

Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Vocational Rehabilitation Program Social Security Work Incentives

Many people with disabilities who receive Social Security benefits don't know they can apply for rehabilitation services. There are special provisions in the Social Security regulations called "work incentives" that can help people return to work or even begin working if they have never worked before.

Persons approved for Social Security disability benefits are presumptively eligible for VR services. Individuals interested in VR services meet with a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to discuss the help needed to achieve their job goal. A Work Plan is developed if it appears that VR's help can assist the individual to work. The Work Plan is a "map to success," as it describes the job goal and the rehabilitation services needed to reach that goal.

The SSA work incentives help people with disabilities to work by allowing them to:

- ◆ Test their abilities to work for a specified period of time without losing any benefits. This is called a Trial Work Period.
- ◆ Deduct from earnings the cost of certain impairment-related work items or impairment-related work services. This may help people earn more while they continue to receive benefits.
- ◆ Continue to receive SSI cash benefits even after earnings exceed the Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) level.
- ◆ Continue Medicaid coverage, even though the total amounts they earn from work preclude the payment of SSI cash benefits, until the person's earnings are sufficient to replace lost benefits.

For more information about how work may affect disability benefits, you may call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213. You may also consult the SSA RedBook on Work Incentives at http://www.ssa.gov/work/ResourcesToolkit/redbook_page.html or visit the local Social Security office nearest you.