

# Ticket to Work

## What is Ticket to Work?

Ticket to Work, also known as “the Ticket,” is a work incentive for work age individuals with disabilities who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), or both. Ticket to Work is a free and voluntary program for individuals to receive supports that increase their financial outcomes towards financial independence.

Eligible individuals can assign their ticket to a state vocational rehabilitation program or an employment network (an organization that agrees to provide or coordinate delivery of services for Social Security beneficiaries) to receive supports including: career counseling, benefits advisement, vocational rehabilitation, case management, and more.

## What is an example of using the Ticket?

Luisa is a 23-year-old woman who receives SSDI, SSI, Medicare, Medicaid, and subsidized housing (Section 8/811). She lives in Alamogordo and wants to work; however, she doesn't know what she wants to do.

After calling the Ticket to Work Help Line through the TTY, she is determined eligible and begins intake with the New Mexico Commission for the Blind. She assigns her ticket to the NMCFB, and begins doing discovery to determine her interests, skills, education, and community. Through the discovery process which includes job shadowing, Luisa determines she wants to become a teacher at the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Alamogordo. She previously had enrolled and took general education courses at Eastern New Mexico University in Roswell and would need to complete a bachelor's degree including 24 hours of courses that prepare her for teaching individuals who are blind and/or visually impaired.

In order to reach her career goals, Luisa must complete her bachelor's in a program that meets eligibility for a blind and visually impaired teaching license, pass the required PRAXIS teaching exams, submit an initial application for the license, and ultimately become employed at the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Alamogordo.

During the two years that follow, Luisa accomplishes all of the above, while getting career support, benefits advisement, vocational rehabilitation, and additional services to become a licensed teacher for the blind and visually impaired in Alamogordo. Luisa, now licensed and employed at the NMSBVI in Alamogordo, earns \$47,000 per year, which means she no longer receives as many government benefits, however, her income and healthcare coverage allow her to live a more stable and meaningful life with less government paperwork.

## Resources

Ticket to Work website - <https://www.ssa.gov/work/>; Helpline # 1-866-968-7842 or 1-866-833-2967 (TTY)