

FAQ's from 9/26/2012 Conference Call – SSA / NYESS / OMH / LWIBs

Questions for SSA

In our county there are 2 ENs in addition to the state VR, in this new system is there a chance we will be splitting payments with another EN?

Yes, this is a possibility.

Does this eliminate overpayments? How are they handled?

By joining the NYESS Statewide Administrative Employment Network (AEN) which has more connections to SSA data, overpayments should be reduced.

Would this enable us to share phase 1 payments for services we perform for individuals also signed up with Access VR?

No.

Just to clarify...We are a One Stop who is a current EN with the DEI.

How do we handle this new NYESS?

The Local Workforce Investment Board will need to decide if they wish to participate as a partner in the NYESS AEN. If the LWIB decides to participate, a contract (Provider Agreement) with the Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene (RFMH) must be completed. In addition, each LWIB must since a Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement (CDNA). Data entry will continue in the NYSDOL's statewide case management system, OSOS.

Are we automatically grandfathered in?

No. Each of the 33 LWIBs must make individual decisions to participate and sign the documents mentioned in previous answer.

Which EN is then assigned the ticket?

If the LWIB or service provider is currently an EN and makes the decision to join the NYESS AEN, then the individual EN status will be put on hold by SSA. Any existing tickets that were assigned to the current stand-alone EN will be reassigned to the NYESS AEN.

The IWP requirements include some elements that One-Stops would not have in an employment plan, how is that addressed through auto assignment?

The example IWP found at <http://www.nyess.ny.gov/contracts/TTW/SSA-1370-IWP.pdf> illustrates required elements.

Specific elements that must be included, that might not currently be included in a DOL IEP are income goals – short-term, intermediate-term, and long-term.

This is not addressed through auto-assignment. Staff must work with the customer to develop and IEP/IWP that includes the required elements; retain a signed copy in hard file or an electronic copy; and indicate in NYESS/OSOS on the Ticket To Work tab the date the IEP/IWP was developed and click the radio button “”,

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I'm interested in knowing if customers will sign at least an addendum to our local plan, so they know they are making a choice for this additional service.

Recommendation is that all customers have the Ticket To Work program explained to them using the SSA approved brochure and obtain the customer's signature. This document will need to be stored in a locked file.

NOTE: Subsequent to the 9/26/2012 call, SSA informed OMH that obtaining the customer's approval via phone will be acceptable. The staff must indicate on the SSA approved brochure, the date of the call and receipt of the customer's verbal approval. A copy of this notated brochure should be sent to the customer with the original kept in the confidential file.

Will vendors have a direct connection to Maximus for questions, or will any questions go to the administrators of NYESS

No, vendors will not have any connection to Maximus for questions. Questions will be handled via the NYESS AEN.

How will consumer choice be addressed in the NYESS system?

Customer (consumer) choice is addressed in that multiple service providers who are partners within the NYESS AEN will still exist. Customers will be able to choose which service provider is best for them. The benefit is that there will not have to be an "unassigning" and "reassigning" of the customer's ticket as the Ticket is assigned to the NYESS AEN, not an individual service provider as a stand-alone EN.

Will SSA's EN list include NYESS, and will those current ENs who affiliate with the NYESS remain on the SSA website

ENs that have signed with NYESS will not remain on the SSA website.

What will our status as an independent EN be once we join NYESS?

Once a LWIB or CBO Service Provider becomes a NYESS AEN partner, the independent EN status is put on hold by SSA.

How can we track that we are receiving appropriate income from ticket-holders we are working with?

Disbursements of Ticket To Work revenues will display the services provided to a given individual by the specific service provider entity. In addition, the amount of the total revenue to each specific service provider entity will be shown by individual customer.

Will we have access to the EN Portal for NYESS customers as we have for our own?

As mentioned previously, no.

Questions for NYESS Administrative Employment Network
(AEN)

If we are a one stop and EN will we need to start adding service hours or just continue to take activity credits?

For the Ticket To Work revenue generation and sharing, it is not necessary to record service hours. All calculations for disbursement of revenue will be based upon specific activities that have been provided to the individual customer by all respective entities who have recorded activities into NYESS.

NOTE: Some State Agency contracts may require you to report Service Hours for agency management purposes. Specifics should be contained within the specific contracts

What is the time frame for this to start?

Realistically, ASAP. Each month that passes without service providers joining the NYESS AEN results in approximately \$1 million loss in revenue to our state.

Is there going to be a way to identify customers that are eligible for a Ticket but don't disclose that fact to staff when they come for services?

By explaining the Ticket To Work program to your customers, obtaining their signature on the SSA approved brochure, developing an IEP/IWP, and record all of the above in NYESS/OSOS, you have set the stage for Ticket To Work revenue generation. Based on an individual customer matching specific data characteristics recorded in the system, a file of SSNs will be routinely matched to SSA data. When there is a match, then the customer will be “enrolled” in the Ticket To Work program and behind the scenes tracking will occur to provided needed information to SSA for Milestone and Outcome payments.

If we use OSOS and are already an EN - do we have to take any action with NYESS?

Yes. The Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB) must sign both a contract (Provider Agreement) with RFMH and a Confidentiality of Non-Disclosure Agreement (CNDA) in order to become a partner in the NYESS AEN.

Would orientations be included in billing hours?

NOTE: For the Ticket To Work process, specific activities as entered into NYESS, not hours of service, will be used to calculate the disbursement of revenue generated.

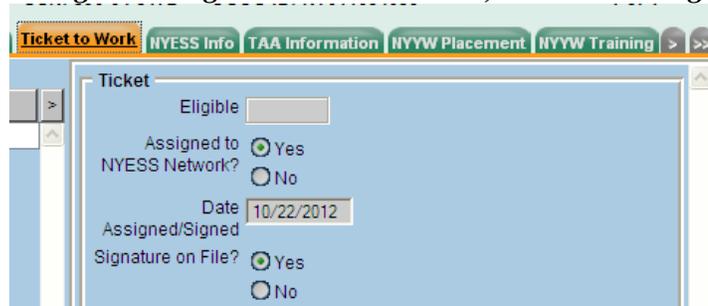
Final decisions on which services will count towards calculations for disbursement of generated Ticket To Work revenues will be finalized and shared with all partners.

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Describe the process of assigning a Ticket, from the beneficiary perspective, to the NYESS system?

The customer (current beneficiary or prospective beneficiary) will have the Ticket To Work program explained to them by staff. The customer will need to sign the SSA approved brochure. This brochure will be maintained in a confidential file at the local service provider's offices. NOTE: Subsequent to the 9/26/2012 call, SSA informed OMH that obtaining the customer's approval via phone will be acceptable. The staff must indicate on the SSA approved brochure, the date of the call and receipt of the customer's verbal approval. A copy of this notated brochure should be sent to the customer with the original kept in the confidential file.

Staff must indicate in NYESS on the Ticket To Work tab, that the assignment occurred, date the assignment/signature was obtained, and that the signature is on file.



The screenshot shows a web-based form titled "Ticket" with several tabs: "Ticket to Work", "NYESS Info", "TAA Information", "NYW Placement", and "NYW Training". The "Ticket" tab is active. The form contains the following fields and options:

- Eligible:
- Assigned to NYESS Network?: Yes, No
- Date Assigned/Signed:
- Signature on File?: Yes, No

When will this system be prepared to distribute payments to ENs that choose to participate in the AEN?

Once revenue is received, the RFMH will begin disbursing funds to the appropriate entities. NOTE: There is a lag between having a ticket assigned to the NYESS AEN and when Milestone and/or Outcome payments are received. RFMH does not expect to be lagging disbursements to the providers beyond reasonable business time to calculate and issue the payment checks.

I don't see the draft contract on the NYESS site. Please clarify where that is located so we can review it. Thank you.

The contract (Provider Agreement) exists on two websites.

For CBO Service Providers:

http://www.nyess.ny.gov/contracts/TTW/NYESS-Provider_Agreement_Final_Fillable_6-13-12.pdf

For LWIBs (note, LWIBs must also sign the CNDA):

<http://labor.ny.gov/workforcenypartners/nyess-provider-agreement.pdf>

<http://labor.ny.gov/workforcenypartners/nyess-confidentiality-and-non-disclosure.pdf>

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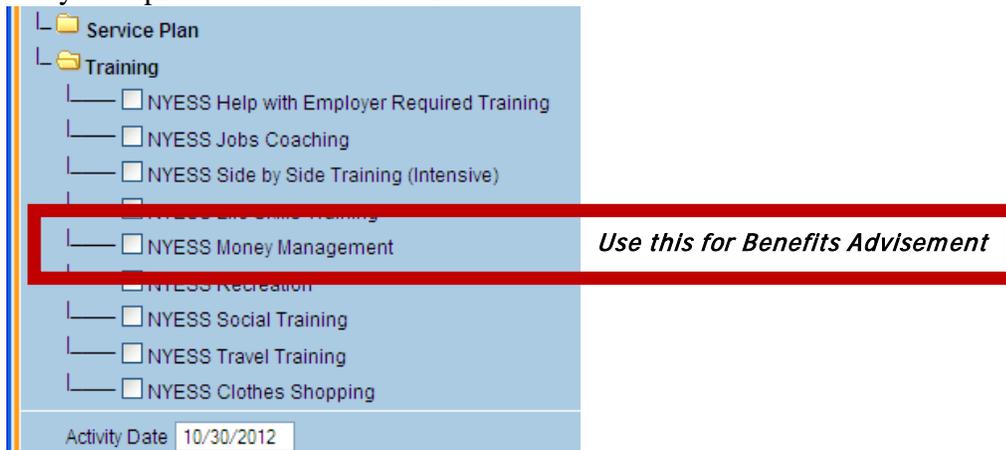
I have some concerns that services to Ticket Holders may be less individualized through this process, because of the greater number of service providers involved in serving individual Ticket Holders, and the message seems to be that the vendors will communicate a unified approach with each Ticket Holder. However, there seems to be no formal process to make this happen. Can we please discuss this?

There have always been both federal and state requirements for coordination of support services. Without a single case management system, integration / coordination of services has been next to impossible to accomplish. Using NYESS/OSOS, all entities serving a specific customer now has the ability to see who is providing which services and to coordinate, integrate and reduce duplicative service delivery to the customer.

Ticket assignment - NYESS will be using the e-Ticket assignment process, and will rely on having Individual Employment Plans on file, or using the IWP template from Maximus, and simply sending in SSNs en mass for assignment. Who will develop the initial plan for services? It seems this initial plan should be developed by the vendor with the most experience, as this directs the overall plan for services. Can we please discuss this?

Integration of services across all entities working with a distinct client can now be achieved as staff from one agency will be able to see what other agencies are working with the customer and which staff members are working with the client. This is expected to encourage communication between agencies and staff members. This open communication is expected to lead to the appropriate “lead” service coordinator without the need for Policy to determine this.

I see there is a list of NYESS activities in OSOS, however, SSA Disability benefits & Work Incentives advisement, a cornerstone of this work, is not listed, can you explain? Will this be a billable service?



In NYESS, the emphasis is on real-time delivery of Life Coaching, focusing on Asset Accumulation, and Money Management. Therefore, “SSA Disability Benefits and Work Incentives Advisement” are listed as “NYESS Money Management” (see screen shot above). NYESS/OSOS has the functionality to add additional services and/or rename current service descriptions to better describe the services that are being provided. OMH and DOL will work with all partners to ensure that appropriately labeled services exist in the system. If you feel there is a specific service that needs to

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be added or updated, start by using the “Contact Us” hyperlink on <http://www.nyess.ny.gov>.

On a webinar, John Allen stated that folks should assign any and all Tickets. Since the beginning of the Ticket program, the goal has been self-sufficiency...if Vendors are instructed to assign all Tickets, and there is no assessment process for determining which Ticket holders will be most appropriate for our services, and to sort out Ticket holders who have a goal of removing themselves with benefits, how is it that we are honoring the commitment to serve Ticket holders who have the goal of self-sufficiency? Please explain.

NYESS is not suggesting that all SS//SSDI customers should have their tickets assigned.

The process as described is to educate all customers, current beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries, about the Ticket To Work program and to obtain their permission up front to have their Ticket assigned to the NYESS AEN if and when appropriate. “If and when appropriate” is determined by the data entry into NYESS/OSOS and the individual customer demographics meeting specific parameters. Once these parameters are met, then a match with SSA data will occur and if the customer is eligible for the program, background tracking will occur and as Milestones and Outcomes are reached, revenues will be disbursed to all of the providers who contributed to the respective customer reaching their Milestones and Outcomes.

NOTE: This process has never been done before, so NYESS staff members are continually reviewing the process to improve the specific demographic parameters to be used to initiate the match to SSA data.

NOTE: In specific instances, such as Pre-Vocational Service, the beneficiary should not be enrolled in the Ticket To Work program.

How will NYESS and SSA make sure that a State Agency, EN, or a local service provider, is actually providing the job retention services to help assigned Ticket Holders maintain their jobs throughout the Ticket to Work Process, in order for them to become self supporting to meet the primary mandate of the TTW program.

This determination will be based on the IEP/IWP goals and the recording of appropriate service provision in NYESS/OSOS for an individual customer. Periodic program reviews and audits are always part of any such program.

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The NYESS AEN staff stated that the matching of SS numbers has identified approximately 60,000 ticket holders in NY State that could be eligible for TTW payments, with a potential of \$24 million in payments. Has it been determined that all of those individuals are actually working at an earnings level that would enable NYESS to collect the payments? If not, how do we know if that percentage is 75%, 50%, 25% or a very low number of only say, 5% or 10%? The answer is key to whether this program can sustain DRC salaries in the short time before the end of the DEI Grant, considering that there will be a delay in verifying the earnings through employment tax records, and therefore a delay in receipt of Ticket payments.

The projections were determined by OMH and SSA working together. The 60,000 ticket holders represent customers who have reached Milestones and/or Outcome levels of income based on wage record matching.

Benefits Planning is a key component of Ticket to Work success, will benefits planning be a countable activity/service included in the NYESS?

Yes, Benefits Planning as well as Life Coaching will be countable. Currently, this is recorded as “NYESS Money Management” activity.

If so, will certification of Benefits Planners be required to be credited for this activity/service?

Specifics on this are not yet available. RFPs for Life Coaching service provision are expected sometime in the 3rd quarter of Calendar Year 2013.

ACCES-VR is an integral partner in the NYS system. Will the role/partnership between ACCES and other agencies affiliated with NYESS be defined, and will an MOU be developed between ACCES and NYESS to ensure seamless services for consumers, including job development and follow along services. And importantly, how will cost reimbursement for services requested by ACCES-VR from NYESS ENs that do not have a contract through its Unified Contract Services (UCS) be addressed?

Waiting on finalization of MOU to provide answer.

What is the latest date that we can join NYESS and still be eligible for DRC funding from the 20%?

In order to generate enough Ticket To Work revenue for NYESS to assume the cost of DRCs following the end of the NYSDOL DEI grant on September 30, 2013, LWIBs will need to join the NYESS AEN as soon as possible. Delays in joining the NYESS AEN results in a project revenue loss of \$1 million per month for the State of NY.

How soon will an updated list of activities be added to the NYESS menu to cover the types of services that we offer (benefits counseling, career guidance, administration of career assessment tests, development of IWP, convening of an IRT, job referrals/development, counseling)?

Once specifics are decided upon and tested, it takes simply an overnight refresh of the behind the scenes tables.

Most services that will be used already exist in OSOS. Updated guidance to the LWIBs, One Stop Centers, and DRCs will need to be shared. The <http://www.nyess.ny.gov>

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Contact Us hyperlink is a universal place to submit your specific ideas. OMH and DOL are in constant communication re: issues such as this.

Will payment percentages be weighted differently during the tenure of the TTW milestone and outcome payments if CDO is providing the long-term and ongoing benefits counseling and crisis management?

When can we expect the development of the structured payment plan to be complete?

Will there be a chance for input from DRCs/Workforce ENs?

The proposal for calculating payments based on type of service provided and number of services provided is being finalized (10/4/2012) and will be shared with stake holders shortly for comment.

How soon will payments begin to flow?

There will be a 3 to 6 month lag between enrolling a customer as a Ticket To Work participant and Milestones and/or Outcomes being reached to result in revenues. Once revenues start, it is NYESS and RFMH's intent to immediately start disbursement to the appropriate providers for the individual who attained a Milestone or Outcome.

Will we need to wait for wages to be reported to the NYS Tax Dept or to the Social Security Administration?

The customers should be submitting their paystubs to SSA.

We will be using the wage information that SSA has available. We will not be waiting for the NYS Tax Dept wage files.

What kind of counseling are current NYESS providers giving to their TTW customers to inform them that they are assigning their TTW to NYESS?

A "Best Practices" area will be created on <http://www.nyess.ny.gov> as well as at <http://www.labor.ny.gov/workforcenypartners/tools.shtm> (Program Tools under NYESS/Ticket To Work) to share such information. Review of the SSA approved brochure by the staff member with the customer is the guidance that has been given at this time.

What is the process of "backing out" of the NYESS system if we are not receiving the funds we need or feel we have earned?

Frankly, OMH and DOL do not anticipate this happening. If a NYESS AEN partner should decide that they no longer wish to participate in the NYESS AEN, the contract between the specific provider and RFMH will be terminated.

The specific provider will need to work with SSA directly to have their stand-alone EN status returned to active.

The individual customer will need to determine whether or not they wish to have their ticket assignment remain with the NYESS AEN (other partners may still be serving the individual customer) or if they wish to "unassign" their ticket from the NYESS AEN and have it "reassigned to the specific provider who is choosing to revert to a stand-alone EN. Again, customer choice will be the deciding factor.