



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

## What is the Ticket to Work program?

The Ticket to Work program is an employment support program for people with disabilities who receive benefits from the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program or the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, and who are interested in going to work or increasing their work. The program's goal is to increase opportunities and choices for Social Security disability beneficiaries to obtain vocational rehabilitation, employment, and other 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.

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

Participation in the Ticket to Work program begins when a person with a disability reaches an agreement with an employment network (EN). An EN is an entity that enters into an agreement with the Social Security Administration to either provide or coordinate the delivery of the necessary employment services to Social Security disability beneficiaries. In American Indian and Alaska Native communities, employment networks could be federally funded tribal programs, like a tribal workforce agency, a tribal vocational rehabilitation services project, or a tribal-owned business, such as a tribal gaming enterprise.

## Why should tribal entities become ENs?

In 2003, the National Council on Disability reported that about 27 percent of the American Indian population between the ages of 16 and 64 identified themselves as disabled. This represents hundreds of thousands of tribal members with disabilities.

According to the 2010 Census, 5.2 million people in the United States identified as American Indian and Alaska Native, either alone or with one or more other races. Out of this total, 2.9 million people identified as American Indian and Alaska Native alone, and 2.3 million reported being American Indian and Alaska Native with one or more other races.

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 operate?

The Ticket to Work program is performance based. An EN receives payments when the person with a disability achieves certain employment outcomes. The program is voluntary for the person and for the employment network. The person with a disability chooses if, when, and where to participate in the program.

Tribal employment networks who become ENs have access to the basic contact information for all eligible people who are in their service area and who aren't working with another EN. ENs are encouraged to reach out to SSI and SSDI beneficiaries and disability advocates in their communities. ENs aren't required to serve everyone unless otherwise mandated by other legislation or rules governing their organization. ENs elect which specific services they want to offer, which people they're capable of serving, and in which geographical area they'll work.

## When will tribal ENs be paid?

When a beneficiary achieves certain paid employment outcomes, the tribal EN submits a request for payment and evidence of the

person's earnings to the program's Operations Support Manager. A notice will be sent when the request has been approved. The payment will then be 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, contact us at **[ENService@ssa.gov](mailto:ENService@ssa.gov)**, or call us toll-free at **1-866-584-5180**.

For additional information on Social Security's employment support programs, visit the Ticket to Work website at **[www.yourtickettowork.com](http://www.yourtickettowork.com)** or Social Security's special website at **[www.socialsecurity.gov/work](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work)**.

## Contacting Social Security

The most convenient way to contact us anytime, anywhere is to visit **[www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov)**. There, you can: apply for benefits; open a *my* Social Security account, which you can use to review your *Social Security Statement*, verify your earnings, print a benefit verification letter, change your direct deposit information, request a replacement Medicare card, and get a replacement 1099/1042S; obtain valuable information; find publications; get answers to frequently asked questions; and much more.

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.

If you need to speak to a person, we can answer your calls from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. We ask for your patience during busy periods since you may experience a higher than usual rate of busy signals and longer hold times to speak to us. We look forward to serving you.



Securing today  
and tomorrow

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