



# The Ticket to Work Program and Becoming a Tribal Employment Network

## What is the Ticket to Work Program?

The Ticket to Work Program is a free and voluntary program that supports career development for people with disabilities. The program is for people who receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and are interested in going to work or increasing their earnings. It increases choices for beneficiaries to obtain employment support services from public and private providers, employers, and other organizations. These organizations include federal programs operated by tribes and tribally owned-and-operated entities and businesses. The program seeks to enable beneficiaries to reduce or eliminate their reliance on disability benefits and to replace benefits with earnings from employment.

## Who is eligible for services under the Ticket to Work Program?

Participation in the program begins when an eligible beneficiary (age 18-64) receives services from a state vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency or when the beneficiary and an Employment Network (EN) agree to work together on reaching the beneficiary's employment goals. An EN makes an agreement with Social Security to provide or coordinate delivery of necessary employment services to eligible beneficiaries. In American Indian and Alaska Native communities, ENs can be federally funded tribal programs. These include tribal workforce agencies, tribal VR services projects, or tribal-owned businesses, such as tribal gaming enterprises.

## Why should tribal entities become ENs?

American Indians and Alaska Natives experience disability more often than the general population in America. This presents increased needs for tribal governments, service

providers, and businesses to meet. The Ticket to Work Program offers a valuable option for addressing some of these needs.

The National Congress of American Indians passed a resolution in 2010 endorsing the Ticket to Work Program and encouraged tribal nations to apply. The resolution states, "NCAI urges tribal programs and tribal nations to apply for employment network status through the Ticket to Work initiative of the Social Security Administration" (NCAI Resolution ABQ-10-017).

## How does the Ticket to Work Program work?

The Ticket to Work Program is performance-based. An EN receives payments when the person with a disability achieves certain employment outcomes.

ENs are encouraged to reach out to SSI and SSDI beneficiaries and disability advocates in their communities. ENs are not required to serve everyone unless otherwise mandated by other legislation or rules governing their organization. ENs elect which specific services to offer, in which geographical area, and who to serve.

## When will tribal ENs be paid?

When a beneficiary working with an EN achieves certain paid employment outcomes, the EN submits evidence of the person's earnings to SSA's Ticket Portal, along with a request for payment. Once the request is approved, the payment is deposited electronically into the EN's financial institution.

## Where can I find more information about becoming a tribal EN?

To learn more about becoming an EN, email [ENService@ssa.gov](mailto:ENService@ssa.gov). For additional information on Social Security's employment support programs, visit the Ticket to Work service provider website at [yourtickettowork.ssa.gov](http://yourtickettowork.ssa.gov) or [www.ssa.gov/work](http://www.ssa.gov/work).

## Contacting Social Security

The most convenient way to do business with us from anywhere, on any device, is to visit [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov). There are several things you can do online: apply for benefits; get useful information; find publications; and get answers to frequently asked questions.

When you open a personal *my* Social Security account, you have more capabilities. You can review your *Social Security Statement*, verify your earnings, and get estimates of future benefits. You can also print a benefit verification letter, change your direct deposit information, request a replacement Medicare card, get a replacement SSA-1099/1042S, and request a replacement Social Security card (if you have no changes and your state participates).

If you don't have access to the internet, we offer many automated services by telephone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call us toll-free at **1-800-772-1213** or at our TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**, if you're deaf or hard of hearing.

A member of our staff can answer your call from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. We ask for your patience during busy periods since you may experience a high rate of busy signals and longer hold times to speak to us. We look forward to serving you.



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Social Security Administration

Publication No. 05-10160

June 2021 (Recycle prior editions)

The Ticket to Work Program and Becoming a Tribal Employment Network  
Produced and published at U.S. taxpayer expense