

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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April 14, 2009

Dear Community Rehabilitation Provider:

As a valued partner in our work to assist consumers served by the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services to find and keep employment, we want to encourage you to consider becoming an Employment Network under the Social Security Administration's Ticket-to-Work program. The new Ticket-to-Work regulations have the potential to bring additional revenue to Florida to provide employment support to Social Security beneficiaries. A concern voiced by many Community Rehabilitation Providers is the lack of available funding to provide supports to consumers after Vocational Rehabilitation closes the case and these funds once earned can be used for this purpose, or for any other.

Many SSA beneficiaries need some job support beyond VR case closure. Traditionally CRP's have had to do this with no additional revenue. Under the new regulations, Social Security Beneficiaries continue to have the opportunity to work with both VR and local Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP's). The regulations provide the potential follow-along revenue by making funding available to a CRP for ongoing supports to insure consumers retain employment after case closure. One way this occurs is when the consumer who is receiving either SSI or SSDI works at the level of Substantial Gainful Activity. Additionally there are other ways for you to be paid to support consumers you serve who are not part of the DVR/CRP partnership.

There are two events in May that will highlight this program. One in Tampa on May 1 at the Tampa Bay Workforce Center at 5701 E. Hillsborough in Tampa and one on May 4 in Miami at the Department of Children and Families, Agency for Persons with Disabilities offices in the Rhodes Building, North Towers, Rooms, 423-425, 401 NW 2nd Avenue, Miami. The conference features tracks for providers and for beneficiaries. For more information contact Leslie Barrett at 703-448-6155, x 228.

BILL PALMER

*Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation*

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Florida Relay Service: 1-800-955-8771 (TTY) • 1-800-955-8770 (Voice) • [www.rehabworks.org](http://www.rehabworks.org)

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If you cannot attend one of these events, or would like to learn more information about this opportunity, you can go to [www.ssa.gov/work](http://www.ssa.gov/work) for more information or call Joel Middleton at CESSI, SSA's Program Manager for Outreach and Recruitment. You can reach Joel at 703-448-6155,x 223. An application to become an employment network is available on-line.

It is important to note that becoming an EN will not change your contract relationship with VR; it will just expand our opportunities to serve consumers. The details of this "Partnership Plus" provision is outlined in the material I have provided for your review. A member of the VR Management Team in your area will be present to discuss the new Partnership Plus Memorandum of Understanding agreement that outlines how Florida VR will work with service providers who are ENs under the Ticket. One new feature is the opportunity for ENs to earn up to \$1000 by providing post-employment related job-related services that allow the consumer to retain employment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Palmer".

Bill Palmer, Director