

The Ticket  
To Work And  
Self-Sufficiency  
Program

## Why You Should Read This Booklet

This booklet is for people who receive a *Ticket To Work And Self-Sufficiency* from the Social Security Administration. Please take a few minutes now to read the booklet, and then keep it in a safe place where you can refer to it as needed.

## How To Use This Booklet

The information in this booklet will answer your questions about the *Ticket To Work And Self-Sufficiency Program*. It also tells you where to go if you have other questions, and how to get additional help in using the ticket. If you have questions that are not answered here, you should call the Ticket Program Manager, **MAXIMUS, Inc.** at 1-866-968-7842 (TTY 1-866-833-2967).

## What Is The Program

The *Ticket To Work And Self-Sufficiency Program* (the Ticket Program) is a new part of the Social Security program. It is for people who receive Social Security Disability Insurance benefits and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits because of disability or blindness. The program offers you greater choices in getting the services you need to go to work or to earn more money. The goal of the program is to help you earn enough money so that you will not need Social Security cash benefits.

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## Part 1— How The Program Works

### How Does This Program Work

Under the Ticket Program, you can receive employment services, vocational services or other services to help you go to work or to earn more money. These services are provided by **Employment Networks**, which are private organizations or government agencies that have agreed to work with Social Security in providing employment services to beneficiaries with disabilities.

### Do I Have To Take Part In The Program?

No. The Ticket Program is **voluntary**. If you decide that you are not interested in the program, or that you are not able to work, you do not have to take part. Your decision will have no effect on your disability benefits. However, you should keep the Ticket we sent to you in a safe place in case you decide later to take part in the program

### How Do I Get Started?

If you are interested in taking part in the Ticket Program, you should call **MAXIMUS, Inc.** at 1-866-968-7842 toll-free (TTY 1-866- 833-2967). **MAXIMUS** is a private company that is working with Social Security to help us manage the program. **MAXIMUS** can answer most of your questions about the Ticket Program, and can give you the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of employment networks that are in your area.

### What Is An Employment Network?

Employment networks are public or private providers in your local community, and can include the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency. Employment networks are the organizations responsible for providing the services you need to work or to earn more money, **at no cost to you**. The Ticket Program gives you the opportunity to choose from a variety of employment networks.

An employment network may be a single organization that provides all of the services you need, or it can be a group of providers. It also may work with other individuals or organizations that are not part of the network to provide the appropriate services.

Before you give your Ticket to an employment network, you should carefully choose the one that you think can best help you to reach your employment goal. You are free to talk with as many employment networks as you choose without having to give one your Ticket.

For help in selecting an employment network, go to Part III in this booklet on *How To Get Help In Using The Ticket*.

Remember: An employment network cannot charge you for the services it provides.

## What Happens When I Contact An Employment Network?

You can call or visit any employment network. When you visit one, you should have your Ticket with you.

The employment network may need to obtain certain information about you from Social Security. You can expect them to ask certain questions about your disability, your work history, and other subjects. This is necessary so they can decide if they can help you. You should feel free to ask any questions about how the employment network can help you reach your employment goal.

## Can An Employment Network Contact Me?

Yes. An employment network may contact you to find out if you are interested in working with them. The employment network will give you detailed information to help you decide if you are interested in pursuing your employment goals with them.

## How Will An Employment Network Know That I Have A Ticket And That I Am Not Working With Another Employment Network?

**MAXIMUS** will be keeping a record of people who have Tickets who are not working with employment networks. **MAXIMUS** will give this information to employment networks.

## Do I Have To Work With A Particular Employment Network?

No. You and an employment network must agree that you can work together. If you cannot agree, you can take your Ticket and contact another employment network. You can do this at any time, even after you have signed papers with an employment network.

Of course, you should think carefully before you sign any papers or you decide to take your Ticket to another employment network.

## What Happens If An Employment Network And I Agree To Work Together?

First, the employment network will work with you to develop a plan that is right for you. The plan will include your goals for the type of work you want to do, and maybe for the amount of money you want to earn. The plan also will state exactly what services the employment network will provide to help you reach your goal. In addition, the plan will explain your rights under the program including:

- your right to take your Ticket back if you are not satisfied with the services you are receiving from the employment network; and
- information on the availability of advocacy services and help in resolving disputes through the State Protection and Advocacy System. You can find more information about these services on page 10 in *Part III— How To Get Help in Using The Ticket*.

You or your representative and the employment network will have to sign the plan before you can start working with the employment network under the Ticket program. The employment network should give you a copy of the plan, in an accessible format if you need it. If necessary, you can work with the employment network to change your plan if your situation changes.

When you sign the plan, you have "assigned" your Ticket to the employment network, and you cannot work with another employment network without taking your Ticket back.

### What If I Am Unhappy With The Employment Network?

There are several steps you can take if you are having a problem with your employment network. Under the Ticket Program, an employment network must have a process to deal with situations where clients are unhappy with them. If this process is not successful, you can call **MAXIMUS** and ask them to resolve your grievance informally. If **MAXIMUS** cannot resolve your grievance informally, it will report your grievance to Social Security.

If your Ticket has been assigned to a state vocational rehabilitation agency, the state agency must give you a description of the services available through the Client Assistance Program. It also must give you the opportunity to resolve your grievance through mediation or an impartial hearing.

Again, you also can request the Protection and Advocacy Agency in your state to help you if you are unhappy with an employment network. You can ask your state agency to help you at any stage of the grievance process.

## Part II— How The Program May Affect Your Disability Benefits

### What Happens When I Go Back To Work?

If you go back to work, or you begin to earn more money, you must notify your local Social Security office. The Ticket Program does not replace the special rules, called "work incentives," that help serve as a bridge between Social Security and SSI disability benefits and financial independence. These work incentives include:

- cash benefits while you work;
- Medicare or Medicaid while you work; and
- help with any extra work expenses you may have as a result of your disability.

You can find more information about Social Security and SSI work incentives in the booklet, *Working While Disabled— How We Can Help* (Publication No. 05-10095), which you can find at your local Social Security office, or you can request by calling our toll-free number **1-800-772-1213**. If you use the Internet, you can find this information, and other information concerning the employment of individuals who receive benefits because of disability, at [www.ssa.gov/work](http://www.ssa.gov/work).

## How Does Participating In The Ticket Program Affect Medical Reviews Of My Disability?

We ordinarily review your medical case from time to time to see if you are still disabled under our rules. If we find that you are no longer disabled, we may stop your benefits.

If you choose to participate in the Ticket Program, we will not conduct a medical review of your case as long as you meet certain requirements and assign your Ticket to an employment network. We will send you more information about these requirements after you assign your Ticket.

If you would like more information about these requirements now, you can call **MAXIMUS** at 1-866-968-7842 (TTY 1-866-833-2976).

## Part III— How To Get Help In Using The Ticket

### Where Can I Get More Information Or Advice?

In addition to **MAXIMUS, Inc.** here are two other important sources of information and advice about the Ticket Program that you should use. Your **State Protection and Advocacy System** can provide legal services, advocacy, and other services you may need in using the ticket. The **Benefit Planning, Assistance, and Outreach Program** are organizations that help you with work incentives and other employment support programs available to you. Call **MAXIMUS** to find out the State Protection and Advocacy System and Benefit Planning, Assistance and Outreach organization nearest you.

### How Can The Protection And Advocacy System Help?

Your **State Protection and Advocacy System** can help you in many ways. They can give you information and advice about vocational rehabilitation and employment services, including selecting an employment network under the Ticket Program. They can tell you about the special rules called, "work incentives" that are designed to support your efforts to work. The agency also can help you with any complaints against an employment network or other provider that is helping you work. And they can help you with problems concerning the employment plan you develop with an employment network under the Ticket Program.

To find out how to contact your local Protection and Advocacy Agency, call **MAXIMUS** at 1-866-968-7842 (TTY 1-866-833-2967).

### What Is The Benefits Planning, Assistance And Outreach Program?

Social Security has a new program, called the **Benefits Planning, Assistance and Outreach Program**, which could help answer questions about SSA's work incentives and help you make a decision about working.

Under this program, Social Security pays community organizations to provide information and assistance to persons who receive Social Security disability benefits or SSI benefits who are attempting to work. The program has benefit

specialists who can help you understand how work affects your payments, and explain what other federal, State and local supports there are to help people with disabilities who want to work.

For more information about this program, you may also call **MAXIMUS** at 1-866-968-7842 (TTY 1-866-833-2967).