



RURALFACTS

SSA WORK INCENTIVES 2009

WORK RELATED PROVISION	CAPSULE DEFINITION	EFFECT ON SSI (SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME)	EFFECT ON SSDI (SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY INSURANCE)
TWP Trial Work Period	A TWP month is used in any month an SSDI recipient grosses \$700 or more (2009), up to a total of 9 months during any 5-year rolling period. TWP for self-employment = 80 hours work/month or \$700 net earnings.	NO	YES
SGA Substantial Gainful Activity	Monthly gross earnings of \$980 or more (2009) in competitive employment or a sheltered workshop or work activity center, after all exclusions are applied. Note: SGA is subject to yearly increases. 2009 SGA blind = \$1640/mo. SGA for self-employment = \$980 net/month	YES application only Earnings at the SGA level usually result in “Cessation of Disability” for the working SSDI recipient. Working SSI recipients have protection under 1619a. SGA is considered at time of application for <u>both</u> SSI and SSDI.	YES
EPE Extended Period of Eligibility	The period that begins at the end of an SSDI recipient’s 9 th trial work period (TWP) month and runs for 36 straight months. Disability status is protected even if SSDI recipient is not due a check because of earnings over SGA.	NO	YES If benefits terminated for SGA, and earnings fall below SGA during EPE, benefits resume.
IRWE Impairment Related Work Expenses	Expenses related to disability which are necessary for a disability benefit recipient to work, and which are paid for by the recipient. These expenses are then deducted from gross earnings when making SGA determinations for SSDI, and when figuring payment amounts for SSI.	YES Affects SGA determination at application only, and SSI benefit payable monthly. Deduct from gross earnings before figuring SSI due.	YES Affects only SGA determination for applicants and recipients. Has no effect on amount of SSDI check.
Subsidy or Subsidized Employment	Services and supports (monetary and non-monetary), which are received by a working disability recipient and which keep him/her employed. If dollar values were attached to these supports they would show what a disability recipient is actually earning as opposed to what he/she is being paid. Includes employer accommodations and job modifications. Subsidy can be provided by an employer and/or others (VR, job coaches, friends, and family, etc).	YES At medical disability reviews. Existence of subsidy can help protect a person’s disability status. Should be documented on an ongoing basis.	YES Affects only SGA determinations, and can help to prevent cessation of benefits. Subsidy allows SSDI recipient to have higher earnings without loss of SSDI. Subsidy information also helps at Continuing Disability Reviews (CDRS).
SEIE Student Earned Income Exclusion	The amount of gross earnings not counted by SSI for students under 22. \$1640/month in 2009, up to a total of \$6600 for the year	YES	NO

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Extended Medicare	For Title II recipients only who perform SGA after their TWP, and therefore lose their eligibility for benefits. Medicare can be continued for at least 39 months after the end of the TWP, although the person must pay the monthly premium. Medicare can continue even longer (4 additional years) with Medicare buy-in program and the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act provisions.	NO	No effect on benefit or loss of benefits. Presumes Medicare coverage for 39 more months.
1619a Special Benefits	For SSI recipients only. Takes effect when working SSI recipient grosses over \$980/month in 2009 and allows SSI benefits to be paid up to the amount of the “breakeven point.” (“Breakeven point” is the amount of earnings that reduce an SSI check to \$0.)	YES Allows SSI recipient to earn up to “breakeven point” before losing eligibility for payments.	NO
1619b Extended Medicaid	For SSI recipients only. Takes effect when working SSI recipient is not due any SSI payments because of earnings. Provides continued Medicaid until gross earnings surpass a “threshold” amount calculated for each state, and there are no extraordinary medical expenses. When there are extraordinary medical expenses, an “individual threshold” applies.	YES Permits SSI recipients who aren’t due SSI checks because of earnings to retain SSI eligibility and medical coverage under Medicaid.	NO
PASS Plan for Achieving Self Support	A way to exclude excess resources and various kinds of income from being counted for SSI if they are used to achieve a work goal that is certified as feasible by VR or private CRC. PASS must be approved by SSA before implementing. Can be written by anyone.	YES	NO However, by using a PASS, an SSDI recipient can become financially eligible for SSI and Medicaid.
BWE Blind Work Expenses	The cost of actual work expenses (e.g. FICA, lunches, guide dog, personal assistance, transportation, etc) is deducted before figuring countable income.	YES Affects SSI payment amount due.	YES Affects amount of earnings counted for SGA determinations.

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To apply for SSI or Social Security benefits, contact your local Social Security office or call 1-800-772-1213. The Social Security Administration publishes many informational brochures that explain benefits in detail. You can access this information through SSA’s website at <http://www.socialsecurity.gov>.

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