

WIN News

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WIN Just in Time Services

The Work Incentives Network provides three different levels of services: Information and Referral (I&R), written individualized advisements, and Work Incentive Plan services. These services are delivered utilizing the “Just in Time” learning model based on the notion that people are only ready to learn something when the need to apply the information has arisen.

Another important piece of information we use in the referral process is whether services can be delivered by telephone or if they need to be delivered in person. Services by telephone are generally quicker as they can be delivered by any of the 11 WICs around the state. Services that need to be delivered in person are limited to the availability of the WICs in the participant’s area.

The Work Incentive Coordinators gather information from participants and their employment team and utilize the “Just in Time” model to determine which level of service is currently needed. WIN also combines the “Just in Time” model, service delivery method, and the referral date to determine priority status for connecting the participant to a specific WIC for services.

WIN also offers a hybrid-method of service delivery which can speed the referral process. Services are initiated by telephone with the first available WIC who may or may not be in the participant’s area. If the WIC is out of the participant’s area, WIN can eventually refer the participant to a local WIC for the delivery of the benefits and work incentives counseling services.

WIN is seeing an increase in referrals as are most employment programs for people with disabilities. WIN experienced a 35% overall increase in referrals from 2013 to 2014. There has been an additional 20% increase from 2014 to the first five months of 2015. WIN still is able to provide services to all eligible participants, but there may be a lag time between the referral to WIN and the actual initiation of services.

Question and Answer Corner

Gene Rada and Paula Fitch, WIN Project Managers

Welcome to the WIN Question and Answer Corner of the WIN Newsletter. Please send your questions or concerns about benefits and employment to Eugene.e.rada@state.or.us or Paula.fitch@state.or.us and title them QUESTION.

Question: If a client doesn’t use all nine months of his Trial Work Period (TWP) within a five-year period, does the nine-month TWP start over?

Answer: No, but the TWP months that end up outside of the rolling 60-month period will “fall off” and no longer count and those months that “fall off” will be usable again. Social Security looks at the last five years of work history, to check on the TWP status. Also, the TWP threshold changes each year. It was \$700 in 2009, \$720 in 2010, 2011 and 2012, \$750 in 2013, \$770 in 2014, and \$780 in 2015. Tracking the use of TWP can be confusing. Beneficiaries may have used all of the TWP without even knowing it. Work Incentives and benefits counselors work with the SSA to help determine TWP status for SSDI beneficiaries. TWP is not a SSI work incentive, so it doesn’t apply to SSI-only beneficiaries. For more information about TWP and other work incentive you visit the SSA Redbook at: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/>.

WIN continues to explore ways to improve access to our services without an increase in resources. Our goal is to lessen any anxiety participants may be experiencing about their benefits during their path to employment.

Please don't hesitate to contact Gene Rada at Eugene.e.rada@state.or.us or Paula Fitch at paula.fitch@state.or.us.

Success Story

The Bend Vocational Rehabilitation office referred a client to Jill Hannemann, the WIC at Abilitree, in November 2014 for benefits and work incentives counseling services. The participant had just received the clearance to work from the doctors and was eager to find a job.

The participant was in the Trial Work Period (TWP) with all nine trial work months available as well as the Grace Period. These two work incentives would allow her to retain her SSDI cash payment for a minimum of 12 months, allowing time to make sure the job was a success and also plan for the future months when her cash payment would cease.

She would retain her Medicare for a minimum of 93 months, but the offer of employer sponsored health insurance would help with the Medicare deductibles and co-payments.

The participant contacted Jill at the first of the year saying she was being offered a full-time manager position that would oversee offices in Central Oregon, earning nearly \$3,000 a month, plus benefits after 90 days.

The plan the participant and Jill had created provided the participant with the information necessary to decide whether or not to accept the job. This is a great picture of how SSA work incentives provide a "transition to work" for a beneficiary who wants to be financially independent.

Additional information on the different phases of SSDI can be found in the WIN Fact Sheet ["Social Security Work Incentives 2015 Quick Reference Guide."](#)

Training Schedule

Understanding SSA Benefits and Employment

The training is from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Dates and locations are below. Lunch is not provided

Salem

Was held March 12

La Grande

Was held June 9

Medford

Sept. 17, Self-Sufficiency Office, 800 Cardley St., Large Conference Room

Portland

Nov. 5, Portland State Office Building, 800 NE Oregon St., Room 1B

Pre-registration is required through the DHS Learning Center at <https://dhslearn.hr.state.or.us>. The course is C04631. For accommodation needs, please contact Paula Fitch at paula.fitch@state.or.us or 503-947-5469

OELN Social Security Benefits and Work Incentives

Click [here](#) for additional information and registration or go to <http://www.employment-first.org/> and click on calendar.

WINTip of the Month

1619b

This work incentive allows an SSI recipient to maintain Medicaid coverage and retain SSI "status" or eligibility if earnings alone or in combination with other income become too high for an SSI cash payment. A SSI recipient can earn up to \$33,098 in 2015 and still be eligible for Medicaid and not lose their connection to SSI. There are additional work incentives such as the Employed Persons with Disabilities program if earnings are too high to remain in 1619b status. Additional information about 1619b can be found in the WIN Fact Sheet ["What Happens to SSI and Medicaid When I Work?"](#)

This document can be provided upon request in alternate formats for individuals with disabilities or in a language other than English for people with limited English skills. To request this brochure in another format or language, email paula.fitch@state.or.us