



MATEO Employment Services

Matching Abilities To Employment Opportunities

6947 Coal Creek Pkwy SE #754 Newcastle, WA 98059

425-894-3021

www.mateoemploymentservices.com

Ticket to Work Information Handbook 2024



Social Security's Ticket to Work program

Social Security's Ticket to Work (Ticket) program supports career development for people ages 18 through 64 who receive Social Security disability benefits (SSI or SSDI) and want to work.

This free and voluntary program helps people with disabilities achieve their employment goals and increase their financial independence by reducing their dependence on disability benefits.

Through the Ticket program, you work with a service provider to identify your employment goals, as well as the supports and services you need to succeed. You and your provider will develop an agreement called an Individual Work Plan (IWP), an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or an Individual Employment Plan (IEP), depending on the type of service provider you choose. This agreement is a roadmap to success, describing specific employment services, vocational rehabilitation services and supports to help you toward financial independence.

What is in your work plan?

Every work plan must include:

Career Planning: You and your service provider will discuss short- and long- term employment goals that your service provider determines are reasonable. This includes the amount of earnings when you start working and earnings you expect to earn when your plan ends.

Specific supports and services: Your service provider will describe short- and long-term supports they will provide to you. These may include career counseling, job search and job placement assistance, resume writing and benefits counseling. Once you start working, they can help you maintain employment, find another job or increase your earnings.

An agreement: Think of your work plan as a contract. Your service provider agrees to invest time and resources to help you become employable, find work, keep a job and maximize your earnings potential. You agree to follow the plan and make timely progress toward your goals. The work plan must be written and signed to show you both agree to the goals and services. Over time, if you're not satisfied with your plan or the supports, you may consider revising your agreement or changing service providers.

What is timely progress?

Timely progress means actively pursuing your employment goals. Social Security reviews your progress regularly to determine if you are making progress toward your work goals within timeframes that your service provider explains to you. Timely Progress Reviews not only consider your work and earnings, but also any training or education you've received to help you find and maintain employment. If Social Security determines you are not making timely progress

toward your goals, you are subject to a regularly scheduled medical Continuing Disability Review.

What are your responsibilities?

Your part of the agreement involves meeting responsibilities that your service provider will explain to you and help you meet. These differ for everyone depending upon your benefits and what is written in your plan. They include:

- Making timely progress in the program through a combination of education, training, and earnings
- Reporting your earnings to Social Security
- Reporting any change in status (employment, marital, living arrangements) to Social Security

Goals of the Ticket to Work Program 2024

- Your participation in the Ticket to Work and Self Sufficiency program is voluntary. It is important that you understand the program's goals before deciding whether it is right for you.
- The purpose of the Ticket Program is to offer you the supports you need to increase both your ability to work and your earnings and reduce your reliance on cash benefits.
- By agreeing to assign your Ticket and participate in the program, you are agreeing to make a steady effort to achieve these aims.
- Our role (EN), is to do all we can to help you reduce and ultimately eliminate your dependency on disability benefits and to earn a better living. You will not be penalized if you cannot become fully self-supporting. However, if you decide to use your Ticket you should make a commitment to try your best to achieve these goals.
- You can start out working part time during the first 9 months but should have a goal to become self-supporting in time. You should work towards having earnings of \$1110.00 *or* more a month by at least the 10th month after you start working with us. You should also have a goal to earn at least \$1550.00 or more a month after your first year of work.
- The Ticket program is not a good fit for every disability beneficiary. But, if you are committed to trying to work, we are here to provide you the services and supports to help you to do so.
- The goal of the program is to provide beneficiaries access to services and supports to increase a person's ability to work, earn more than benefits alone, and eventually become and stay self-supporting to the extent possible.
- Participation in the program is free and voluntary. ENs cannot charge for services provided under the program and there is no penalty if a beneficiary chooses not to participate.
- One benefit of participation is that regularly scheduled medical reviews are postponed

while a Ticket is in use as long as the beneficiary is making expected progress towards self-supporting employment as defined in the Ticket regulations.

There are safety nets to encourage beneficiaries to pursue work.

- Medicare, and possibly Medicaid, coverage may continue after cash benefits cease due to work and earnings.
- An Expedited Reinstatement to Benefits (EXR) allows a beneficiary who entered the workforce and lost his/her job within five years of benefit cessation to receive up to six months of provisional benefits. During this time Social Security will conduct a medical review to determine if the person is still eligible for benefits based on his/her disabling or medical condition.
- A beneficiary's signature on the Individual Work Plan (IWP) notes his/her consent to assign the Ticket to that EN. In agreeing to assign the Ticket, the beneficiary is committing to make a steady effort to achieve self-supporting employment. A beneficiary who is unable to become fully self-supporting will not be penalized.
- A beneficiary can start working and earning any amount during the first nine months of program participation; however, the beneficiary's goal should be to eventually become self-supporting. Program participants are expected to work towards monthly earnings at the Trial Work level no later than the 10th month after entering the program, and at the Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) level within 13 months of starting work.

Overview of Service

MATEO Employment Services is an Employment Network (EN) for the Social Security Ticket to Work Program. MATEO Employment Services provides Job Placement and Job Retention services for Ticket to Work customers.

Job Placement services are designed to assist clients in obtaining community employment in their preferred industry. Job Placement services include, but are not limited to, resume development, job search strategies, on-line application assistance, and interview preparation.

Job Retention services are designed to assist clients maintain employment. Job Retention services include, but are not limited to, assistance with new hire paperwork, new hire orientation, job coaching, and accommodations recommendations.

MATEO Employment Services is dedicated to providing services that are tailored to meet the goal of each client. Services are conducted virtually or at mutually agreed upon, public settings. Services are offered Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm. For local clients, Retention services will be provided during off shifts and weekends as needed. Clients can expect to receive direct services weekly/bi-weekly/monthly/or quarterly. All services are provided directly by MATEO Employment Services.

Mission

To ensure qualified individuals with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in employment by promoting inclusion in the workplace and providing support to achieve employment goals.

Person-Centered Philosophy

MATEO Employment Services is dedicated to providing consumer-driven services. To this end, persons receiving services will provide the primary direction in shaping their services and formulating their plan of service or support.

- The plan of service or support for persons receiving services shall be developed through a person-centered planning process.
- The plan is to be based on the expressed needs and desires of the persons served and their abilities, capabilities and the supports necessary to reach their goals.
- Services and supports are to be provided in environments that promote maximum independence, community inclusion and quality of life.
- Families shall be valued members of the support team.
- The process will fully explore the individual's and family's desires with respect to lifestyle decisions and hopes and dreams for the future.
- The process will encourage, support, and enable choice, control, independence and integration.
- The process will consider issues and concerns about the person's health, welfare, and safety.

Client Rights

In order to protect the rights of Ticket to Work clients, MATEO Employment Services will only conduct meetings in public settings mutually agreed upon by the Employment Specialist and client. Clients have the right to terminate service at any time if they are uncomfortable and/or feel their rights have been violated. MATEO Employment Services will provide clients with our written Client Rights policies at the intake meeting.

Client rights include the right to:

- Choose what EN you want to assign your Ticket to
- End services and unassign your Ticket at anytime
- File a complaint with Social Security by contacting the Ticket to Work Help Line
Call 1-866-968-7842 1-866-833-2967 (TTY) M-F 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. ET or local authorities
- To have information delivered in alternative formats
- Be treated with respect
- Have your confidential information protected
- Have an explanation of services provided
- Receive information and have a sufficient amount of time to make decisions
- Be free of discrimination
- Be free of harassment, retaliation, racism, and abuse
- Access information in your vocational file including receiving copies
- Receive a copy of your client rights, and grievance/complaint policy and procedure
- Be free from humiliation, neglect, financial, or any other form of exploitation

- Receive concurrent services (ex. Mental health, career counseling) with other agencies not funded by the Ticket to Work Program
- Compose your own service delivery team including but not limited to parent, sibling, counselor, and/or advocate

Confidentiality of Information

MATEO Employment Services always maintains a strict level of client confidentiality. Taking the following precautions to ensure client confidentiality:

- Client records are kept on a secured cloud-based database.
- All hard copy client records will be scanned and stored in their secured electronic file within 24 hours of signature collection.
- Records will be kept on file for 2 years following the completion of services.
- All electronic copies will be deleted from the cloud-based servers following the collection of evaluation data.
- All clients will sign a release of information specifying who MATEO has consent to speak to regarding client information and what information can be shared.
- All personal technology used by MATEO will be password protected to uphold client confidentiality.
- Any breach of confidential information will be investigated and reported.

Privacy

MATEO Employment Services works to ensure client privacy regarding meetings, discussions had with employers on behalf of clients, and in the community. MATEO will abide by the following policies to ensure maximum client privacy:

- All meetings between clients and MATEO will be held in, at minimum, a semi-private area (examples: Library common areas, library study rooms, WorkSource. Meetings may also take place in public areas such as coffee shops as long as the meeting location is agreed upon.
- At client request, meetings with MATEO will be scheduled in a private area.
- All meetings of a highly sensitive nature will be held in private conference room space.
- MATEO will respect client power and choice regarding disclosure of client disabilities to employers.
- MATEO will provide clients with information about the ADA and disclosure of their disability, so clients can make an informed choice about disclosure.

Freedom from abuse and neglect

MATEO Employment Services is committed to providing services to adults with disabilities that are free from abuse, exploitation, retaliation, humiliation, and neglect. Should MATEO suspect abuse, exploitation, retaliation, humiliation, or neglect, the proper authorities will be notified immediately.

Access to and the release of one's personal records

All clients of MATEO have the right to access to their personal records. The following procedures are in place to facilitate the release of client personal records:

- Clients and/or guardians can request access to their personal records at any time.
- MATEO will make an appointment with the client within 6 days, so that the client may review their record. MATEO will ensure that the meeting takes place in a private conference room. Or copies of records will be printed and mailed to the client for review.
- Clients may request copies of all or part of their personal records.
- MATEO will document when a review of personal records has been requested and occurred.

Informed Consent and expression of choice regarding service delivery

MATEO Employment Services adopts a person-centered philosophy to service delivery. We strive to individualize services according to each participant's unique skills, abilities, interests, and barriers. We believe service delivery is a partnership between the client and MATEO. We encourage the maximum involvement and participation of the client in their employment services. We expect clients to be active participants in their service delivery. We will provide information so that clients can make informed choices about their service delivery. The following policies are in place to ensure that clients are informed about the services they are participating in and have the power and knowledge to make informed choices regarding their service delivery:

- All possible clients will participate in an informational meeting to discuss the Ticket to Work Program, their vocational goals, interests, skills, abilities, and barriers. At this time MATEO will provide an explanation of the services provided. Clients will be encouraged to ask questions about the agency as well as the services provided.
- All clients who choose MATEO as their EN will participate in a planning meeting regarding a plan for services provided by MATEO. The planning meeting will consist of developing the (IPE) Individual Plan for Employment.
- All clients will sign an Authorization to Disclose Confidential Information form, specifying the type of information MATEO can share and/or gather prior to service delivery. If a client chooses to not sign the consent form, MATEO may not be able to provide services to the client.

Access or referral to legal entities for appropriate representation, if needed

MATEO Employment Services policy regarding a client's right to have access to legal representation is to provide clients with the following resources. Clients are encouraged to call 911 in the event of an emergency.

Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS)

The Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS) program helps people with disabilities who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and have a disability-related employment issue. PABSS advocates provide legal support, advocacy, and information to assist beneficiaries to resolve employment-related concerns. This may include:

- Navigating organizations and services to support your efforts to work and protect your rights such as appealing decisions of a vocational rehabilitation agency or EN
- Requesting reasonable accommodations in your workplace, college classes, training courses, and licensing programs
- Other disability-based legal issues that are barriers to employment, such as transportation

PABSS services are located throughout the 50 states, the District of Columbia, five U.S. territories, and the Navajo and Hopi reservations in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. They are free to everyone who receives Social Security disability benefits.

Investigation and resolution of alleged infringement of rights

Clients have the right to file a complaint regarding any rights infringements.

Clients have the right to ask for an investigation and resolution to a possible infringement of their rights.

Whenever possible, complaints are resolved between MATEO Employment Services and the client. If a client has a concern about their case, they are encouraged to talk with the Employment Specialist with MATEO Employment Services first, if possible, as the problem could be a miscommunication or a misunderstanding between the client and the Employment Specialist.

MATEO Employment Services takes the rights of clients very seriously. The following policies are in place to ensure a fair investigation and resolution of alleged infringement of rights:

- MATEO will conduct a thorough investigation of alleged infringement of rights by interviewing clients, staff involved and any witnesses.
- In cases where the owners are involved directly in alleged infringement of rights, clients are encouraged to use the resources provided.
- In all cases of alleged infringement of rights an incident report will be drafted.
- MATEO will comply with all external investigations and supports a transparent process for arriving at a conclusion.

Client Grievance Procedures

Every Ticket to Work client receiving services from MATEO Employment Services has the right, without the fear of reprisal, to bring forward a complaint, report a violation of any ethical codes, file a grievance, and or appeal a decision made by MATEO Employment Services personnel. Clients are encouraged to discuss issues directly with the person involved, if appropriate, in an attempt to resolve the issue. Customers can expect a response within 2 business days and a proposed resolution within 3 business days.

Conflict of Interest

MATEO employees maintain professional relationships with all of its stakeholders. The exchange of gifts, money, or gratuities is prohibited at all times. MATEO will inform the appropriate stakeholders of any situation that presents a conflict of interest for persons served or services provided.

Safety

Stakeholders shall maintain a safe and sanitary workplace that includes appropriate protective equipment, and is in compliance with applicable environmental, health and safety laws, rules and regulations. In addition, the following procedures are followed

- All direct service staff will receive Adult First Aid and CPR before providing direct service to clients and comply with current American Red Cross/American Heart Association standards for recertification.
- Each staff will have access to a first aid kit and a roadside emergency kit.
- Each staff will have access to each client's emergency contact via electronic records.

Request for Reasonable Accommodations

All participants have the right to request a reasonable accommodation to allow them to fully participate in services. Reasonable accommodations may either be requested verbally or in written form using the Request for Reasonable Accommodations form. Each participant has the right to receive documentation regarding the reasonable accommodation should the request be denied. Each request will be reviewed by the owner and every effort will be made to grant reasonable accommodations to allow for full accessibility of MATEO's services.

Criteria for Entering, Transitioning, and Exiting Services

Choose your EN

- Interview as many EN's as you would like
- Complete the IWP Individual Work Plan to assign your Ticket
- Services begin once your Ticket has been assigned to MATEO Employment Services

Transitioning

- You will transition from job placement services to retention services once you have secured employment

Exiting Services

- You can unassign your Ticket at anytime
- MATEO Employment Services may unassign your Ticket at anytime
 - Client's lack of participation in services
 - Unable to attain employment goals
 - Harassment, threats, or intimidation of any kind
 - Active substance use including the inability to pass a drug test.