**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) -**

**Ticket to Work Program and Employment Networks**

**Q: What is the Ticket to Work Program?**

**A:** The Ticket to Work (Ticket) Program offers Social Security beneficiaries with disabilities the choices, opportunities and supports needed to find and keep employment, increase their earnings, and reduce their dependence on benefit payments. It is free and voluntary for eligible individuals (Ticketholders) ages 18 through 64 who receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. The program’s goal is to ensure that Ticketholders have access to vocational rehabilitation, employment, and other support services from public and private providers and other organizations. Ticketholders may obtain services from employment providers including State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies and Employment Networks (ENs). The primary goal of the program is to get Ticketholders to become self-sufficient thus reducing a Ticketholders reliance on public benefits.

**Q: What is an Employment Network (EN)?**

**A:** An EN is an entity approved by Social Security to either provide or coordinate the delivery of services to Ticketholders. People with disabilities receiving benefits from SSA can use the Ticket issued to them by SSA to obtain services and supports to assist them in preparing for work and entering and maintaining employment. SSA pays approved providers of services, referred to as "Employment Networks" (ENs), when the Ticket Holders they are serving go to work and achieve designated levels of work and earnings. The EN can be a single entity, a partnership/alliance (public or private), or a consortium of organizations collaborating to provide services that meet the requirements of the Ticket program. A Ticketholder may assign their Ticket to an EN of their choice to obtain employment related services or supports.

**Q: What is a Public Workforce EN?**

**A:** Public Workforce ENs may be State Workforce Agencies (SWA), State Workforce Development Boards (SWDBs), Workforce Development Areas (WDAs), Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), American Job Centers (AJCs), and American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation agencies (AIVR). Find out more at [**www.yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/web/ttw/workforce**](http://www.yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/web/ttw/workforce)**.**

**Q: How many Workforce system entities across the nation are currently operating as ENs?**

**A:** There are approximately 110 workforce system ENs. This represents nearly a fifth of all ENs, but less than 5 percent of the AJCs nationwide, indicating the tremendous potential for increasing participation in the Ticket program. Of the 110 Workforce ENs, about 100 are currently “active,” meaning they have accepted Tickets and received Ticket payments within the last year. In Fiscal Year 2016, these ENs received a total of $7 million in payments from Social Security.

**Q: Do ENs receive any upfront funding to become an EN?**

**A:** Agencies do not receive any upfront funding to become ENs; however Workforce ENs can access an abundance of EN start-up resources created through the U.S. Department of Labor’s Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grants. Ticket program funding is performance-based, so ENs receives payments when a beneficiary achieves a certain level of work and earnings. The value of the Ticket can be significant when employment outcomes are achieved, potentially adding up to over $28,000 per individual. Workforce entities are well positioned to be ENs since they are already funded to provide supports to job seekers, including individuals with disabilities.

**Q: How does an EN get paid?**

**A:** ENs receive payments through automated systems put in place by Social Security. A payment may be requested via the on-line Ticket Portal (with documentation of Ticketholder earnings), or payments may be received automatically through a process called E-PAY, when earnings and other payment criteria are met for any Ticketholders assigned to an EN. All payments are deposited electronically in the ENs financial institution. Find out more at [**www.yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/web/ttw/payments**](http://www.yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/web/ttw/payments)

**Q: How do you know if your organization is ready to become an EN?**

**A:** An EN Self-Assessment tool has been developed to help workforce entities decide if they meet the requirements to operate successfully as an EN and determine the type of EN model most appropriate for their organization. The tool can be found at: [**www.yourtickettowork.com/web/ttw/resource-documents**](https://www.yourtickettowork.com/web/ttw/resource-documents)**.** Through the DEI a Workforce EN Planning Guide was created to assist Workforce entities with selecting the most appropriate EN model. While developed for DEI grantees, this Planning Guide provides useful information to any AJC interested in becoming an EN. Click on the following link to access the Planning Guide and other helpful resources, [**https://dei.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/03/29/14/43/LP\_EN\_Workforce\_Resources\_and\_DEI\_Sustainability**](https://dei.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/03/29/14/43/LP_EN_Workforce_Resources_and_DEI_Sustainability). Contact the EN Development Team within the Ticket Program Manager (TPM) at **enoperations@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov** for more information.

**Q: What is an Administrative Employment Network and how do they work?**

**A:** An Administrative EN is a group of service providers organized under a single EN of Record. The EN of Record completes the EN Request for Application (RFA) and assumes responsibility for ensuring that all requirements in the RFA and Ticket Program Agreement (TPA) are met. The EN of Record typically manages the Ticket program administrative functions while the partners provide Ticketholder services, however there are various Administrative EN models. The partners may be other ENs and/or non-ENs qualified to deliver appropriate services. Learn more information about Administrative Employment Networks here: [**https://yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/web/ttw/administrative-en**](https://yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/web/ttw/administrative-en)**.**

One Administrative EN that works with many AJC’s in the public workforce systems is:[**https://americandreamen.org/**](https://americandreamen.org/)

**Q:** **What is a Request for Application (RFA)?**

**A:** The EN Request for Application (RFA) explains the duties of an EN, requirements for award consideration, and how to apply to become an EN. The application process is streamlined for Workforce entities since they are automatically pre-qualified to become ENs and, unlike traditional applicants, is not required to submit business plans. More information can be found at: [**www.ssa.gov/work/enrfa.html**](https://www.ssa.gov/work/enrfa.html) and [**www.yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/web/ttw/workforce**](http://www.yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/web/ttw/workforce)**.**

**Q: What is a Ticket Program Agreement (TPA) and how does it work?**

**A:** The TPA is a business agreement between the EN and the Social Security Administration. On September 1, 2017 the TPA replaced the previous Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) and added new requirements including EN performance measures. Review the TPA Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) at [**www.yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/web/ttw/resource-documents**](http://www.yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/web/ttw/resource-documents)**.**

**Q: What are the benefits for becoming a Workforce EN?**

**A:** There are many advantages for becoming an EN.There is no fee to apply and the Ticket program provides a proven revenue source that can complement other state and Federal resources available to workforce entities. It can be easily integrated into current business models serving individuals with disabilities. The funding is discretionary, allowing for great flexibility with how ENs can use the income. Participating in the Ticket program and partnering with a state VR agency to provide services to Ticketholders supports state WIOA requirements to enhance partnerships and work with multiple service systems.

**Q: What is the process to become a Workforce EN?**

**A:** Public workforce entities that wish to become an EN should submit a streamlined RFA to the Social Security Administration based on the guidelines contained on the website. A TPA will be awarded when the application is approved. When EN training is completed and all EN employees in positions that will handle Ticketholder Personally Identifiable Information (PII) receive favorable suitability determinations from SSA, the workforce entity can begin operating as an EN and serving Ticketholders.

**Q: How does a Workforce EN find Ticketholders?**

**A:** Social Security uses many methods to connect beneficiaries with ENs, including webinars, social media, phone campaigns, and various targeted notices and materials. Ticketholders are encouraged to contact the Ticket to Work Help Line toll-free at 1-866-968-7842, (1-866-833-2967 TTY). Beneficiaries may also use the Find Help online tool at [**www.choosework.ssa.gov/findhelp/**](http://www.choosework.ssa.gov/findhelp/) to research or contact any EN.

The Ticket program also offers a Service Provider Outreach Toolkit at [**https://yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/related-resources/service-provider-outreach-toolkit.html**](https://yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/related-resources/service-provider-outreach-toolkit.html) to support the outreach and marketing efforts of ENs and VR agencies to promote the program to Ticketholders and disability-focused organizations. The materials include factsheets, posters, sample press releases, sample program language, videos, program branding and more. ENs are encouraged to download and use the library of logos, graphics and banners on their websites to demonstrate official involvement in the Ticket program. The materials are updated periodically and can be easily tailored to suit Workforce EN messaging.

ENs are also invited to author blogs and submit Ticketholder success stories, which may be selected for publication on the Ticket program websites. In addition, they may volunteer to be presenters on monthly national webinars. These are excellent ways to promote Workforce EN services and expertise to large Ticketholder audiences.

**Q: Where can I find out more about becoming an EN?**

**A:** To find out more about becoming an EN visit [**www.yourtickettowork.ssa.gov**](http://www.yourtickettowork.ssa.gov/web/ttw/en-home). You may also email Social Security’s EN Service Team (ENST) at **ENservice@ssa.gov** or call them toll-free at **1-866-584-5180**, (TTY **1-866-584-5181).** The EN Development Team within the Ticket Program Manager (TPM) is also available to answer questions, explain EN service models, and provide step-by-step assistance with the EN application and onboarding process. Contact them at **enoperations@yourtickettowork.ssa.gov**.