



United States of America

Does the Ticket to Work really give people choice and control?



Presented by:
David A. Rust
Social Security Administration
Deputy Commissioner for
Retirement and Disability Policy

1



Ticket to Work & Work Incentives Improvement Act

- Ticket enacted in December 1999.
- Before Ticket, State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies were primary providers of employment-related services.
- Ticket expanded beneficiaries' choice of employment service providers to include other public as well as private entities (Employment Networks-ENs).

2



Enhanced Incentives to Test Ability to Work

- Expedited reinstatement
- Suspended medical disability reviews
- Expanded availability of medical benefits
- Required testing of SSDI Benefit Offset – \$1 for \$2 of earnings

3



Increased Choice and Flexibility of Services

- **Beneficiaries Provided Choice:**
 - whether to use the Ticket;
 - when time is right;
 - which service provider to use; and
 - what services/supports needed.
- **ENs (except for State VR Agencies) Provided Choice to:**
 - Accept Ticket; or
 - Reject Ticket
- **Both Must Agree** on Individualized Work Plan

4



Characteristics of Ticket Participants

- Sensory impairments
- Younger age
- Higher education
- SSDI beneficiaries
- Receiving benefits less than 60 months
- Prior work attempts

5



Early Ticket Usage Findings

- Low Ticket participation
- No significant increase in employment service usage with the Ticket
- Many Ticket participants' earnings resulted in benefits stopping, but only temporarily
- May have returned to work anyway – without the Ticket

6



Early EN Participation Findings

- By December 2005, 45% of ENs accepting Tickets
- Majority of Tickets assigned to State VR agencies
- By April 2007, more ENs dropping out than applying
- Lack of access to ENs was identified as core problem
- EN payment amounts were too low

7



Ticket Regulation Changes effective 21 July 2008

Changes focus on improving EN participation and services:

- Increased EN payments
- Partnership Plus - Allowed State VR agencies and ENs to both receive payments when services provided to same beneficiary at different times

8



Trends noted since Ticket changes

- New EN contracts increased from average of 5 per month to 34 per month
- More Public ENs
- Ticket assignment -- up by 167%
- Job starts -- up by 83%.

9



Thank You !



10