

Your Ticket To Work: What You Need To Know To Keep It Working For You

2008



Congratulations on your participation in the Ticket to Work program. We hope this publication is informative and helps you to be successful in the program.

Will you review my disability while I am in the program?

We will not review your disability as long as you make progress in the Ticket to Work program. (If we started a disability review before you began participating, we will finish the review.)

How does Social Security determine my progress?

Your participation in the Ticket to Work program began when you gave your ticket to an employment network or state vocational rehabilitation agency. With their help, you developed an employment plan. While you are in the program, we will review your progress in achieving the goals of your employment plan from time to time.

MAXIMUS, Inc., a company that is helping Social Security manage the Ticket to Work program, will review your progress. The first review will take place after you have been in the program for 24 months. After that, MAXIMUS will conduct reviews every 12 months. The following table explains how we determine whether you are making progress.

Review period	Determining progress
First 24 months	Assumed unless we hear otherwise from your employment network or state vocational rehabilitation agency
Third year	"Substantial earnings"* in three out of 12 months
Fourth year	"Substantial earnings"* in six out of 12 months
Fifth year	Earnings high enough in six out of 12 months to cause federal benefits to stop

**In 2008, earnings of \$940 or more (\$1,570 if you are blind) are considered substantial.*

What happens if I am not making progress?

If we find you are not making progress in the Ticket to Work program, we may begin a medical review to see if you are still disabled. You may continue in the ticket program even if we find that you are not making progress.

What if I start making progress again?

Whenever you think you are making progress again, you should contact MAXIMUS.

They will make a decision about your progress. As long as you meet the disability rules, qualify to participate in the Ticket to Work program and start making progress as expected, we will not begin a medical review.

We have Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) organizations in many areas. Their staff members can help you understand how work affects your benefits. Get more information about WIPAs on the next page.

What if I disagree with MAXIMUS' decision?

If you disagree, you can ask Social Security to review the decision. You have to ask for a review of the decision within 30 days after the date MAXIMUS sends you its decision. Once we make our decision, we will send you a letter explaining it.

(over)

Working and your benefits

How do my earnings affect my benefits?

If you have completed your trial work period, are working and have substantial earnings, we may stop your Social Security disability benefits. We can quickly start your benefits again if your income drops or you stop work.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments are reduced until your earnings have reached a high enough level that you no longer receive your benefit payment. We count less than one-half of your earnings when figuring your SSI payment amount.

For a complete explanation of how earnings affect your benefits, get a copy of *Working While Disabled—How We Can Help* (Publication No. 05-10095). You can get a copy by visiting our website, www.socialsecurity.gov, or calling our toll-free number, **1-800-772-1213** (TTY **1-800-325-0778**).

What happens to my health benefits?

Your Medicare may continue for at least 8½ years after you start to work if you are still disabled. Your Medicaid may also continue, depending on the state where you live and the amount of your earnings.

Where can I get more information?

Contact your WIPA organization. These organizations are located across the country to answer the questions you have about working. Talking with one of their counselors will help you understand and use the work incentives available to you.

WIPA organizations give information and assistance to people who are receiving Social Security or SSI disability benefits and attempt to work.

Their staff will:

- Contact people getting Social Security or SSI disability payments (and their families) to tell them about ways that Social Security supports work efforts;
- Help people understand how work affects their payments; and
- Explain what other federal, state and local supports are available to help people with disabilities who work.

For more information about WIPA organizations and other support programs, visit Social Security's website, www.socialsecurity.gov/work, or call the toll-free number.

For more information about the Ticket to Work program, call MAXIMUS, Inc., toll-free at **1-866-968-7842**, or TTY **1-866-833-2967**. Or, you can visit the website, www.yourtickettowork.com.