



SOARing Together
Series 2: Letter 10 2021
Work Incentives

There are many myths around the idea that individuals with disabling conditions receiving Social Security Disability benefits (SSI/SSDI) or those starting the disability application process should not seek employment for fear of losing their current disability benefits or having the application denied. The real facts are that the Social Security Administration has made special rules to allow people receiving and applying for SSI/SSDI to work and still receive benefits.

As SOAR Specialists, the SSA Blue Book Listings is pretty familiar for identifying a covered disability. <https://www.ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook/AdultListings.htm>. Social Security also has the SSA Red Book for identifying services offered directly through Social Security for employment while or applying for disability benefits <https://www.ssa.gov/redbook/index.html>.

The SS Red Book contains a general description of the disability-related support programs. It will give guidance for SS benefits recipients who want to start or return to work without losing disability benefits. These programs, referred to as work incentives can be used for both the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and the Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) programs. *Working while Disabled: How We Can Help* is another great work incentive recourse published by Social Security. <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10095.pdf>.

Each of these work incentive programs are unique and individualized supports.

A wide range of programs are available, including incentives for individuals wanting:

- To go to college: Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE)
[-https://www.ssa.gov/oact/cola/studentEIE.html](https://www.ssa.gov/oact/cola/studentEIE.html)
- Support while working with an impairment: Impairment-Related Work Expenses (IRWE)
[-https://choosework.ssa.gov/library/2018-11-28-faq-impairment-related-work-expenses](https://choosework.ssa.gov/library/2018-11-28-faq-impairment-related-work-expenses)
- To test their ability to work: Trial Work Period (TWP)
[-https://www.ssa.gov/oact/cola/twp.html](https://www.ssa.gov/oact/cola/twp.html)
- To prepare for or maintain success with employment: Ticket to Work
[-https://choosework.ssa.gov/about/how-it-works/index.html](https://choosework.ssa.gov/about/how-it-works/index.html)

Encouraging employment can assist applicants by building self-worth and confidence, establish an active role in their communities, add meaning and structure to their daily life, and reach employment or career goals. Work can also be an important role of the recovery process of SOAR-**SSI/SSDI Outreach Access Recovery** methodology. Information can also be found on the SOARWorks website:

<https://soarworks.samhsa.gov/topics/employment-work-incentives>
<https://soarworks.samhsa.gov/sites/soarworks.prainc.com/files/EmploymentBrief-2020-508.pdf>
<https://soarworks.samhsa.gov/article/brief-overview-work-incentives>

This information is a brief introduction to an upcoming SOAR webinar, October 26th from 3:00pm-4:30pm. In this webinar, experts in Individualized Placement and Support (IPS) and benefits planning will share how SOAR providers can help SSI/SSDI beneficiaries access these services. They will also share some myth-busting facts about working while receiving SSA benefits. Presenters will provide basic information on SSA's work incentives, particularly the Ticket to Work Program and Employment Networks and how to access these employment resources in your communities. You will hear some success stories too! Please use the link below to register.

https://prainc.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_XJct3KhlQGItVq_2v9-fNA

*"People who **SOAR**, are those who refuse to sit back and wish things would change"* - Charles R. Swindoll

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