignment Form
- Tab D - SSA-L1360 - Ticket Assignment Notice for a Beneficiary
- Tab E - SGA Threshold Amounts Beginning With Calendar Year 2002
- Tab F - Payment Rates Under the Outcome Payment System Beginning With Calendar Year 2002
- Tab G - Payment Rates Under the Outcome-Milestone Payment System Beginning With Calendar Year 2002
- Tab H - Employment Network Payment Request Form

BACKGROUND—TICKET ASSIGNMENTS AND PAYMENTS

12.1 Overview of Ticket Cases

A. Ticket Selection and Mailing Process

The Social Security Administration (SSA) will review the records of beneficiaries who receive benefits under its two disability programs to determine who is eligible to receive a ticket under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program (the Ticket to Work program).<sup>1</sup> SSA will send a ticket mailer package to those found eligible for tickets. This package includes a cover letter, the beneficiary's ticket (see tab A), and a brochure with basic information about the Ticket to Work program.

The ticket selection process is not a one-time event. SSA is implementing the Ticket to Work program in three phases across the nation. (See tab B for a list of the locations included in each implementation phase.) As SSA begins each new phase, it will select the initial group of beneficiaries currently on SSA's disability rolls who are eligible for tickets. Then, the agency's computers will identify newly eligible ticket beneficiaries on a daily basis.

A beneficiary who is entitled to benefits under the SSDI or SSI program must meet several criteria to be eligible for a ticket. The beneficiary must:

- be at least age 18 but not yet age 65;
- be entitled based on SSA's disability standard for adults;
- be receiving a Federal cash disability-based

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<sup>1</sup> One of SSA's disability programs is the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program, which provides disability-based benefits (including benefits for blindness) to "insured" workers, their adult children, and their widow(er)s and surviving divorced spouses. The other is the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program for those who are disabled or blind and have limited income and resources.

benefit from SSA;<sup>2</sup> and

- have had at least one medical review and been found to have a continuing disability, if SSA classified the beneficiary's disability as one that it expects to medically improve.

Initially, SSA will mail tickets to eligible beneficiaries in stages, and thereafter on a flow basis. A beneficiary who is eligible for a ticket does not need to have a ticket before contacting providers about possible services. However, if a beneficiary wants to get a ticket before the scheduled mailing date, the beneficiary may contact SSA's Program Manager for the Ticket to Work program, MAXIMUS, Inc. MAXIMUS is also the beneficiary's contact source for other ticket questions and issues (e.g., MAXIMUS can answer questions about whether a beneficiary is eligible for a ticket; MAXIMUS can issue replacements for lost tickets).

#### B. Beneficiary Participation Is Voluntary

A beneficiary's participation in the Ticket to Work program is voluntary.

- The beneficiary is free to choose when and whether to use the ticket to obtain the assistance needed to return to work or go to work for the first time.
- When a beneficiary decides to use the ticket, the beneficiary may assign it to a State VR agency or an employment network (EN) under our rules for assigning a ticket.<sup>3</sup>
- At any time a beneficiary can retrieve the ticket from a State VR agency or EN and reassign it to another State VR agency or EN that is willing to take the ticket assignment, provided the beneficiary is eligible to reassign the ticket. (Section 12.3 of this Chapter discusses when a beneficiary is eligible to assign/reassign a ticket.)

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<sup>2</sup> Some beneficiaries are entitled to SSDI/SSI benefits but do not receive a monthly Federal cash benefit (e.g., their benefits may be in suspense, they may be getting a State supplementation only).

<sup>3</sup> An EN is a qualified entity that has entered into an agreement with SSA to provide employment services, vocational rehabilitation services, or other support services to ticket beneficiaries.

A beneficiary's non-use of a ticket will not affect entitlement to disability-based benefits. However, if a beneficiary assigns/reassigns a ticket and actively follows the approved employment plan and meets certain work requirements, SSA will not initiate any medical reviews of the beneficiary's case. SSA periodically conducts these reviews to determine whether a beneficiary's condition continues to meet SSA's definition of disability. (See Section 12.16 of this Chapter.)

C. Linking Up With a Provider Via MAXIMUS

A beneficiary may not assign a ticket to more than one provider of services at a time. However, a beneficiary may discuss employment plans and goals with a State VR agency and as many ENs as the beneficiary chooses. The beneficiary can obtain a list of the State VR agency and approved ENs for a particular geographic area by:

- calling MAXIMUS at 1-866-968-7842 or 1-866-833-2967 (TDD), or
- accessing MAXIMUS' website at [www.yourtickettowork.com](http://www.yourtickettowork.com).

D. Developing a Plan for Self-Supporting Employment

A State VR agency or EN will provide employment services, VR services, or other support services to assist a ticket beneficiary in obtaining, regaining, and maintaining self-supporting employment as specified in the beneficiary's:

- Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), if developed with a State VR agency; or
- Individual Work Plan (IWP), if developed with an EN.

A beneficiary who is eligible to assign/reassign a ticket can do so only if that beneficiary and a representative of the State VR agency or EN have developed and signed an IPE/IWP. (See Section 12.3 of this Chapter for further information about the requirements for assigning/reassigning a ticket.)

E. Payment Options Available to State VR Agencies and ENs

A State VR agency or EN may receive payment for its services when a beneficiary, who assigned a ticket to the State VR agency or EN, achieves certain work-related outcomes.

1. Payment Options Available to an EN  
(Including a State VR Agency Functioning as an EN)

Under the Ticket to Work program, ENs have two payment systems to choose from. They are the outcome payment system and the outcome-milestone payment system. (See Section 12.4 of this Chapter for a detailed description of the payments available under these two payment systems.)

Once an EN makes a payment system election, it will apply to all of the EN's ticket assignments. An EN may periodically change its elected payment system. When it does this, the newly elected payment system will apply to the EN's new ticket assignments only. The EN's prior payment system election will continue to apply to the cases of beneficiaries whose tickets were assigned to the EN before the effective date of its newly elected EN payment system.

2. Payment Options Available to a State VR Agency

The Ticket to Work program provides State VR agencies with an additional payment option. On a case-by-case basis, subject to the limitations described in Section 12.1E3 below, when a beneficiary assigns/reassigns a ticket to the State VR agency, the State VR Agency can choose to be paid:

- as an EN, or
- under the traditional, cost reimbursement payment system.

If the State VR agency opts to be paid as an EN, SSA will use the EN payment system that the State VR agency has elected for this purpose. (Section 12.6 of this Chapter discusses how a State VR agency elects an EN payment system and changes its election.)

If the State VR agency opts to be paid under the cost reimbursement payment system, it will be paid for the reasonable and necessary costs incurred in providing VR services to a ticket beneficiary when those services contribute to the beneficiary's employment at the SGA level. (Refer to Chapter 3 of this handbook for the requirements for payment under the cost reimbursement payment system.)

### 3. When a State VR Agency's Payment Options Will Be Limited

A State VR agency's payment options will be limited in a ticket case if SSA has already made a payment with respect to the ticket. This is because SSA's regulations preclude payments under both an EN payment system and the cost reimbursement payment system with respect to the same ticket. (See Section 12.7C of this Chapter for a further discussion of this payment limitation and how a State VR agency finds out if its payment options will be limited.)

## 12.2 Overview of Pipeline, New, and Non-Ticket Cases

Once SSA implements the Ticket to Work program in a State, that State's VR agency(ies) will encounter three types of cases. They are pipeline cases, new cases, and non-ticket cases.

## A. Pipeline Cases

### 1. Definition of a Pipeline Case

A pipeline case is a case in which the beneficiary first becomes eligible for a ticket after developing and signing an IPE with a State VR agency. This could involve a case in which the beneficiary's IPE is developed and signed:

- before SSA implements the Ticket to Work program in a State; or
- after SSA implements the Ticket to Work program in a State (e.g., the beneficiary does not get a ticket initially because SSA classified the beneficiary's disability as one that SSA expects to medically improve and SSA has not conducted the first medical review).

### 2. Beneficiary's Options in a Pipeline Case

A beneficiary has three options in a pipeline case. The beneficiary may choose:

- to assign the ticket to the State VR agency,
- to assign the ticket to an EN, or
- not to assign the ticket to any provider.

If the beneficiary decides to assign the ticket to a provider and is eligible to do so (see Section 12.3A of this Chapter), the beneficiary and the provider will receive written confirmation of the ticket assignment. Also, SSA will not initiate any medical reviews of the beneficiary's disability as long as the beneficiary actively pursues the IPE/IWP and meets certain work requirements. (See Section 12.16C of this Chapter for a discussion of these requirements.) However, if the beneficiary decides not to assign the ticket to any provider, SSA may initiate a medical review.

### 3. State VR Agency's Payment Options in a

## Pipeline Case if the Beneficiary Decides to Assign the Ticket to the State VR Agency

A State VR agency can exercise either of the payment options described in Section 12.1E2 of this Chapter in a pipeline case when the beneficiary decides to assign the ticket to a State VR agency and is eligible to do so. That is, the State VR agency may elect to be paid under its agency's elected EN payment system or under the cost reimbursement payment system. (See Section 12.3A1 of this Chapter for a discussion of how a State VR agency can contact MAXIMUS to find out if a beneficiary is "eligible" to assign a ticket.)

### 4. State VR Agency's Limited Payment Option in a Pipeline Case if the Beneficiary Does Not Assign the Ticket to the State VR Agency

A State VR agency's payment options are limited in a pipeline case when the beneficiary decides not to assign the ticket to the State VR agency.

- The only payment system available to the State VR agency is the cost reimbursement payment system; and
- SSA will pay the State VR agency only if it meets the requirements for payment under the cost reimbursement payment system before SSA makes a payment with respect to the ticket. That is, before another provider, to which the beneficiary assigns the ticket, meets the requirements for payment under its elected EN payment system.

Example 1: A beneficiary begins receiving services from a State VR agency in August 2001.

- In August 2002, the beneficiary becomes eligible for a ticket but decides not to assign the ticket to the State VR agency.
- In September 2003, the beneficiary goes to work and

completes a continuous period of substantial gainful activity (SGA) in May 2004.

- In July 2004, the State VR agency submits a claim for reimbursement.

SSA will approve the State VR agency's cost reimbursement claim because the ticket was never assigned to another provider. The payment to the State VR agency does not represent a payment with respect to the beneficiary's ticket. Thus, if the beneficiary subsequently chooses to assign the ticket to an EN or a State VR agency and is eligible to do so, then that provider may qualify for payments under the Ticket to Work program.

Example 2: A beneficiary begins receiving services from a State VR agency in August 2001.

- In August 2002, the beneficiary becomes eligible for a ticket but decides not to assign the ticket to the State VR agency.
- In February 2003, the beneficiary assigns the ticket to an EN.
- In March 2003, the beneficiary gets a job.
- In March 2004, the State VR agency files a cost reimbursement claim for a continuous period of SGA that the beneficiary completed in December 2003.

SSA will base its decision on whether to approve the State VR agency's cost reimbursement claim on when the EN might first qualify for a payment.

- If the EN first qualifies for a payment in or before December 2003, then SSA will deny the State VR agency's claim and pay the EN's claim. This is because the payment to the EN represents a payment with respect to the ticket.
- If the EN first qualifies for a payment after December 2003, then SSA will approve the State VR agency's cost reimbursement claim. The payment to the State VR agency does not represent a payment with respect to the beneficiary's ticket. Thus, SSA may subsequently pay the EN for any payments for which it may qualify under the Ticket to Work program.

## B. New Cases

### 1. Definition of a New Case

A new case is a case in which the beneficiary first becomes eligible for a ticket before the beneficiary and a representative of the VR agency sign an IPE. In such a case the signatures on the IPE indicate that:

- the beneficiary has decided to use the ticket to obtain services from the State VR agency, if the ticket is assignable; and
- the State VR agency has found the beneficiary eligible for VR services.

### 2. State VR Agency May Not Be Paid in a New Case if the Beneficiary Is Not Eligible to Assign/Reassign the Ticket

A State VR agency may not receive any payments from SSA in a new case if the beneficiary is not eligible to assign/reassign the ticket because the ticket is assigned to another VR/EN. (Section 12.3A1 provides that a State VR agency may contact MAXIMUS to find out if a beneficiary has an assignable ticket; i.e., is eligible to assign/reassign the ticket to the State VR agency.)

3. State VR Agency Payment Options in a New Case if the Beneficiary Is Eligible to Assign/Reassign the Ticket

Generally, a State VR agency has a choice of payment options in a new case if the beneficiary is eligible to assign/reassign the ticket. The State VR agency may choose to be paid under the cost reimbursement payment system or under its agency's elected EN payment system unless, as discussed in Section 12.1E3 of this Chapter, SSA has already made a payment with respect to the ticket. Hence, Section 12.7C3 of this Chapter provides guidance on how a State VR agency can contact MAXIMUS to determine if its payment choices are/may be limited in a new case. As with pipeline cases, whenever a ticket is assigned in a new case, the beneficiary and State VR agency will receive written confirmation of the ticket assignment.

C. Non-Ticket Cases

1. Definition of a Non-Ticket Case

A non-ticket case is a case in which a beneficiary is not eligible for a ticket. That is, the beneficiary does not meet one or more of the criteria for getting a ticket listed in Section 12.1A of this Chapter.

2. State VR Agency Can Claim a Cost Reimbursement Payment in a Non-Ticket Case

A State VR agency can claim a cost reimbursement payment in a non-ticket case, provided all of the requirements for payment outlined in Chapter 3 of this handbook are met and the State VR agency submits a claim (see Chapter 5 of this handbook).

3. Point at Which a Non-Ticket Case Becomes a Pipeline Case

A non-ticket case will become a pipeline case if and when the beneficiary becomes eligible for a ticket. (See Section 12.2A1 above.)

### 12.3 Overview of Ticket Assignments

A. Initial Assignment of a Ticket

1. How to Determine if a Ticket Is Assignable

A beneficiary does not have to present a ticket to a State VR agency to assign the ticket to the State VR agency. However, the beneficiary's ticket must be "assignable" (see Section 12.3A2 below). Thus, a State VR agency may wish to contact MAXIMUS to find out if a beneficiary has a ticket that is "assignable" when:

- that beneficiary wants to assign a ticket to the State VR agency, and
- the State VR agency has determined that the beneficiary is eligible for services.

2. Definition of "Assignable"

The term assignable means that the ticket is not currently assigned to a State VR agency or an EN and the beneficiary is "eligible" to assign the ticket (see Section 12.3A3 below).

3. Definition of Being "Eligible" to Assign a Ticket

A beneficiary is eligible to assign a ticket

if all of the following requirements are met. The beneficiary must:

- Still be entitled to disability-based benefits under the SSDI or SSI program;
- Not yet have attained age 65;
- Actually be receiving a monthly Federal cash disability-based benefit from SSA;
- Not be receiving section 301 payments;
- Not receiving benefit continuation payments during a medical cessation appeal;
- Not receiving provisional cash benefits under the expedited reinstatement provisions; and
- Not receiving presumptive disability/blindness payments.

In addition, the ticket must not be terminated.

4. Proof of a Beneficiary's Decision to Assign a Ticket

Before the ticket assignment process can be completed, the State VR agency must submit proof to MAXIMUS that the beneficiary has decided to assign/reassign a ticket to the State VR agency.

In pipeline cases, the only acceptable proof that a beneficiary has agreed to assign a ticket to the State VR agency is Form SSA-1365, with the beneficiary's signature and date blocks completed in Part B of the form. (Form SSA-1365 is titled "State Agency Ticket Assignment Form." A copy of the form is provided at tab C.)

In new cases a completed Form SSA-1365, with the beneficiary's signature and date in Part B of the form, is sufficient proof that the beneficiary has agreed to assign the ticket to a State VR agency. However, if the beneficiary (or the beneficiary's representative) does not sign the form, then the unsigned form can be submitted along

with the front (or cover) page and last (or signature) page of the IPE signed by both the beneficiary (or the beneficiary's representative) and the State VR agency.

5. Effective Date of a Ticket Assignment

The effective date of ticket assignment is the first day that the beneficiary is "eligible" to assign the ticket and

- in pipeline cases, the beneficiary (or the beneficiary's representative) and a representative from the State VR agency sign Part B of Form SSA-1365; or
- in new cases, the beneficiary (or the beneficiary's representative) and a representative from the State VR agency sign the IPE.<sup>4</sup>

6. Role of MAXIMUS and SSA in Providing Confirmation of a Ticket Assignment

When MAXIMUS receives documentation of a beneficiary's decision to assign a ticket to a State VR agency, it will input the ticket assignment data and provide confirmation of the assignment to the State VR agency. If for some reason the system rejects MAXIMUS' input, MAXIMUS will contact the State VR agency and explain why the ticket assignment was not accepted and what actions may be required to complete the assignment.

SSA will provide confirmation of all ticket assignments to beneficiaries. The notice that SSA sends constitutes verification of the informed choice decision that a beneficiary made in deciding to assign a ticket.

The ticket assignment notice that SSA sends to the beneficiary (see tab D for a copy of the English version):

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<sup>4</sup> The State VR agency enters the date that the beneficiary (or the beneficiary's representative) and a representative of the State VR agency signed the IPE in blocks 5a and 5b of Part A of Form SSA-1365.

- gives the name, address and telephone number of the provider to which the beneficiary's ticket is assigned and the effective date of that assignment;
- explains how the beneficiary can receive more information about how the Ticket to Work program effects benefits; and
- instructs the beneficiary to contact MAXIMUS with any questions about the letter or the Ticket to Work program (e.g., questions about the requirements to unassign/reassign the ticket).

Should a beneficiary contact MAXIMUS about the ticket assignment notice and the options available, MAXIMUS will explain those options so that the beneficiary can decide how and whether to continue to participate in the Ticket to Work program.

## B. Taking a Ticket Out of Assignment

### 1. When a Beneficiary Can Retrieve a Ticket

A beneficiary can retrieve a ticket, that is take it out of assignment, for any reason. To do this, the beneficiary must notify MAXIMUS in writing.

### 2. When a State VR Agency Can Take a Ticket Out of Assignment

A State VR agency may ask, in writing, MAXIMUS, to take a ticket out of assignment when the State VR agency determines that the beneficiary is no longer eligible for VR services under 34 CFR 361.42. (See Section 12.11 of this Chapter for further instructions.)

### 3. Effective Date of Ticket Unassignment

A ticket will no longer be assigned to a State VR agency effective with the earlier of the first day of the month following the month in which:

- the beneficiary notifies MAXIMUS in writing to take the ticket out of assignment; or
  - the State VR agency requests MAXIMUS to take the ticket out of assignment.
4. Role of MAXIMUS in Providing Confirmation That a Ticket Is Unassigned

MAXIMUS will input a request that a ticket be taken out of assignment. When this action is completed, MAXIMUS will notify the beneficiary and the State VR agency that the ticket is considered "unassigned."

C. Reassigning a Ticket

1. When a Beneficiary May Reassign a Ticket

A beneficiary may want to reassign a ticket to the same State VR agency, to a different State VR agency (e.g., the beneficiary moves), or to an EN. A beneficiary may do this provided all of the following requirements are met:

- The ticket must be unassigned. If the ticket is currently assigned, the beneficiary must first tell MAXIMUS, in writing, to take the ticket out of assignment.
- A State VR agency or EN must be willing to work with the beneficiary and both must sign a new IPE/IWP.
- The beneficiary must continue to be "eligible" to assign the ticket, or must be eligible to do so on or after the date the new IPE/IWP is signed.

The definition of being "eligible" to assign a ticket (see Section 12.3A3 above) applies to ticket reassignment cases. However, if a beneficiary does not meet these requirements, the ticket can still be reassigned if the beneficiary develops and signs a new IPE/IWP within the timeframes shown in the following chart, and the ticket

has not terminated. These alternate timeframes are based on whether SSA's records indicate that the beneficiary was actively following the prior approved IPE/IWP at the time the ticket was last assigned and how long it has been since the ticket was last assigned.

**Alternate Timeframes for Developing and Signing a New IPE/IWP When a Beneficiary Is Not Currently "Eligible" to Reassign a Ticket**

Was the beneficiary actively following the prior approved plan?	Timeframe within which the beneficiary must develop and sign a plan with another provider:
Yes	Within 3 months following the month the ticket was last assigned
No	Within 30 days following the date the ticket was last assigned

2. Effective Date of Ticket Reassignment

The effective date of the reassignment is the first day on which all of the following requirements are met:

- The ticket is unassigned;
- The beneficiary (or the beneficiary's representative) and a representative from the State VR agency sign the IPE; and
- The beneficiary is eligible to assign the ticket (or meets one of the alternative criteria).

3. Role of MAXIMUS and SSA in Providing Confirmation of the Ticket Reassignment

As with ticket assignments:

- MAXIMUS inputs all ticket reassignments and provides confirmation of such to the State VR agency.
- SSA sends written conformation of the ticket reassignment to the beneficiary.

## 12.4 Overview of the Two EN Payment Systems

### A. General Description of the Two EN Payment Systems

Section 12.1E2 of this Chapter discusses how a State VR agency can participate in the Ticket to Work program when providing services to a particular beneficiary. Subject to certain payment limitations, a State VR agency can choose to function as an EN or under the cost reimbursement payment system.

When a State VR agency chooses to serve a ticket beneficiary as an EN, SSA will pay the State VR agency under the EN payment system it has elected for this purpose. There are two EN payment systems from which the State VR agency can choose. These are:

- the outcome payment system, under which it may be paid for outcome payment months that a beneficiary achieves after assigning the ticket to the State VR agency; and
- the outcome-milestone payment system, under which it may be paid for milestones and outcome payment months that a beneficiary achieves after assigning the ticket to the State VR agency.

### B. Outcome Payment Months

#### 1. Definition of an Outcome Payment Month

An outcome payment month is a month during the beneficiary's outcome payment period for which SSA pays no Federal cash disability-based benefits to the beneficiary because of work or earnings. The maximum number of outcome payment months per ticket is 60.

SSA considers any month after the month in which entitlement to disability-based benefits ends to be a month for which it pays no Federal cash disability-based benefits, if both of the following requirements are met.

- The individual has gross earnings from employment (or net earnings from self-employment) in that month that are more than the applicable substantial gainful activity (SGA) threshold amount (see Section 12.4D below); and
- The individual is not entitled to any other type of Social Security or SSI benefit.

2. Definition of a Beneficiary's Outcome Payment Period

The beneficiary's outcome payment period is a period of 60 months, which do not have to be consecutive, for which SSA pays no Federal cash disability-based benefits to a ticket beneficiary because of work or earnings.

The outcome payment period **begins** with the first month, ending after the date on which the ticket was first assigned, for which such benefits are not payable due to work or earnings.

The outcome payment period **ends** with the 60<sup>th</sup> month, consecutive or otherwise, for which such benefits are not payable due to work or earnings.

3. When a State VR Agency May Be Paid for an Outcome Payment Month

A State VR agency may be paid for an outcome payment month that a ticket beneficiary attains if both of the following requirements are met:

- the State VR agency elected to serve the beneficiary as an EN when it took the beneficiary's ticket assignment; and

- the beneficiary attains the outcome payment month after the ticket was assigned to the State VR agency and before the ticket terminates. (See Section 12.9 of this Chapter for a discussion of when a ticket terminates).
4. The Day on Which a Beneficiary Attains an Outcome Payment Month

A beneficiary attains an outcome payment month on the last day of the month. Thus, if a beneficiary assigns a ticket to a State VR agency before the last day of a month and that month is an outcome payment month, then the State VR agency can receive an outcome payment for that month.

### C. Milestones

1. When a Milestone Occurs

A milestone occurs after the date on which the beneficiary first assigns a ticket and starts working and before the beginning of the outcome payment period (i.e., before the beneficiary's first outcome payment month).

2. Maximum Number of Milestones

The maximum number of milestones that a beneficiary can attain per ticket is four.

3. The Earnings Requirements for Each Milestone

SSA will look at a beneficiary's gross earnings from employment (or net earnings from self-employment) for a month to determine whether the beneficiary has attained a milestone. These earnings must exceed the applicable SGA threshold amount (see Section 12.4D below) for the number of months specified in the following table.

### Earnings Requirement for Each Milestone

Milestone	Number of Months Earnings Must Be More than the SGA Threshold Amount
1	1 month
2	3 months within a 12-month period
3	7 months within a 12-month period
4	12 months within a 15-month period

SSA's rules provide that any of the months used to meet a milestone may be included in the months used to meet a subsequent milestone.

#### 4. When a State VR Agency May Be Paid for a Milestone

A State VR agency may be paid for a milestone that a ticket beneficiary attains if all of the following requirements are met.

- The State VR agency elected to serve the beneficiary as an EN; and
- The State VR agency's elected EN payment system at the time of ticket assignment/reassignment was the outcome-milestone payment system; and
- The beneficiary attained the milestone:
  - after the ticket was assigned to the State VR agency; and
  - before the outcome payment period began; and
  - before the ticket terminates. (See Section 12.9 of this Chapter for a discussion of when a ticket terminates).

#### 5. The Day on Which a Beneficiary Attains a Milestone

A beneficiary attains a milestone on the last day of the qualifying month, e.g., for

the second milestone it would be the last day of the third month. Thus, if a beneficiary assigns a ticket to a State VR agency before the last day of the qualifying month in which the beneficiary attains the milestone, the State VR agency can receive that milestone payment.

D. Definition of the SGA Threshold Amount

The term SGA threshold amount refers to the level of earnings that SSA uses when it evaluates the work activity of an individual for disability entitlement purposes. Each year SSA calculates two SGA threshold amounts. One is for individuals who are statutorily blind and the other is for those who are not. The table at tab E provides the SGA threshold amounts beginning with calendar year 2002. (We will update this table as needed.)

12.5 Overview of the Payment Rates Under the Two EN Payment Systems

A. Basis for EN Payments

Payments under the two EN payment systems are based on the **payment calculation base (PCB)** for the calendar year in which the beneficiary attains the outcome payment month or the milestone. The PCB is the national average disability benefit payable under each of SSA's two disability programs.

In December of each year, SSA will calculate, and post to its web page, an SSDI and an SSI PCB for milestones and outcome payment months that beneficiaries attain in the following calendar year. SSA will use:

- the **SSDI PCB** when computing the payment due a State VR agency for serving a ticket beneficiary who receives benefits under the SSDI program (including a beneficiary who is concurrently entitled under the SSI disability program); and

- the **SSI PCB** when computing the payment due a State VR agency for serving a ticket beneficiary who receives benefits under the SSI disability program only.

Inasmuch as, payments under the EN payment systems are based on the PCB, a State VR agency that opts to serve a ticket beneficiary under its agency's elected EN payment system will not have to document any costs when it submits an EN payment request. Such costs are immaterial to a payment computation under the two EN payment systems.

B. Payment Rates Under the Outcome Payment System

A State VR agency may receive only outcome payments under the outcome payment system. The outcome payment rate for each of the 60 possible outcome payment months will equal 40 percent of the applicable PCB for the calendar year in which the beneficiary attains the outcome payment month, rounded to the nearest whole dollar. This is the maximum amount that the law allows.

Refer to the table at tab F for the calculated payment rates under the outcome payment system beginning with outcome payment months attained in calendar year 2002. We will update this table at the end of each calendar year.

C. Payment Rates Under the Outcome-Milestone Payment System

A State VR agency may receive both milestone and outcome payments under the outcome-milestone payment system.

1. Milestone Payment Rates

The payment rates for the four possible milestones are tied to a percentage of the PCB for the calendar year in which the beneficiary attains the milestone, rounded to the nearest whole dollar. The following table gives the percentage rates that SSA applies to each milestone.

### Payment Rate Applicable to Each Milestone

Milestone Number	Payment Rate (as % of the Applicable PCB)
1	34 %
2	68 %
3	136 %
4	170 %

Refer to Section I of tab G for the calculated milestone payment rates beginning with milestones attained in calendar year 2002. We will update this table at the end of each calendar year.

#### 2. Outcome Payment Rate

The outcome payment rate for each of the 60 possible outcome payment months will equal 34 percent of the applicable PCB for the calendar year in which the beneficiary attains the outcome payment month, rounded to the nearest whole dollar. This is less than the outcome payment rate payable under the outcome payment system because of a requirement in the law. This requirement specifies that the total payments under the outcome-milestone payment system for a beneficiary must be less than the total amount that would be payable under the outcome payment system for the same beneficiary.

Refer to Section II of tab G for the calculated payment rates for outcome payment months attained in calendar year 2002. We will update this table at the end of each calendar year.

#### 3. Reduction of Outcome Payments Because of the Receipt of Milestone Payments

If a State VR agency receives one or more milestone payments with respect to a ticket, then SSA will reduce each outcome payment it

makes to the State VR agency for that ticket by an amount equal to  $1/60^{\text{th}}$  of the milestone payment(s) made.

Example: If a State VR agency received a total of \$900 in milestone payments, each of the 60 outcome payments will be reduced by \$15.

It should be noted that if the outcome payment period begins before the beneficiary attains all four milestone payments, the State VR agency will not actually "lose" the unpaid milestone amount. That amount is part of the outcome payment base that may be paid to the State VR agency over the 60-month outcome payment period.

## 12.6 Overview of How a State VR Agency Elects an EN Payment System

### A. Initial Election of an EN Payment System

Before SSA implements the Ticket to Work program in a State, it will send a letter to each State VR agency advising it about the payment systems available under the Ticket to Work program. This letter will ask the State VR agency to choose an EN payment system to use when it elects to function as an EN with respect to an individual's ticket. The letter will also ask the State VR agency to return a signed EN payment system election form to MAXIMUS, as one of MAXIMUS' duties is to oversee and facilitate EN payments under the Ticket to Work program.

### B. When a State VR Agency Can Change Its Elected EN Payment System

After first electing an EN payment system, a State VR agency can make one change in its elected payment system at any time before the close of the 12<sup>th</sup> month following the **later** of:

- the month SSA implements the Ticket to Work program in the State; or

- the month the State VR agency makes its first EN payment system election.

Additionally, at least every 18 months, SSA will offer each State VR agency the opportunity to change its elected EN payment system.<sup>5</sup>

C. Effect of a Change in a State VR Agency's Elected EN Payment System

When a State VR agency decides to change its elected EN payment system, the effective date of the newly elected EN payment system will be the first day of the month following the month in which the State VR agency notifies MAXIMUS of the change.

- The newly elected EN payment system will apply to prospective ticket assignments only.
- It will have no impact on the payments the State VR agency may be due for serving beneficiaries who assigned their tickets to the State VR agency prior to the effective date of the change in its elected EN payment system.

## 12.7 Overview of Limitations on Payments

A. Splitting EN Payments

A beneficiary may assign a ticket to more than one provider at different times (including a State VR agency that has elected to serve the beneficiary as an EN). When this occurs and more than one provider qualifies for the same milestone or outcome payment, that payment may be shared (i.e., split) among the providers, but SSA will not increase the payment because it is split between two or more providers.

MAXIMUS is responsible for making an "allocation" recommendation with regard to what percentage of a particular payment will go to each provider.

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<sup>5</sup> The Director of the State VR agency, or Director's designee, must sign the initial election form and any request for a change in the agency's elected EN payment system.

MAXIMUS will base its recommendation upon the contribution of the services provided by each provider toward the achievement of the outcome or milestone. If an outcome payment is due and the providers have elected different EN payment systems, each provider's share of the outcome payment will be based on the EN payment rate for the payment system each provider elected at the time the ticket was assigned to each.

Example: If two providers had elected different EN payment systems and the payment allocation recommendation was for a 50/50 split, then:

- one of the provider's share of the payment would be based on 50% of the outcome-milestone payment system's rate for an outcome payment, i.e., 34% of the applicable PCB; and
- the other provider's share of the payment would be based on 50% of the outcome payment system's rate of 40% of the applicable PCB.

Of course, if a milestone payment is due and the two providers that had held the beneficiary's ticket at different times had elected different EN payment systems, then 100% of the milestone payment would go to the provider that had elected the outcome-milestone payment system. The other provider would not qualify for the milestone payment because it had elected to receive outcome payments only.

#### B. Adjustments to EN Payments

A State VR agency that serves a beneficiary as an EN can keep each milestone and outcome payment for which it is eligible, even though the beneficiary does not achieve all 60 outcome payment months. However, EN payments made to a State VR agency may be subject to adjustment (including recovery, as appropriate) if SSA determines that more or less than the correct amount was paid. This may happen, for example, because an EN payment was made in error or because:

- a payment has to be shared with an EN or another State VR agency that served the beneficiary as an EN; or
- a determination SSA makes about an individual's right to benefits causes the EN payment, or denial of an EN payment, to be incorrect.

Section 12.13 of this Chapter discusses how a State VR agency that serves a beneficiary as an EN can appeal a decision that SSA makes about an EN payment issue. A State VR agency should note that if the basis for an EN payment decision it receives is related to a determination about an individual's right to benefits, the State VR agency can not appeal the latter determination. However, if the individual (or individual's representative) appeals that determination, then the State VR agency may furnish any evidence it has which relates to the issues to be decided on appeal.

Examples of determinations about an individual's right to benefits include determinations that disability benefits should be suspended, terminated, continued, denied, or stopped or started on a different date than alleged.

C. Restriction Against Paying Under Both the Cost Reimbursement and EN Payment Systems with Respect to the Same Ticket

1. General Restriction

SSA cannot make payments under both the cost reimbursement payment system and one of the EN payment systems, with respect to the same ticket.

- If SSA pays a State VR agency under the cost reimbursement payment system with respect to a ticket, such payment precludes any subsequent payment based on the same ticket to an EN or to a State VR agency serving the beneficiary as an EN under its elected EN payment system.
- If SSA pays an EN or a State VR agency under its elected EN payment system with respect to a ticket, such payment

precludes any subsequent payment based on the same ticket to a State VR agency under the cost reimbursement payment system.

Note: Refer to the examples in Section 12.2A4 of this Chapter for a clear understanding of how payments are made in pipeline cases.

2. Which Provider SSA Will Pay When We Get a Cost Reimbursement and an EN Payment Claim for the Same Ticket

SSA will pay the provider that first meets the requirements for payment under its elected payment system if it gets a cost reimbursement claim and an EN payment claim for the same ticket.

- If two providers meet the requirements for payment under their respective payment systems in the same month, then SSA will pay the claim of the provider to which the beneficiary's ticket is currently assigned.
- If the beneficiary's ticket is not currently assigned to either provider, SSA will pay the claim of the provider to which the ticket was most recently assigned.

3. How to Determine if Payment Options Are Limited With Respect to a Ticket

A State VR agency may contact MAXIMUS to find out whether a beneficiary's ticket was previously assigned, and, if so, whether SSA has already made any payments with respect to the ticket.

a. Payment Options When a Ticket Was Not Previously Assigned

If MAXIMUS informs the State VR agency that a ticket was not previously assigned, then the State VR agency is free to choose to be paid under its

agency's elected EN payment system or the cost reimbursement payment system.

b. Payment Options When a Ticket Was Previously Assigned and Payment Has Been Made

If MAXIMUS informs the State VR agency that the ticket was previously assigned and that SSA has already made a prior payment with respect to the ticket, then the State VR agency must select a similar payment system.

Example 1: If the prior payment on the ticket was to a State VR agency under the cost reimbursement payment system, then the State VR agency that now seeks the ticket assignment must elect to be paid under the cost reimbursement payment system.

Example 2: If the prior payment on the ticket was under an EN payment system, then the State VR agency that now seeks the ticket assignment must elect to be paid under its agency's elected EN payment system.

c. Payment Options When a Ticket Was Previously Assigned But No Payment Has Been Made

If MAXIMUS informs the State VR agency that the ticket was previously assigned, but SSA has not yet made any payment(s) with respect to the ticket, the State VR agency is free to choose to be paid under its agency's elected EN payment system or the cost

reimbursement payment system. However, in exercising this option, the State VR agency should be aware of SSA's rules for deciding which provider to pay when SSA receives cost reimbursement and EN payment system requests for the same ticket (see Section 12.7C2 above).

## 12.8 Acceptable Evidence of Work or Earnings Required for EN Payments

### A. General Requirements

When a State VR agency requests a milestone or outcome payment, it must submit evidence that demonstrates the beneficiary had sufficient work or earnings to achieve the milestone or outcome.

**Exception:** If the State VR agency does not currently hold the beneficiary's ticket because it is unassigned or assigned to another provider, the State VR agency is not required to submit evidence of the beneficiary's work or earnings. However, if the State VR agency has access to such evidence and submits it, it will speed the decision on the payment request.

### B. Sufficient Evidence of Work or Earnings for a Milestone Payment

If a State VR agency requests a milestone payment, then the evidence of work or earnings that it submits must show that the beneficiary had gross earnings from employment (or net earnings from self-employment) that exceeded the applicable SGA threshold for each of the month(s) required to attain the milestone. (See Section 12.4C3 of this Chapter.)

### C. Sufficient Evidence of Work or Earnings for an Outcome Payment

If a State VR agency requests an outcome payment, the evidence of work or earnings that the State VR agency must submit depends on whether the individual's entitlement to Federal-based disability benefits from SSA has ended.

1. Entitlement Has Not Ended

If entitlement has not ended, then the evidence of work or earnings that the State VR agency submits must show that the beneficiary's monthly earnings were sufficient to preclude SSA from paying any Federal cash disability-based benefits for the month. (Section 12.4B1 of this Chapter.)

2. Entitlement Has Ended Because of Work or Earnings

If entitlement has ended for work or earnings, then the evidence of work or earnings that the State VR agency submits must be sufficient to show that the individual had gross earnings from employment (or net earnings from self-employment) in the month for which the outcome payment is being requested that are more than the applicable SGA threshold amount. (See Section 12.4B1 of this Chapter.)

D. Type of Evidence Needed to Establish Work or Earnings

1. Primary Evidence

If at all possible, a State VR agency should submit primary evidence of a beneficiary's work or earnings. This type of evidence stands alone in establishing the earnings. Sources of primary evidence include:

- unaltered photocopies or original pay slips or a similar document given to an employee by an employer as evidence of wages; or

- original signed and dated statements from the beneficiary's employer; or
- original signed and dated statements of earnings (or net earnings from self-employment) from the beneficiary if the amount of earnings is enough to reduce all Federal benefits to zero.

## 2. Critical Information

In addition, it is important that the evidence contain all of the following data elements:

- the beneficiary's name; and
- gross earnings (or net earnings from self-employment); and
- date money received (i.e., pay date if wages; monthly net earnings if self-employment); and
- the pay period (if the beneficiary is an employee).

## 3. Secondary Evidence

When primary evidence of work or earnings is not available, then evidence of lesser probative value may be submitted. This type of evidence requires additional investigative development by SSA's field offices and thus will slow the payment process. Examples of evidence with lesser probative value include:

- records from third party sources such as union records or State unemployment records, or
- Federal/State tax returns, or
- employee's business records.

## 12.9 Overview of When a Ticket Terminates and the Effect of Such a Termination

### A. When a Beneficiary's Ticket Terminates

Generally, a beneficiary's ticket terminates with the earliest of the following:

- the month in which an individual's entitlement to disability-based benefits ends for reasons **other than** work or earnings; or
- the month an individual who is entitled to widow(er)'s or surviving spouses benefits under the SSDI program attains age 65; or
- the month following the month an individual who is entitled to a disability-based benefit under the SSI program attains age 65.

Different rules apply if a beneficiary's entitlement to disability-based benefits ends for work or earnings. Under these rules, a ticket terminates with the **earliest** of the following:

- the month the individual attains full retirement age (beginning in 2003 SSA's full retirement age will increase gradually from age 65 to age 67); or
- the month the individual dies; or
- the month the individual becomes entitled to a non-disability-based benefit from SSA; or
- the month SSA makes a subsequent unfavorable disability determination (i.e., the month SSA denies a subsequent application for disability benefits, or the month SSA decides not to approve a request to reinstate disability-based benefits); or
- the month in which the individual again becomes entitled to a disability-based benefit based on a new application; or
- the month in which the individual is eligible to receive a new ticket because SSA approves the individual's request to reinstate disability-based benefits and finds the individual eligible for a new ticket.

#### B. Effect of a Beneficiary's Ticket Terminating

A beneficiary is no longer eligible to participate in the Ticket to Work program if the ticket terminates for any of the reasons listed above. In practical terms this means that:

- The beneficiary may not assign or reassign the ticket to a State VR agency in or after the

month the ticket terminates.

- Also, SSA will not pay a State VR agency for any milestones or outcomes the beneficiary achieves in or after the month in which the ticket terminates.

#### C. Eligibility for a New Ticket

There are two instances in which SSA will issue a new ticket to a beneficiary who meets the ticket eligibility requirements in Section 12.1A of this Chapter.

- The first situation would occur if SSA reinstates the individual's benefits under SSA's expedited reinstatement provisions that became effective in January 2001. These provisions allow an individual whose entitlement to disability-based benefits ended because of work and earnings to request that benefits be started again without having to complete a new application. To qualify for these benefits the individual must be unable to work because of an impairment(s) that is the same or related to the one(s) that allowed the individual to get benefits before. Also, the individual must request reinstatement within 5 years from the month the individual's entitlement ended because of work or earnings.
- The second situation would occur if the beneficiary files a new application for disability-based benefits and SSA approves it.

### PROCEDURES—TICKET ASSIGNMENTS AND PAYMENTS

#### 12.10 Getting a Ticket Assigned/Reassigned

##### A. Pipeline Cases - Beneficiary Decides to Assign a Ticket to the State VR Agency

A State VR agency should take the actions listed in the following chart if a beneficiary in a pipeline case decides to assign a ticket to the State VR agency.

- Inasmuch as this type of case is one in which the beneficiary becomes eligible for a ticket after signing an IPE (see Section 12.2A of this

Chapter), the chart does not require the beneficiary and State VR agency to develop and sign another IPE.

- Of course, before a State VR agency takes the following actions, it may wish to contact MAXIMUS (1-866-968-7842 or 1-866-833-2967 (TDD)) to verify that the beneficiary is "eligible" to assign the ticket. (See Section 12.3A of this Chapter.)

**Ticket Assignment Actions in a Pipeline Case if the Beneficiary Decides to Assign a Ticket to the State VR Agency**

Step	Action
1	Decide which payment system to select, i.e., the State VR agency's elected EN payment system or the cost reimbursement payment system.
2	<p>Complete Part A of Form SSA-1365 (see tab C), the State Agency Ticket Assignment Form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This part of the form requests general information about the State VR agency and beneficiary, including the date the IPE was signed.</li> <li>• Item 7 is where the State VR agency makes its payment system election for the beneficiary's case.</li> </ul> <p>Note: The current version of Form SSA-1365 instructs the State VR agency to complete and submit Form SSA-1366 (State Vocational Rehabilitation Ticket to Work Information Sheet) if the second block of item 7 is checked. Do not do this. Form SSA-1366 is now obsolete and future revisions to Form SSA-1365 will delete this instruction.</p>

<b>Step</b>	<b>Action</b>
3	<p>Have the beneficiary (or, if appropriate, the beneficiary's representative) and a State VR agency representative complete and sign Part B of Form SSA-1365.</p> <p>Note: The beneficiary's (or the beneficiary's representative's) signature is required on Form SSA-1365 in all pipeline cases in which the beneficiary decides to assign a ticket to the State VR agency. This is because it constitutes evidence of the beneficiary's decision to assign the ticket to the State VR agency. No pipeline case will be assigned to a State VR agency if the beneficiary's (or the beneficiary's representative's) signature is missing from the SSA-1365.</p>
4	<p>Mail or fax the completed and signed Form SSA-1365 to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MAXIMUS Ticket to Work  ATTN: Ticket Assignment  P.O. Box 25105  Alexandria, VA 22313</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Fax - 703-683-3289</p>

B. Pipeline Cases - Beneficiary Decides Not to Assign a Ticket to the State VR Agency

A State VR agency has no ticket assignment actions in a pipeline case in which the beneficiary decides not to assign a ticket to the State VR agency. In other words, the State VR agency does not have to complete any forms or contact MAXIMUS.

C. New Cases

In a new case, i.e., a case in which the beneficiary first becomes eligible for a ticket **before** signing an IPE, the State VR agency may contact MAXIMUS at the time it determines that a ticket beneficiary is eligible for VR services. MAXIMUS can then advise:

- whether beneficiary is eligible to assign/reassign the ticket; and
- whether the ticket was previously assigned to another provider; and
- whether there might be any restriction on the type of payment options available to the State VR agency.

If MAXIMUS advises that the beneficiary is eligible to assign/reassign the ticket, then once the State VR agency and beneficiary develop and sign the IPE, the State VR agency must take the actions described in the following chart to facilitate the assignment of the beneficiary's ticket.

### Ticket Assignment Actions in a New Case

Step	Action
1	Decide which payment system to select, i.e., the State VR agency's elected EN payment system or the cost reimbursement payment system. (See Section 12.7C3b and c of this Chapter if MAXIMUS advised that the ticket was previously assigned.)
2	<p>Complete Part A of Form SSA-1365 (see tab C), the State Agency Ticket Assignment Form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This part of the form requests general information about the State VR agency and beneficiary, including the date the IPE was signed.</li> <li>• Item 7 is where the State VR agency makes its payment system election for the beneficiary's case.</li> </ul> <p>Note: The current version of Form SSA-1365 instructs the State VR agency to complete and submit Form SSA-1366 (State Vocational Rehabilitation Ticket to Work Information Sheet) if the second block of item 7 is checked. Do not do this. Form SSA-1366 is now obsolete and future revisions to Form SSA-1365 will delete this instruction.</p>
3	<p>Have the beneficiary (or, if appropriate, the beneficiary's representative) and a State VR agency representative complete and sign Part B of Form SSA-1365.</p> <p>Note: If the beneficiary (or the beneficiary's representative) does not sign the form, submit the unsigned form, with the front (or cover) page and last (or signature) page of the IPE, to MAXIMUS (see step 4).</p>

Step	Action
4	<p data-bbox="548 233 1338 338">Mail or fax the completed and signed Form SSA-1365 (along with the front and last pages of the IPE, if needed) to:</p> <p data-bbox="712 380 1172 516">MAXIMUS Ticket to Work ATTN: Ticket Assignment P.O. Box 25105 Alexandria, VA 22313</p> <p data-bbox="712 558 1057 581">Fax - 703-683-3289</p>

## 12.11 Requesting That a Ticket Be Unassigned

### A. Actions Required

Section 12.3B of this Chapter discusses taking a ticket out of assignment. If the State VR agency stops providing services to a ticket beneficiary because it determined that the beneficiary is ineligible for VR services under 34 CFR 361.42, it requests, in writing, that the ticket be taken out of assignment by:

- contacting MAXIMUS by fax or mail; and
- requesting MAXIMUS to take the ticket out of assignment.

### B. MAXIMUS' Numbers and Address

When requesting that a ticket be taken out of assignment, use the following numbers/address.

Phone Number: 1-866-968-7842 or 1-866-833-2967  
(TDD)

Fax Number: 703-683-3289

Mailing Address: MAXIMUS Ticket to Work  
ATTN: Ticket Unassignment  
PO Box 25105  
Alexandria, VA 22313

## 12.12 Requesting Payment

### A. Requesting a Cost Reimbursement Payment

Follow the instructions in Chapter 5 (Submitting a Claim for Reimbursement) when requesting a cost reimbursement payment. These instructions require the State VR agency to:

- complete a VR provider claim form (i.e., Form SSA-199),
- secure the required SGA documentation, and
- submit the VR provider claim form and the required SGA and cost documentation to the Social Security Administration, using the address provided on the VR provider claim form.

### B. Requesting an EN Payment

Section 12.4 of this Chapter discusses the payments available under both EN payment systems and when a State VR agency may be paid for an outcome payment month or a milestone that a beneficiary attains.

#### 1. EN Payment Request Form

Request each outcome and milestone payment in writing using:

- the "Employment Network Payment Request Form" that is available at tab H or on MAXIMUS' website ([www.yourtickettowork.com/training](http://www.yourtickettowork.com/training)); or
- a facsimile that contains the same information as this form.

#### 2. Evidence of the Beneficiary's Work or Earnings

Also, submit documentation that the beneficiary had sufficient work or earnings to achieve the outcome or milestone payment being claimed. Section 12.8 of this Chapter discusses the required earnings documentation.

3. Forward to MAXIMUS

Mail or fax the payment request form and earnings documentation to MAXIMUS at:

MAXIMUS Ticket to Work  
ATTN: Ticket Payment  
PO Box 25105  
Alexandria, VA 22313

Or

Fax - 703-683-3289

12.13 Requesting Reconsideration of an EN Payment Decision

A State VR agency may request reconsideration of an EN payment system that SSA makes.

- The request for reconsideration must be in writing.
- The request must be submitted within 60 days of the date the State VR agency received the notice of SSA's decision.
- The State VR agency may submit any evidence it has in support of its request. However, if the decision that SSA made concerning an outcome or milestone payment is based on a related decision about an individual's right to benefits, the State VR agency cannot appeal that decision. (See Section 12.7B of this Chapter.)
- The State VR agency must mail or fax its request for reconsideration to MAXIMUS at:

MAXIMUS Ticket to Work  
ATTN: Ticket Payment  
PO Box 25105  
Alexandria, VA 22313

Or

Fax - 703-683-3289

When MAXIMUS receives the claim, it will review it, clarify any issues, and forward the request for reconsideration to OESP. OESP, in turn, will also review the request, undertake any needed development, notify the State VR agency of its decision in writing.

## OTHER TICKET RELATED ISSUES AND PROCEDURES

### 12.14 Handling Disputes with Ticket Beneficiaries

A State VR agency should follow the dispute resolution provisions in title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, if a dispute arises with a ticket beneficiary who is seeking services from, or has already assigned a ticket to, the State VR agency.

### 12.15 Referrals of Ticket Beneficiaries from ENs

#### A. Referral Agreement

An EN that holds a beneficiary's ticket assignment, may refer the beneficiary to a State VR agency for services. However, to do this, the EN and State VR agency must have an agreement that specifies the conditions under which the State VR agency will provide services. The agreement must be in writing and signed by both parties before the EN may refer a ticket beneficiary to the State VR agency.

Generally, a referral agreement will be a broad-based one, stating the conditions under which the State VR agency will provide services to referred beneficiaries. In addition, in an individual case, the State VR agency and EN may want to enter into an individualized agreement to meet the needs of a single beneficiary.

Each EN is required to send MAXIMUS a copy of any broad-based referral agreement it enters into with a State VR agency. In the course of verifying the establishment of such an agreement, MAXIMUS may contact the State VR agency.

#### B. Handling an Attempted Referral Without an Agreement

A State VR agency should take the following actions if an EN attempts to refer a ticket beneficiary it is serving to the State VR agency:

- Contact the EN to discuss the need to establish a referral agreement.

- If unable to negotiate a referral agreement with the EN, notify MAXIMUS that an attempted referral was made without an agreement. (MAXIMUS will contact the EN to explain that it cannot make a referral to a State VR agency without an agreement.)

C. Handling Disputes that Arise Between a State VR Agency and an EN

Generally, a State VR agency should resolve any disputes that arise with an EN as follows.

- First, look to the procedures for resolving disputes that may be spelled out in the referral agreement between the State VR agency and the EN.
- If there are no express procedures for handling disputes in the referral agreement, then look to any procedures for resolving disputes under contracts and interagency agreements provided for under State law or other administrative procedures.

If neither of these procedures exists, then the State VR agency or EN may ask MAXIMUS to recommend a resolution to the dispute. To do this:

- the request must be in writing, and
- it must include a copy of the agreement, information on the issue(s) in dispute, and information on the position of the State VR agency and the EN.

12.16 Suspension of Medical Reviews for Beneficiaries Who Are Using a Ticket

A. General Exemption from Medical Reviews

As stated in Section 12.1B of this Chapter, SSA will not initiate a medical review of a beneficiary's case while the beneficiary is "using" a ticket.

- A medical review is a review that SSA conducts periodically to determine whether or not a beneficiary's condition continues to meet SSA's definition of disability.

- Medical reviews are not the same as the work reviews that SSA conducts when a beneficiary goes to work after benefits start and SSA must decide if the work or earnings are sufficient to cause a reduction or stoppage in benefits while the beneficiary tests his/her ability to work.

#### B. Definition of "Using" a Ticket

The term "using" a ticket applies to a specified period after the ticket is assigned/reassigned during which a beneficiary is actively following an IPE/IWP and making timely progress toward self-supporting employment.

#### C. Timely Progress Reviews

A State VR agency will monitor a beneficiary's progress with an IPE, but MAXIMUS will decide if the beneficiary is actually "using" the ticket in accordance with SSA's rules. These rules provide two distinct definitions of timely progress within two defined time frames. These are:

- the initial 24-month progress period, during which the beneficiary must actively participate in the IPE; and
- subsequent 12-month progress periods, during which the beneficiary must demonstrate increased work activity and earnings.

##### 1. Initial 24-Month Progress Period and Review

The initial 24-month period begins with the month following the month the beneficiary first assigns the ticket. During this period the beneficiary is "actively participating" in the IPE when the beneficiary regularly follows the parameters outlined in the plan.

During the initial 24-month period:

- certain months are not counted (e.g., months in which the ticket is not assigned), and
- a new 24-month period will start, in certain ticket reassignment cases.

A State VR agency should notify MAXIMUS during the 24-month period if the beneficiary is not following the IPE. Then, at the completion of the 24-month period, MAXIMUS will conduct a progress review. During this review MAXIMUS will request information from the State VR agency concerning any times the beneficiary was not actively participating in the IPE.

2. Subsequent 12-Month Progress Periods and Reviews

Following the initial 24-month review, MAXIMUS will conduct additional 12-month progress reviews. During these reviews any month in which the ticket was not assigned will not count toward the review period, and MAXIMUS will look at the beneficiary's level of work or earnings. That level must meet the requirements outlined in the following table for the ticket to remain "in use."

**Level of Work or Earnings Required for the 12-Month Progress Reviews**

Review Period	Level of Work or Earnings Required
First 12-month period	Work at least 3 months and have gross earnings from employment (or net earnings from self-employment) that exceed the SGA threshold amount for non-blind beneficiaries. (May count work performed during the initial 24-month period.)
Second 12-month period	Work at least 6 months and have gross earnings from employment (or net earnings from self-employment) that exceed the SGA threshold amount for non-blind beneficiaries.

Review Period	Level of Work or Earnings Required
Third and subsequent 12-month periods	Work resulted in no Federal cash disability-based benefits from SSA for at least 6 months.

D. When the Reviews Will Stop

If MAXIMUS determines that the beneficiary is not making timely progress toward self-supporting employment, the ticket will be considered to be "not in use" and during these times MAXIMUS will not monitor the beneficiary's performance. However, a beneficiary's ticket can move back into "in use" status if certain requirements are met. When a beneficiary's ticket move back into "in use" status, MAXIMUS will again conduct periodic reviews of the beneficiary's progress toward self-supporting employment.

MAXIMUS will also stop monitoring the beneficiary's progress when the ticket becomes unassigned. A ticket that is "in use" does not immediately go into "not in use" status when it is taken out of assignment. Rather, it can stay in "in use" status for up to 3 months, while a beneficiary is looking for another provider. Then, at the end of this 3-month extension period, the ticket moves into "not in use" status, unless it is reassigned.

If any of the following events occur, the ticket will also move out of "in use" status:

- the ticket terminates (see Section 12.9 of this Chapter); or
- the beneficiary attains the 60<sup>th</sup> outcome payment month (or would have attained it in those cases in which SSA makes payments under the cost reimbursement payment system.).

E. Effect of a Ticket Moving into "Not-In-Use" Status

A ticket's movement into "not in use" status affects SSA decision to conduct a medical review

only. It does not affect a beneficiary's right to benefits. Nor, does it affect a State VR agency's right to payments or, for that matter, whether the ticket is or can be assigned/reassigned.

#### 12.17 Annual Periodic Reports from MAXIMUS

In December of each year, MAXIMUS will produce a preliminary report for each provider from data in its system. The report will compile data from December 1 of the previous year through November 30<sup>th</sup> of the current year. Information on the report will include statistics on tickets accepted for assignment, tickets unassigned, EN payments requested and issued, and dispute filings. When a State VR agency receives its report, it should review it and notify MAXIMUS if there are any discrepancies.

Tab A - Sample Ticket Certificate (Form SSA-1359)  
Refer to [http://www.ssa.gov/work/Ticket/TicketImage\\_Desc.html](http://www.ssa.gov/work/Ticket/TicketImage_Desc.html)  
To get accessible text of the Sample Ticket Certificate

**Social Security  
Administration**

**Ticket to Work  
and  
Self-Sufficiency**

---

Ticket Number  
123-45-6789TW

---

Claim Account Number                      987-65-4321 W

---

Issue Date:

---



This ticket is issued to you by the Social Security Administration under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program. If you want help in returning to work or going to work for the first time, you may offer this ticket to an Employment Network of your choosing or take it to your State vocational rehabilitation agency for services. If you choose an Employment Network and it agrees to take your ticket, or if you choose your State agency and you qualify for services, these providers can offer you services to help you go to work.

An Employment Network provides the services at no cost to you. The Social Security Administration will pay the Employment Network if you assign your ticket to it, and the Employment Network helps you go to work and complies with other requirements of the Program. An Employment Network serving under the Program has agreed to abide by the rules and regulations of the Program under the terms of its agreement with the Social Security Administration for providing services under the Program. Your State agency can tell you about its rules for getting services.

*James B. Bunnhair*

Commissioner of Social Security

**Tab B – Ticket to Work Phase-In Locations**

<b>Phase 1 Locations (First Selections—01/2002)</b>	<b>Phase 2 Locations (First Selections—11/2002)</b>	<b>Phase 3 Locations (First Selections—11/2003)</b>
Arizona	Alaska	Alabama
Colorado	Arkansas	American Samoa
Delaware	Connecticut	California
Florida	District of Columbia	Guam
Illinois	Georgia	Hawaii
Iowa	Indiana	Idaho
Massachusetts	Kansas	Maine
New York	Kentucky	Maryland
Oklahoma	Louisiana	Minnesota
Oregon	Michigan	Nebraska
South Carolina	Mississippi	North Carolina
Vermont	Missouri	Northern Mariana Islands
Wisconsin	Montana	Ohio
	Nevada	Pennsylvania
	New Hampshire	Puerto Rico
	New Jersey	Rhode Island
	New Mexico	Texas
	North Dakota	Utah
	South Dakota	Virgin Islands
	Tennessee	Washington
	Virginia	West Virginia
		Wyoming

**STATE AGENCY TICKET ASSIGNMENT FORM  
TICKET TO WORK AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM**

**Instructions** - This form must be completed to record that a beneficiary who is a ticket holder has decided to assign the ticket to a State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agency. The form must be completed by both the State VR agency representative and the ticket holder or, as appropriate, the ticket holder's representative. The State VR agency will submit this form in lieu of submitting the Individualized Plan for Employment. The ticket holder or his/her representative, as appropriate must sign this form to confirm the decision to assign the ticket to the State VR agency. The State VR agency will either send or fax the completed and signed form to:

**Mail -** **MAXIMUS Ticket to Work** **Fax - 703-683-3289**  
**ATTN: Ticket Assignment**  
**P.O. Box 25105**  
**Alexandria, VA 22313**

**A. To be Completed by State VR Agency (after verifying the beneficiary has a ticket which may be assigned to the State VR agency)**

1. Enter the State VR Agency's name	Enter the State VR Agency's Employer Identification Number (EIN)
2. Ticket Holder's Name (Last, First, Middle Initial)	3. Ticket Holder Number (This is the Social Security Number on the ticket with the TW suffix.) _____ TW _____
4. (a) What vocational objective or employment outcome is outlined in the ticket holder's Individualized Plan for Employment?	
(b) What is the expected type of job? (Check one EEOC classification below):	
<input type="checkbox"/> Executive/Managerial	<input type="checkbox"/> Skilled Craft
<input type="checkbox"/> Professional	<input type="checkbox"/> Secretarial/Office/Clerical
<input type="checkbox"/> Sales	<input type="checkbox"/> Service Worker
<input type="checkbox"/> Technical/Paraprofessional	<input type="checkbox"/> Operative
5. (a) Date the Individualized Plan for Employment was signed by ticket holder his/her representative (month, day, year)	5. (b) Date the Individualized Plan for Employment was signed by the State VR agency counselor (month, day, year)
6. In the Individualized Plan for Employment, date established for meeting the vocational objective chosen (month, year)	
7. What SSA Payment system is the State VR agency selecting with respect to this ticket holder? (Place an X in the appropriate box.)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cost Reimbursement Payment System	
<input type="checkbox"/> State VR agency's employment network payment system of record (If this option is selected, submit Form SSA- 1366, "State Vocational Rehabilitation Ticket to Work Information Sheet" or equivalent information with this SSA- 1365)	

**B. To be completed by the ticket holder or ticket holder's representative**

Check the appropriate box and sign your name in the space provided below.

I am the ticket holder to whom the information on this form applies.

I am the representative of the ticket holder to whom the information on this form applies and am acting on his/her behalf.

**I understand that once my ticket is assigned to the State VR agency, I have the right to retrieve my ticket for any reason. I acknowledge that the information contained on this form relating to the ticket holder is correct, and that I do willingly agree to assign my ticket to the State VR agency shown above.**

**I understand that if I make, or cause to be made, a representation which I know is false concerning the requirements of the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program, I could be punished by a fine, or imprisonment, or both.**

Ticket Holder or Representative Signature	State VR Agency Representative Signature
Date	Date

## **Tab C – Form SSA-1365 (Back)**

### **Collection and Use of Information from Your Ticket Assignment Form Privacy Act Statement**

The Social Security Administration is authorized to collect the information on this form under Public Law 106-170 and section 1148 of the Social Security Act. While furnishing the information on this form is voluntary, failure to provide all or part of the information on this form to the Social Security Administration will prevent assignment of your Ticket to Work to the provider of services chosen by you. The information provided on this form will allow the Social Security Administration to monitor the progress of a participant in the Ticket to Work and Self -Sufficiency Program.

Although the information you furnish on this form is almost never used for any other purposes than stated in the foregoing, there is a possibility that for the administration of the Social Security programs or for the administration of programs requiring coordination with the Social Security Administration, information may be disclosed to another person or to another government agency as follows: (1) to another Federal, State, or local government agency for determining eligibility for a government benefit or program; (2) to a Congressional office requesting information on behalf of the program participant; (3) to a third party for the performance of research and statistical activities; and (4) to the Department of Justice for use in representing the Federal Government.

The information you provide may also be used without your consent in automated matching programs. These matching programs are computer comparisons of Social Security Administration records with records kept by other Federal agencies or State and local government agencies. Information from these matching programs can be used to establish or verify a person's eligibility for federally funded or administered benefit programs and for repayment of payments or delinquent debts under these programs.

We may also use this information you give us when we match records by computer. Matching programs compare our records with those of other Federal, State, or local government agencies. Many agencies may use matching programs to find or prove that a person qualifies for benefits paid by the Federal government. The law allows us to do this even if you do not agree to it.

Explanations about these and other reasons why information you provide may be used or given out are available in Social Security offices. If you want to learn more about this, contact any Social Security office.

### **Paperwork Reduction Act Notice**

We are required by law to notify you that this information collection is in accordance with the clearance requirements of 44 U.S.C. §3507, as amended by Section 2 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. We may not conduct or sponsor, and you are not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid Office of Management and Budget control number. We estimate that it will take you about 3 minutes to complete this form. This includes the time it takes to read the instructions, gather the necessary facts, and answer the questions.

Refer to Accessible Portable Document Format of SSA 1365 form at <http://www.ssa.gov/work/ServiceProviders/SSA1365.pdf>

Tab D - SSA-L1360 - Ticket Assignment Notice for a  
Beneficiary-Page 1

Social Security Administration  
Important Information

Social Security  
Administration  
P.O. Box 1433  
Alexandria, VA 22313  
Date:  
Ticket Number:

John Doe  
Address  
Street  
City ST ZIP  
Bar Code

Thank you for taking part in the Ticket to Work program. Our records show that effective (insert ticket assignment date) you have assigned your ticket to:

(insert name, address and  
telephone number of the  
employment network or State  
VR agency)

This means you and this organization have agreed to work together on your employment plan.

Report Changes That May Affect Your Ability to  
Participate in Your Employment Plan

If you are not able to continue participating in your employment plan with (insert the name of the employment network/State VR agency), you should report this right away to MAXIMUS Inc. MAXIMUS is the Program Manager who is helping us to manage the Ticket to Work program. Their toll-free number is 1-866-968-7842 (YOUR TICKET) or TDD 1-866-833-2967 (TDD 2WORK).

Tab D - SSA-L1360 - Ticket Assignment Notice for a  
Beneficiary-Page 2

Medical Reviews

We usually conduct a medical review from time to time to see if you are still disabled under our rules. As long as you are using your ticket, we will not begin a medical review. However, if we started a medical review before you assigned your ticket, we will complete the medical review.

If you have questions about the rules for "using a ticket" you should contact MAXIMUS.

If you get a "Notice of Continuing Disability Review" or a "Disability Update Report" in the mail, please contact your local Social Security office. Tell them that you are taking part in the Ticket to Work program. They will tell you what you need to do.

How the Ticket to Work Program Affects  
Benefits

Please contact MAXIMUS if you have questions about how taking part in this program affects your benefits. MAXIMUS can arrange for you to talk to a Benefits Specialist or someone who can:

- answer any questions you have about how work or earnings may affect your benefits;
- give you information about Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) work incentives; and
- give you information about other Federal and State programs that can help you go to work.

The enclosed fact sheet will tell you about the services of Benefits Specialists.

If You Have Any Questions

Please contact MAXIMUS at 1-866-968-7842 (1-866-YOUR TICKET) or TDD 1-866-833-2967 (1-866-TDD 2WORK) if you have any questions about this letter or the Ticket to Work program.

For more information about Social Security or SSI work incentives, you may request the booklet titled *Working While Disabled—How We Can Help.*

Tab D - SSA-L1360 - Ticket Assignment Notice for a  
Beneficiary-Page 3

(Situation 1a)

We invite you to visit our website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) on the Internet to find general information about Social Security. If you have any specific questions, you may call us toll free at 1-800-772-1213, or call your local Social Security office at:

(insert telephone number of local Social Security office)

We can answer most questions over the phone. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you may call our TTY number, 1-800-325-0778. You can also write or visit any Social Security office. The office that serves your area is located at:

(insert address of local Social Security office)

If you do call or visit an office, please have this letter with you. It will help us answer your questions. Also, if you plan to visit an office, you may call ahead to make an appointment. This will help us serve you more quickly when you arrive at the office.

(Situation 2a)

We invite you to visit our website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) on the Internet to find general information about Social Security. If you have any specific questions, you may call us toll free at 1-800-772-1213. We can answer questions over the phone. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you may call our TTY number, 1-800-325-0778. If you prefer to visit one of our offices, please check the local telephone directory for the office nearest you. Or call us and we can give you the office address. Please have this letter with you if you call or visit an office. It will help us answer your questions.

(insert name)

Deputy  
Commissioner  
for  
Operations

Enclosure:  
Fact Sheet on Services of Benefits  
Specialists

**Tab E – SGA Threshold Amounts Beginning With  
Calendar Year 2002**

<b>Calendar Year</b>	<b>SGA Threshold Amount Beneficiary Is Not Statutorily Blind</b>	<b>SGA Threshold Amount Beneficiary Is Statutorily Blind</b>
<b>2002</b>	<b>\$780</b>	<b>\$1,300</b>
<b>2003</b>	<b>\$800</b>	<b>\$1,330</b>
<b>2004</b>	<b>\$810</b>	<b>\$1350</b>

**Tab F – Payment Rates Under the Outcome Payment System  
Beginning With Calendar Year 2002**

<b>Calendar Year Outcome Payment Month Attained</b>	<b>Outcome Payment Rate SSDI or Concurrent (SSDI/SSI) Ticket Beneficiary</b>	<b>Outcome Payment Rate SSI Only Ticket Beneficiary</b>
<b>2002</b>	<b>\$ 317</b>	<b>\$ 191</b>
<b>2003</b>	<b>\$ 328</b>	<b>\$ 196</b>
<b>2004</b>	<b>\$ 336</b>	<b>\$ 199</b>

**Tab G – Payment Rates Under the Outcome-Milestone Payment System Beginning With Calendar Year 2002**

**I. Milestone Payment Rates:**

Calendar Year Milestone Attained	Milestone Payment Rate SSDI/Concurrent (SSDI/SSI) Ticket Beneficiary				Milestone Payment Rate SSI Only Ticket Beneficiary			
	Milestone #				Milestone #			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
2002	\$269	\$538	\$1,077	\$1,346	\$162	\$324	\$648	\$811
2003	\$279	\$557	\$1,114	\$1,393	\$167	\$334	\$668	\$835
2004	\$286	\$572	\$1,143	\$1,429	\$169	\$339	\$678	\$847

**II. Outcome Payment Rates:**

Calendar Year Outcome Payment Month Attained	Outcome Payment Rate SSDI or Concurrent (SSDI/SSI) Ticket Beneficiary	Outcome Payment Rate SSI Only Ticket Beneficiary
2002	\$269	\$162
2003	\$279	\$167
2004	\$286	\$169

**Note:** Under the outcome-milestone payment system, SSA will reduce each outcome payment that a State VR agency receives for a ticket by an amount equal to 1/60<sup>th</sup> of any milestone payments that the State VR agency received for that same ticket.

Tab H - Employment Network Payment Request Form

MAXIMUS

EMPLOYMENT NETWORK PAYMENT  
REQUEST FORM

To ensure prompt an

To ensure prompt and accurate payment to your Employment Network, please complete the following form and attach acceptable evidence of Beneficiary earnings.

I. Employment Network Information

1. EN Organization Name

---

---

2. EIN Number (Tax ID Number)

---

II. Ticket Information

3. Beneficiary Name

---

4. Beneficiary Social Security Number

---

III. Payment Information

5. This payment request is:

A. Outcome Payment Method  Outcome Number

---

B. Outcome/Milestone Method.

Milestone Number (please circle all that apply) 1  
2 3 4

Outcome Number \_\_\_\_\_

IV. Earnings Information

6. Type of earnings documentation submitted  Copy of  
Pay Statement  W2  
 Other, Please Describe

7. The verification of earnings submitted is to qualify  
my request for EN payment(s) for the month of:

---

	Year:		Year:
	Year:		Year:
	Year:		Year:

