

# The Successes & Challenges of Operating a Ticket to Work Program

Employment Network Survey Results

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## Abstract

Phone interviews were conducted with workforce development systems that are currently Employment Networks under the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program. The level of activity of the Employment Networks varied significantly, from having little or no activity in terms of Ticket assignments and revenue generation, to relatively significant generation. The purpose of the interviews was to identify the critical factors for those workforce development entities that have experienced success with the Ticket, as well as the challenges of those entities that have had little or no activity. Key factors in success included: a need for clarity among staff and customers regarding the Ticket to Work and how it operates; the importance of integration of the Ticket program within the administrative and operational structures of One-Stop Career Centers/workforce development systems; and clarity regarding which customers should be targeted for the Ticket program. Primary challenges include the lack of resources to support services prior to job placement and generation of revenue, lack of understanding by both staff and customers in terms of how the program operates, and individual's resistance to reducing reliance on cash benefits. These results will be used to inform the technical assistance delivery of the One-Stop Ticket Success Project.

*This report was written by La Tonya Green, Ph.D. Editorial assistance was provided by Kenya Crumel, Kathryn Henry, David Hoff, and Dalton Laluces. Interviews used as the basis of this report were conducted by Jennifer Bose, Andrea Bryant, Cori Di Biase, and Jennifer Polkes.*

# Executive Summary

The One-Stop Ticket Success Project is an initiative funded under a contract from the US Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration, with support from the Social Security Administration.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the project is to provide technical assistance to State Workforce Investment Boards (SWIB), Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIB), and One-Stop Career Centers (One-Stops) in becoming Employment Networks (EN) administering the Social Security Administration's (SSA) Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program (TTW).<sup>2</sup> TTW is a workforce investment program for people with disabilities who are interested in working.<sup>3</sup>

**Survey background and methodology:** In November 2010, staff from BCT Partners and the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI), partners in administering the One-Stop Ticket Success project, conducted phone interviews with One-Stops, Workforce Investment Boards (WIB), and their partners and affiliates. All of the entities interviewed were qualified ENs, with wide variations in level of activity under the TTW Program. The purpose of the interviews was to obtain information about the day-to-day realities of operating as an EN administering a TTW program. The information collected during the interviews is presented in this report. In addition to reporting the findings of the interviews, this report includes analysis and technical assistance recommendations devised directly from the findings.

A list of ninety workforce development ENs was provided by SSA. This list was divided into three categories: Group A, which consisted of fifty-five ENs that have received little or no Ticket assignments and earned little or no revenue; Group B, which consisted of twenty-one ENs that have had a relatively significant level of Tickets assigned but earned very little revenue; and Group C, which consisted of fourteen ENs that have received a significant number of Ticket assignments and earned relatively significant revenue.

## Survey Results

**Reasons for becoming an EN:** Respondents stated three main reasons why their organization became an EN: 1) because the organization was already serving customers who are the target audience for the TTW program, 2) because their organization wanted to increase the support services being offered to their customers, and/or 3) because their organization wanted to tap into another revenue source. Many respondents stated that the TTW program is a good program in theory, but the program has been difficult to implement.

**EN activities:** Activities that sites have undertaken to operate as an EN and to serve individuals under the TTW program include:

- 1) Hiring staff to administer the program
- 2) Increasing customer recruitment efforts
- 3) Increasing the support services available to customers

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<sup>1</sup> The Employment and Training Administration administers federal government job training and worker dislocation programs, federal grants to states for public employment service programs, and unemployment insurance benefits. The services are primarily provided through state and local workforce development systems. *About ETA* <[www.doleta.gov/etainfo/](http://www.doleta.gov/etainfo/)>. Accessed January 21, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> *The One-Stop Ticket Success Project* <[www.disability.workforce3one.org/view/2001034051773324747.info](http://www.disability.workforce3one.org/view/2001034051773324747.info)>. Accessed January 20, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> The Ticket Program is part of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999. The goal of the Ticket Program is to increase opportunities and choices for SSA disability beneficiaries to obtain employment, vocational rehabilitation, and other support services from public and private providers, employers, and other organizations, while reducing or eliminating their reliance on cash benefits as a source of income. Under the Ticket Program, the SSA provides disability beneficiaries with a Ticket to be used to obtain social services including job training and job placement assistance from any organization that is an EN. MAXIMUS, a private company, has been contracted by the SSA to function as the Operations Support Manager and the Ticket Program Data Operations Center Manager of the program. *The Ticket to Work Program* <[http://www.yourTickettowork.com/program\\_\\_info](http://www.yourTickettowork.com/program__info)>. Accessed December 29, 2010.

- 4) Participating in webinars sponsored by the TTW program
- 5) Attending Work Incentive Seminar Events (WISE)
- 6) Developing partnerships with other organizations that serve people with disabilities.

**Barrier across all three groups:** Respondents from all three groups consistently reported the following as barriers to administering the TTW program successfully:

- 1) The lack of an adequate number of staff
- 2) The low profile of the TTW program
- 3) The lack of customer knowledge of TTW program
- 4) The size, administrative structure, and lack of operating funds
- 5) Their geographic location
- 6) The tight job market
- 7) The lack of support services provided to people with disabilities (such as public transportation) offered by the city or county within which the EN is located.

**Ticket holders are part of existing One-Stop customer base:** Any individual may utilize the services of their local One-Stop Career Center, including customers with disabilities, through core services that are required to be universally accessible under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA). Most ENs reported that they already serve customers who fit the eligibility requirements for the TTW program.

**Determining who to serve makes a difference:** Although One-Stops are required to serve any individual who wishes to use its services, ENs are not required to serve anyone who seeks their assistance through the Ticket to Work (i.e., ENs are not required to accept Tickets from every individual who wishes to assign their Ticket). Ticket holders similarly have complete choice about whether or where to assign their Ticket. Despite not being required to do so, some respondents in Group A reported creating or altering their TTW program to better serve more challenging Ticket customers. Respondents in Group B and C reported excluding customers from their program who needed intense job training before they could be ready for work. Some respondents in Groups B and C also reported excluding individuals whose disabilities were so severe that they would be a challenge for the One-Stop to place in a job.

**Level of knowledge varies:** The participants' responses reveal that there is widespread general knowledge of the TTW program including awareness of the amount of revenue that can be generated by the program. However, respondents' in-depth knowledge of the TTW program varied greatly within and between the groups. The level of knowledge of the program corresponded with the level of success of respondents in terms of generating revenue, with respondents in Group A the least knowledgeable about the TTW program and respondents in Group C the most knowledgeable about the program.

**Length of time as EN unrelated to success:** Of the ninety ENs on the interview list, the first became a TTW site in 2002 and the latest joined in 2010. The least successful sites have not assigned any Tickets, and therefore, have not generated any revenue. The most successful site has assigned 234 Tickets and generated \$91,286. There was no obvious pattern between length of time an organization has been a TTW site and the number of Tickets generated and revenue earned.

**Program resource issues:** Respondents from all three groups reported the need for additional funding and resources to implement their program. All of the organizations knew before they agreed to become an EN that they would not receive any funding upfront, and would only earn revenue after a customer secured a job earning a

certain wage, and earn additional revenue only if a customer maintained employment on an ongoing basis. A few of the ENs are situated within an organization with an operating budget large enough that it can fund the operations of the TTW program until it becomes profitable. However, most ENs reported concerns about their inability to offer a stronger program because they lacked up-front funding either for implementing the program, hiring staff, or increasing support services. ENs that lacked the funding to implement the TTW program or that experienced significant staffing difficulties, typically generated little or no revenue (Group A).

**Customer confusion and concerns:** Respondents from all three groups reported that a measurable number of their customers are not very well informed about the TTW program. Also, respondents from all three groups reported that they have customers who are reluctant to participate in the TTW program because either they fear they will lose their Social Security disability benefits (SSDI – Social Security Disability Insurance; or SSI – Supplementary Security Income) or because they feel the TTW program is too complicated.

**Less successful ENs lack ability to track placements:** ENs that assigned Tickets but earned limited or no revenue (Group B) relied on the Work Incentive Planning Assistance Program (WIPA) and Community Work Incentive Coordinators (CWICs) to educate Ticket holders about the TTW program. As a result, the ENs in Group B experienced a higher number of Ticket assignments. However, Group B's barriers to earning revenue were centered on their inability to track a Ticket holder after he/she began working. In these cases, the EN lacked a sufficient tracking system and/or an adequate number of staff members to be able to conduct follow-up activities with customers. ENs with an adequate number of staff were able to offer more intensive support services, including systematic follow-up with customers once they secured employment, and were able to generate the most revenue from the TTW program.

### **Analysis of Results**

In analyzing the results of this survey, there appear to be three primary elements that are keys to success of One-Stop Career Centers in operating as Employment Networks:

- 1) Integration of the program within existing One-Stop operations and systems, rather than making the Ticket to Work a wholly separate program, or just simply assigning it to a staff member to handle without integrating it into the existing One-Stop administrative systems and services;
- 2) Focusing Ticket efforts on existing One-Stop customers, and the typical One-Stop customer base, rather than attempting to serve a different group of customers than the One-Stop typically serves;
- 3) Using discretion in terms of individuals who get served under the Ticket – i.e., focusing efforts on individuals who are interested and ready to go to work at earning levels that reduce or eliminate their reliance on cash benefits and that results in Ticket payments, rather than accepting Tickets from any individuals who are interested in assigning their Ticket to the One-Stop.

The bottom line is that success with the Ticket program is dependent on the One-Stop “doing what it does best”, meeting the needs of individuals who typically benefit from One-Stop services, and using its standard service model with enhancements, with support from the existing administrative structure and systems. Part of the focus in designing a successful TTW program, is utilizing mechanisms and systems that are as efficient as possible, that allow Ticket customers to be served both effectively and efficiently, and that does not require extensive investment in additional staff resources.

## Technical Assistance Needs

**Group A:** ENs that have experienced little or no Ticket assignments and earned no revenue (Group A) require the most technical assistance in order to be able to implement the TTW program successfully. The three main technical assistance recommendations for Group A are:

- 1) Provide assistance with designing a service delivery system that utilizes existing resources to respond to the needs of TTW customers, and/or identifying resources to pay for operating costs, including costs to hire and train the appropriate number of staff members to administer the TTW program;
- 2) Provide assistance with understanding how to better operate as an EN, including how to better integrate the TTW program into their existing administrative and database management systems; and
- 3) Assist with recruitment strategies that increase customers' knowledge of the TTW program, including devising materials that dispel the inaccuracies of the TTW program and that communicate the benefits of participating in the TTW program.

**Group B:** ENs that have experienced a relatively significant level of Ticket assignments, but have earned little or no revenue from those assignments (Group B) face similar barriers to success as Group A but, to a certain degree, have been better able to maneuver around them. The three main technical assistance recommendations for Group B are:

- 1) Provide assistance with strategies to identify TTW customers more proficiently;
- 2) Provide assistance with how to provide meaningful short-term job training to customers while also working to place the customer into a job that meets the TTW income requirements; and
- 3) Provide assistance with how to better track and verify the employment status of Ticket holders who have been placed into a job.

**Group C:** ENs that assigned a relatively significant number of Tickets and generated a relatively significant amount of revenue (Group C) are operating TTW programs that are the most integrated into the overall administrative structure of their workforce development organization. The four main technical assistance recommendations for Group C are:

- 1) Provide assistance with how to better utilize existing Ticket to Work resources (MAXIMUS<sup>4</sup>, etc.);
- 2) Provide assistance on how to maximize the identification of Ticket assignments from the One-Stop customer base;
- 3) Analyze current placement rates and determine if there are mechanisms for enhancing both placements and retention; and
- 4) Provide assistance with how to partner better with other workforce development organizations who serve people with disabilities so that the EN can assign more Tickets and earn more revenue.

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<sup>4</sup> MAXIMUS is private company that is “partners with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to serve individuals with disabilities through the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program. The program ensures that Social Security beneficiaries with disabilities have greater choices and opportunities for obtaining employment, vocational rehabilitation, and other support services.” MAXIMUS also “helps remove barriers that prevent individuals from seeking employment out of fear of losing their health care coverage,” “connect[s] beneficiaries to Employment Networks (EN) so that they can obtain the jobs and services they need,” and “provide[s] the necessary support to sustain ongoing operations.” Ongoing operations include: “managing a toll-free customer contact center to answer beneficiary questions and connect them to employment networks; administering Ticket assignment and the payment processing to ENs; and ensuring the continuity of program operations for key participants, including SSA beneficiaries, ENs, and state Vocational Rehabilitation agencies.” <<http://www.maximus.com/services/workforce-solutions/Ticket-work>> Accessed December 30, 2010.

## Overview

The One-Stop Ticket Success Project is an initiative funded under a contract from the US Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (ETA), with support from the Social Security Administration (SSA).<sup>5</sup> The purpose of the project is to provide technical assistance to State Workforce Investment Boards (SWIB), Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIB), and One-Stop Career Centers (One-Stops) in becoming Employment Networks (EN) administering the Social Security Administration's (SSA) Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program (TTW).<sup>6</sup> TTW is a workforce development program for people with disabilities who are interested in working.<sup>7</sup>

In November 2010, staff from BCT Partners and the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI), partners in administering the One-Stop Ticket Success project, conducted phone interviews with One-Stops, Workforce Investment Boards (WIB), and their partners and affiliates. All of the entities interviewed were qualified ENs, with wide variations in level of activity under the TTW Program. The purpose of the interviews was to obtain information about the day-to-day realities of a workforce development program operating as an EN administering a TTW program. The data collected during the interviews is presented in this report. This report also includes analysis and technical assistance recommendations devised directly from the findings

## Methodology

Phone interviews were conducted to inform One-Stop Ticket Success project staff and other stakeholders interested in expanding the use of the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program by One-Stop Career Centers. A list of workforce development ENs was provided by SSA. The list also provided some details about the number of Tickets that have been assigned to the EN and the revenue those assignments have generated. This information was used to sort the ENs into three groups detailed below.

### Grouping the Respondents

The list of 90 ENs was sorted into three distinct groups based on their history and experience with the TTW Program. Group A consisted of 55 ENs that had little or no Ticket assignments and generated little or no revenue from the TTW program. Group B was composed of 21 ENs that have had some success in the number of Tickets assigned but have generated little or no revenue from those assignments. Group C contained 14 ENs that have had significant success with the TTW Program, with a significant number of Ticket assignments and relatively significant revenue generated from these assignments.

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<sup>5</sup> The Employment and Training Administration administers federal government job training and worker dislocation programs, federal grants to states for public employment service programs, and unemployment insurance benefits. The services are primarily provided through state and local workforce development systems. *About ETA* <[www.doleta.gov/etainfo/](http://www.doleta.gov/etainfo/)>. Accessed January 21, 2011.

<sup>6</sup> *The One-Stop Ticket Success Project* <[www.disability.workforce3one.org/view/2001034051773324747.info](http://www.disability.workforce3one.org/view/2001034051773324747.info)>. Accessed January 20, 2011.

<sup>7</sup> The Ticket Program is part of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999. The goal of the Ticket Program is to increase opportunities and choices for SSA disability beneficiaries to obtain employment, vocational rehabilitation, and other support services from public and private providers, employers, and other organizations, while reducing or eliminating their reliance on cash benefits as a source of income. Under the Ticket Program, the SSA provides disability beneficiaries with a Ticket to be used to obtain social services including job training and job placement assistance from any organization that is an EN. MAXIMUS, a private company, has been contracted by the SSA to function as the Operations Support Manager and the Ticket Program Data Operations Center Manager of the program. *The Ticket to Work Program* <[http://www.yourTickettowork.com/program\\_\\_info](http://www.yourTickettowork.com/program__info)>. Accessed December 29, 2010.

Table 1	Group A	Group B	Group C	Total
Contacted	55	21	14	90
Participated	25	10	3	38
Participation Rate	45%	47%	21%	42%

Of the 90 sites that were contacted, 38 participated in an interview, (42% overall participation rate). Appendix B contains a list of sites that participated in the survey. Of those who participated in an interview, 25 were in Group A, ten in Group B, and three in Group C, which translates to 45%, 47% and 21% participation rates for each grouping respectively.

These programs generally fell into two categories: a) One-Stop Career Centers; or b) administrative bodies with oversight over the One-Stop Career Center system in a state or local area (these included Local or State Workforce Investment Boards, Workforce Investment Act Administrators, and similar entities).

The entities interviewed were reflective of the extensive variation nationally in legal and organizational structures of One-Stops, and the bodies that have oversight/administrative responsibility. In a few cases the listed entity's role in the One-Stop system was not clear; these instances were noted. In a few cases, the organization was an entity that is a subcontractor with the One-Stop/Workforce Investment Board, or an affiliated partner. While the responses of these affiliated entities were still of possible interest, they were less critical to the core purpose of the overall purpose of this effort.

### Structure of the Survey

The design of the questions and lines of inquiry were intended to obtain qualitative information from the respondent regarding their experience with the Ticket program to inform future technical assistance efforts. The line of inquiry was designed to not just be a rote series of questions and responses, but instead one that engaged the contact in conversation and discussion. The list of questions and lines of inquiry are detailed in Appendix A.

The questions were separated into two sections. The first section contained general questions. These questions were designed to solicit answers that would provide a general understanding of the particular site. These questions asked about the respondent's organization's role in their One-Stop Career Centers in particular, and their workforce development system in general. Questions in this section also sought to understand the factors behinds the respondent's organization's decision to become an Employment Network as well as the types of activities that the organization has undertaken as an Employment Network. In addition, one question in this section was used to verify the information contained in the list provided by SSA regarding the EN's Ticket assignments and revenue generation.

The second section contained questions specific to the group wherein the respondent's organization belonged. These questions were designed to obtain information about the challenges and/or success that the organization was experiencing regarding their TTW program and its associated contributing factors/causes. In this section, respondents were also asked if they were interested in additional technical assistance and, if so, what areas they would be interested in obtaining additional help.

## Survey Findings

The first section of the survey findings in this report, contains observations from the responses from the General Questions section. This section discusses themes around how ENs have organized and structured their operations. The General Questions also solicited responses regarding the EN’s reasons and purpose in deciding to operate the TTW program in their area. Moreover, the first section also provides some insight regarding the types of activities ENs have initiated for the TTW program as well as some general barriers they may have encountered in the process.

The second section contains the responses from each particular group. As noted, ENs were sorted into three groups (A, B, and C) depending on their Ticket assignment history and revenue generation from the TTW program. Each group was asked a specific set of questions designed to solicit their input regarding their challenges and success as well as any additional support they would like to receive (if any).

Table 2 provides a summary of the groups’ experiences, including their challenges, successes and recommendations. ENs who are experiencing success with the TTW program appear to have developed strategies to overcome these barriers.

**Table 2: Summary of Group Experiences**

Group A	Group B	Group C
<b>Challenges:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of Funds/Staff Capacity</li> <li>• Recruitment and Follow-up</li> <li>• Coordination and Support</li> <li>• Customers Not Job Ready</li> <li>• Lack of Institutional Memory</li> <li>• Misconceptions about TTW Program</li> <li>• Problem with Ticket Assignments in Areas with Multiple ENs</li> </ul>	<b>Challenges:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of Funds/Staff Capacity</li> <li>• Customers Not Job Ready</li> <li>• Recruitment and Follow-up</li> <li>• Milestone Payments and Coordination with MAXIMUS</li> </ul>	<b>Challenges:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Client Tracking Horizon Too Long</li> <li>• Lack of Funds/Staff Capacity</li> </ul>
<b>Successes/Strategies:</b>  Not applicable	<b>Successes/Strategies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted Marketing</li> <li>• Built Solid Partnerships</li> </ul>	<b>Successes/Strategies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better Identify TTW Customers in One-Stops</li> <li>• Targeted Marketing</li> <li>• Constant Contact with Customers</li> <li>• Selective Enrollment</li> <li>• Built Solid Partnerships</li> <li>• Educating and Informing Customers about TTW and Benefits</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and Inform the Public About TTW</li> <li>• Consider Changes in Reimbursement Structure</li> <li>• Enhanced Support and Training</li> <li>• Building Capacity</li> </ul>	<b>Recommendations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Incentives for Customers</li> <li>• Enhanced Support and Training</li> </ul>	<b>Recommendations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share Best Practices</li> <li>• Improvements to TTW Program (streamline Ticket holder identification process, verification of wages, reporting requirements, and expediting milestone payments).</li> <li>• Enhanced Support and Training</li> </ul>

## General Question Responses

The responses to the questions posed in the general section yielded a wide range of results. Responses varied within groups and between groups. In some cases there were commonalities within and across groupings.

### Organization, Structure and Operations

Responses in the General Questions section revealed there is a wide variety of structures underpinning an EN's operations. Moreover, the responses also suggest that the governance and oversight arrangements for ENs also vary greatly. Some organizations operate their EN either as an individual entity or under the administrative umbrella of their WIB. In some locations the WIB has administrative oversight of workforce development ENs within the region. Some organizations in Group A reported becoming an EN as an independent organization. ENs in Group B, for the most part, were comprised of local WIBs, a state agency that oversees One-Stops, LWIBs, Community Rehabilitation Programs, and One-Stop partners contracted with WIBs to administer the TTW program for regional One-Stops. Most of the ENs in Group C were comprised of WIBs, One-Stops, and One-Stop operators.

### Partnerships

Several respondents in Group A spoke about partnering with other social service organizations. One respondent reported that her organization contracted with Abilities, Inc., a private firm that works with individuals with disabilities and the organizations that serve them. She stated that her organization partnered with Abilities<sup>8</sup> because it has a disabled persons network that assists One-Stop DPNs (Disability Program Navigators)<sup>9</sup> with finding customers and employment opportunities.

Several respondents also spoke about co-locating with other organizations that serve people with disabilities so that they could combine their resources to assign more Tickets. Several respondents reported being co-located with public Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) or community rehabilitation providers (CRPs).<sup>10</sup> These programs typically provide employment services and counseling to people with disabilities, provide or arrange for services to enable an individual to go to work, and provide training and technical assistance to employers about disability employment issues. It is unclear if or how being co-located with these programs have benefits to the administration of the TTW program. A respondent reported that a branch of public VR is co-located in their building and has assigned Tickets. The respondent did not indicate if the two organizations share the revenue public VR receives for meeting TTW milestones.

### The Decision to Administer the Ticket to Work Program

While there were some variations in the responses about the motives surrounding their organization's decision to become an EN, there was a clear common thread across all groups. The top two reasons reported from all three groups was that their organization became an EN to create additional revenue for services that they were already providing, and to complement other programs they were already administering. Other common responses

<sup>8</sup> *About Abilities, Inc* <[www.abilitiesinc.org/AboutAbilities.aspx](http://www.abilitiesinc.org/AboutAbilities.aspx)>. Accessed on January 25, 2011

<sup>9</sup> Disability Program Navigators (DPNs) are staff responsible for assisting in building the capacity of One-Stop Career Centers to meet the needs of customers with disabilities. Federal funding for this program ended in 2010. Some DPN position have been maintained through state funds. [http://www.doleta.gov/disability/new\\_dpn\\_grants.cfm](http://www.doleta.gov/disability/new_dpn_grants.cfm)

<sup>10</sup> Public VR is a mandated One-Stop partner under WIA.

included: 1) being better able to assist individuals with disabilities, 2) being mandated by their state, 3) being awarded a DPN (Disability Program Navigator) grant, and 4) having a considerable population of people with disabilities within the area and determining that the TTW program would be a beneficial tool for One-Stop customers.

## Activities Implemented to Build Capacity as an EN

In order to comply with the TTW guidelines, ENs across all three groups increased the support services they offered. More specifically, ENs reported that they offer more intensive support services such as one-on-one counseling and case management as well as job search and placement assistance, increasing WIA services. Some respondents reported that they are providing more one-on-one support for Ticket holders. Examples of marketing efforts included marketing on Facebook and Twitter, while others stated that their primary marketing is the EN listing on the MAXIMUS Ticket to Work website. Additional outreach/marketing activities included registering to receive a compact disk of TTW referrals from MAXIMUS, attending local WIB seminars to develop relationships with people from the agencies who might refer job-seekers. For training and capacity-building, some ENs in Group A reported that they have listened to the webinars posted on the TTW website, talked with staff from MAXIMUS, and trained their staff in how to properly administer the TTW program.

Participants in Group B responded with similar answers as the respondents in Group A, including some respondents reporting that they have not undertaken any new activities either to operate as an EN or to serve customers of the TTW program. The main difference between the responses from Group A compared to Group B is, administratively, TTW programs in Group B are much more integrated into their organization's overall operation.

One respondent reported that her organization utilizes the human services infrastructure offered by their state to incorporate the TTW program within its administrative structure.<sup>11</sup> Another respondent reported that he identified two case managers in two separate areas of the organization to lead the TTW program. He stated that his organization did not apply for a DPN grant because DPN grants are not sustainable, and the organization would eventually have to raise the funds to maintain staff for the TTW program. Therefore, he did not want to devote staff time to applying for the grant.

In terms of data management, respondents reported adding a 'Ticket' code and 'disability' field to data tracked by his state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser system.<sup>12</sup> One respondent reported using a comprehensive database to track data in each of his state's 38 Workforce Centers.

Other activities Group B respondents reported: informing potential customers about the TTW program, improving staff administrative procedures including data base management, establishing a local WIB as the central control for statewide TTW activities, assigning DPN staff to lead the building of a referral network, using DPN staff for job development, aggressively recruiting Ticket holders, creating staff positions to focus on the benefits and support

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<sup>11</sup> The Connecticut Department of Social Services Human Service Infrastructure was "designed to create a more efficient system of connecting people to the services they need." HSI is envisioned as a coordinated, statewide social service system that use existing public resources more effectively, serve customers more efficiently, identify barriers and gaps in services, and track outcomes so the state will know how people are doing as a result of services provided." *Human Service Infrastructure Initiative is Launched By DSS* <[www.ct.gov/dss/cwp/view.asp?a=2345&q=304910](http://www.ct.gov/dss/cwp/view.asp?a=2345&q=304910)>. Accessed January 24, 2011.

<sup>12</sup> The US Department of Labor states that the "Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 established a nationwide system of public employment offices known as the Employment Service. The Act was amended in 1998 to make the Employment Service part of the One-Stop services delivery system." <[http://www.doleta.gov/programs/wagner\\_\\_peyser.cfm](http://www.doleta.gov/programs/wagner__peyser.cfm)>. *Wagner-Peyser/Labor Exchange* Accessed February 17, 2011.

services available for TTW customers, offering orientations specifically for TTW recipients, and implementing WISE events. Many respondents also reported that they provide the same support services to TTW customers as they do for all customers, but provide more one-on-one contact and follow-up.

Respondents in Group C reported: initiating activities such as an employer symposium to build employer interest in hiring people with disabilities, training workforce staff to talk with customers about the TTW program, conducted monthly check-in calls with other One-Stops to determine if there were any issues or challenges with administering the TTW program, developing outreach materials to inform TTW customers and potential employers about the benefits of the program, creating partnerships with other social service providers, training staff in how to adhere to the TTW guidelines, and enhancing all of their support services in order to operate as an EN and to meet the needs of Ticket holders.

## Barriers to ENs Implementing TTW Activities

During the General Section of the interview, respondents from Group A gave detailed feedback about the challenges they have experienced as they tried to operate the TTW program, which have hindered their attempts at undertaking some activities.

Many respondents in this group found operating the TTW program very complicated and cumbersome. One respondent stated that “administering the TTW program is a convoluted process.” She reported that her organization has their hands full with dislocated workers “so no one has time to figure how to administer the TTW program effectively.”

Group A respondents noted that funding is a major barrier to operating as an EN and to fully implementing the TTW program. One respondent stated that while the TTW program fits into their existing program, it took staff quite some time to implement it because the organization did not have the discretionary funds to get the program started.

Other ENs, in other groupings, also reported that they did not increase the support services they offer because they lack the funding to do so. In particular, ENs in small cities and rural areas consistently reported not being able to provide very many support services due to the lack of funding. Whether they increased the support services they offered or not, ENs from all three groups expressed concern about the lack of upfront funding to implement the TTW program effectively. Some respondents in Group B, as with Group A, reported that they are not currently doing any marketing or advertising for the TTW program due to the lack of funding.

## Summary of “General Questions” Findings

Most respondents stated that their organization found the TTW program attractive because it allows them to generate revenue for services they were already offering. Most respondents, despite the limited success they had with the program, understood the value of becoming an EN. Respondents reported undertaking activities such as increasing their marketing and recruitment efforts, hiring additional staff, and providing intense one-on-one counseling to their customers to operate as an EN and to serve the customers in the TTW program. The barriers to implementing a successful program, based mostly on the responses of the ENs in Group A, are: the lack of integration into the overall administrative structure of the organization the EN operates within, the lack of operating funds, the lack of an adequate number of staff dedicated to administering the TTW program, customer misinformation about- and lack of knowledge of the benefits TTW program, the underutilization of MAXIMUS, and being co-located with another social service agency that also administers the TTW program.

# Group A

## Challenges

Respondents from Group A were comprised of ENs that had little or no Ticket assignments which in turn has translated to little or no revenue generation from the TTW program. The second set of questions asked of the respondents from this group to identify the barriers/challenges they perceived to be inhibiting their TTW programs performance.

Given a choice of thirteen responses including “Other” and the option to select “All that apply,” respondents reported that they assigned so few Tickets and earned so little revenue because of: 1) concerns by Ticket holders over the loss of SSA benefits, 2) their organization’s lack of an adequate number of staff members to operate program, and 3) the unwillingness of Ticket holders to assign their Ticket. Interestingly, none of the respondents said that their inability to implement a successful program was due to a “lack of One-Stop capacity to meet employment needs of people with disabilities.”

## Lack of Funds/Staff Capacity

Group A faced a myriad of challenges implementing the TTW program. However for a number of respondents, the number one concern for ENs in Group A was the lack of staff and resources to properly implement the TTW program. Many respondents stated that if they had one person who was dedicated to the TTW program, that person could spend more time working with each customer and staying in contact with Ticket holders.

Respondents reported that there are several issues with implementing the TTW program. One respondent stated that he is “not thrilled with the program” because it is difficult to operate. He stated that he was really excited about the program when he heard about it, but then reality set in and he realized that the program was not what he expected. Since they lost their DPN program funding, they do not have the staff to implement the program successfully.

## Challenges with Recruitment and Follow-up

Many respondents stated that there is too much legwork and a lack of resources required to recruit, train, place, and follow-up with customers. Many respondents also reported that they would like to do more recruiting but lack the funding for marketing. One respondent stated that even when they did organize a special event for the specific purpose of recruiting new TTW customers, they are not able to advertise well and were not able to attract people to attend; as a result, the respondent reported, staff time and other resources were wasted. A respondent whose organization is not currently actively recruiting customers for the TTW program reported that his organization knows that there are many ways to recruit aggressively but his organization does not have the staff time or organizational interest in being more aggressive.

Several respondents reported feeling that their organization is wasting resources trying to tracking down people who are not interested in participating in the program.<sup>13</sup> They have received three calls in the past five months from individuals inquiring about how the EN can help them acquire financial assistance. People think the One-Stop has

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<sup>13</sup> ENs can obtain access to a pool of qualified candidates through the MAXIMUS Beneficiary Referral CD. <[www.cessi.net/ttw/employer/index.html](http://www.cessi.net/ttw/employer/index.html)>. Accessed December 30, 2010.

money for them. Once they find out what the program is about, customers are not as interested because of the structure of the program. Some have initial interest in the program but do not sign-up to participate.

Less than half of the respondents in Group A stated that they are actively recruiting Tickets holders. Those who are recruiting are engaged in activities such as sending out a general mailing about the TTW to all SSI/SSDI and Medicaid recipients in their area. Some respondents stated receiving referrals from organizations and agencies like the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Most respondents in Group A stated that they are not getting regular inquiries from Ticket holders. One respondent stated that he is going to be running the TTW program in partnership with public Vocational Rehabilitation, which provides funding and gives referrals. One respondent in particular reported that her EN has received referrals from a VR agency that wanted to split the Ticket with them, but they have not yet shared any Tickets with any other organizations. Factors include a lack of collaboration, and Tickets being assigned to the wrong agency.

### Lack of Coordination and Support

One respondent stated that his EN has experienced very little cooperation from the local SSA (Social Security Administration) office. He reported feeling that SSA should be a better partner to ENs by at least providing ENs with a base amount of funding so that they could hire the appropriate number of staff and embark on an aggressive marketing campaign. A respondent stated that ENs operating within a large well-funded organization like Goodwill might have the option of utilizing funds from the larger organization until they become profitable. He argued that independent ENs and ENs operating within smaller organizations do not have resources to be able to do that.

Another respondent wished she knew what DOL was communicating to Ticket holders about the TTW program so that she could organize her TTW program in a way so that it was building upon what the customers already knew about the program. Two other concerns respondents reported about recruiting customers are: 1) their organization's inability to better utilize MAXIMUS for outreach, and 2) SSA's compact disk of referrals being ineffective in finding customers interested in participating in the program.

Respondents noted that Ticket holders call the SSA office about the TTW program, however these Ticket holders are reporting that the staff does not know the purpose of the TTW program. Respondents also reported that their local SSA office was not knowledgeable about the TTW program and was of little assistance to them as they were trying to implement their program.

### Lack of Customer Job-Readiness

Some respondents in Group A reported encountering several Ticket holders who wanted to utilize their Ticket but who possessed very few marketable skills. Many respondents in this group stated that they work with customers to build-up their skills before the customer starts their job search. One respondent stated that he is currently working with about twenty-five people who have Tickets they could use, but his focus has been getting them prepared to start working. As people call in and show interest in the TTW program, he talks to them about their job interests, goals, and skill set. He schedules an intake interview and ensures that customers understand what the TTW program entails. Once the customer arrives at the One-Stop, the staff person informs them of the support services available and how to best utilize the services to sustain employment.

Another respondent reported issues placing customers who want to work but cannot because of their age or because of their severe disabilities. He stated, speaking generally, that once a customer finds out she is not a good

fit for the TTW program, she becomes even more anxious about her situation because she realizes she probably will not be able to work again.

Several respondents stated that the type of work some customers want to do does not always match their abilities or capacities. For example, one respondent stated that one individual wanted to be a computer technician but due to his disability, he cannot sit comfortably.

Another respondent reported wishing that the program would work as it was discussed in the training sessions. He stated that there are several different factors to get under control such as people needing to get GEDs, getting medications and medical conditions under control, and getting skills training.

Some respondents reported that the number one barrier to assigning Tickets is the lack of transportation: there is not adequate transportation to help people get to jobs. Even if customers are placed in a job, they could not get to them.

### Lack of Institutional Memory

Many of the respondents in Group A lacked institutional memory about their TTW program. Respondents reported two main reasons for the lack of institutional memory: 1) constantly changing staff, and 2) the lack of any thorough documentation of previous staff members' efforts to implement the TTW program. One respondent reported that despite his lack of knowledge about what has occurred in the past, he hoped to make the TTW program a big part of his organization's operations overall.

Another respondent stated that he is unaware of what his organization has done in the past but that he is eager to get the program up and running again. While another respondent reported that her organization had a DPN at one point, but as of the date of the interview, the grant had not been renewed.

### General Misconceptions about TTW Program Contributing to Lack of Interest

Another major obstacle respondents in Group A reported in the lack of success of the TTW program is the lack of customer education about the TTW program. Several respondents reported that potential customers perceive the TTW program to be complicated. Respondents also reported that potential customers are afraid that they will lose their Social Security benefits if they participate in the program. One respondent reported that "most SSA beneficiaries are receiving benefits and want to maintain them." She stated "this area is very rural so there's a strong culture of a safety net." An additional concern for the Ticket holders in this group was that they were untrusting of SSA's income guidelines.

Respondents also reported that many people who come into the One-Stop on their own, not having been referred by another social service agency, are under the impression the EN will be providing them with a job on the spot.<sup>14</sup> Another respondent stated that many people who call their EN are from outside the area they serve. The respondent stated that ten or fifteen percent of those calling about the TTW program will actually follow up to schedule an intake interview. The perception of this respondent is that people do not follow up, because the TTW program is not going to employ them on the spot. Respondents also reported that the blanket SSA mailings can be confusing and generate misinformation. Ticket holders may be unsure about what to use the Ticket for.

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<sup>14</sup> Ready, Willing & Able is a "holistic, residential, work and job skills training program which helps homeless individuals in their efforts to become self-sufficient, contributing members of society." Ready, Willing & Able <<http://www.doe.org/programs/?programID=1>>. Accessed on January 10, 2011.

## Potential Problem with Ticket Assignments in Areas with Multiple ENs

Telephone interviews were conducted from a list that identified the number of Tickets assigned to each EN. Several ENs in Group A reported that the number of Tickets listed as assigned is too low. Some reported that the number of Tickets they have assigned is so low because they have an agreement with another EN agency that was supposed to split Ticket assignments with them. As opposed to the Ticket assignment being split, Tickets were being assigned to one EN and not to the other. Several respondents stated that they contacted the SSA to assist them in sorting out which Ticket assignments should be credited to which EN.

## Interest in Building Capacity

Despite the challenges, an overwhelming majority of respondents in Group A are interested in building their capacity to serve as an EN and generate revenue under the Ticket Program. Given a choice of nine responses including “Other,” respondents, who were allowed to choose more than one response, mostly wanted assistance in “building staff knowledge regarding Social Security and disability.” They also wanted assistance in “creating partnerships that will increase capacity to meet the needs of Ticket holders.” Other assistance that was requested is “basic knowledge regarding the Ticket Program,” “recruitment/identification of Ticket holders,” “developing incentives for getting individuals to assign their Tickets to the One-Stop,” “increasing services that will assist individuals with disabilities to find employment,” “determining how operation as an EN can be financially successful,” and “streamlining overall administrative processes: identification of Ticket holders, assignments of Tickets, verification of employment/wages, payments from Social Security, etc.” Others stated that they would be interested in building their capacity to serve as an EN and generate revenue under the Ticket Program if they had more resources to administer the program.

## Recommendations

### Educate and Inform the Public about TTW

Several respondents reported that SSA should market the TTW program better. For the TTW program to be successful, one respondent stated, the ENs have to work to change the mindset of their customers, which may be difficult. Individuals have been unwilling to assign their Tickets to the One-Stop for several reasons, including: the lack of transportation makes jobs unrealistic for people with disabilities; they are misinformed or confused about the program; too many demands on Ticket holders make them nervous, and; it is difficult to find motivated people that actually want to get off benefits.

Group A respondents noted that many people are afraid to give up their cash benefits, particularly in an uncertain employment market, with low paying jobs that do not pay higher than the benefits they are receiving. Respondents also stated that friends and relatives may be advising against going back to work because they are concerned about the loss of benefits. Moreover, respondents noted that many customers have been willing to participate but have not been able to find jobs. Some respondents felt that many people with Tickets are only looking for work in order to meet requirements for other agencies/benefits.

Given the fears of losing the benefits they receive from Social Security, if participants were better informed about what would happen to their benefits, they might be more likely to use their Ticket. Respondents stated that Ticket holders need to know exactly what will happen to their benefits if they start working, and inform customers that they can earn income and maintain necessary benefits. The respondent suggested that a local SSA representative conduct workshops for the people who will be helping customers. If the EN staff could get training from SSA, they

would be better prepared to explain these issues to the Ticket holders. (This response seems to indicate a lack of awareness and/or availability of the Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Program – WIPA, funded by SSA.)

### Need for Clarity on Reimbursement Structure and Targeting Customers

The milestone payments are a difficult obstacle for some of the ENs. Under the terms of the TTW contract, ENs earn revenue for milestone outcomes (e.g. job placement and retention). However, some respondents reported that they did not realize that they can request payment from SSA to receive credit for having helped someone find employment (i.e., an individual who is now employed). Several respondents expressed dismay that their staff could invest significant time into a customer and not receive the proper amount of credit for their effort. She wished there were a way to bill for initial intake hours. The Ticket to Work is an outcome based funding mechanism, and these concerns in part, indicate a lack of understanding that the payments received by the EN after an individual becomes employed, are intended in part to compensate the EN for the pre-placement work. It also indicates the critical importance of targeting individuals who are a good match for the Ticket program in terms of generating payments.

### Enhanced Support and Training

Group A respondents are interested in increasing their capacity to serve as Employment Networks. The most notable concern was building staff knowledge regarding Social Security and disability, as well as creating partnerships specifically designed for Ticket holders. Respondents stated that they would like assistance with: 1) recruiting and identifying Ticket holders, 2) developing incentives for Ticket assignment, 3) determining the financial benefits of maintaining the program, and 4) increasing their basic knowledge of the Ticket Program.

### Summary of Findings for Group A

ENs that have not assigned any Tickets and that have not generated any revenue reported several reasons for their inability to implement the TTW program effectively. The respondents from this group reported that there was a lack of operating funds to: 1) hire the appropriate number of staff, 2) increase the support services they offer, 3) properly recruit new customers, or 4) follow-up with customers once they have secured employment. The second main barrier respondents reported was Ticket holders' fear of losing their SSI/SSDI benefits.

Other major barriers respondents reported was the loss of funding for DPNs, difficulty identifying which individuals are Ticket holders, and the lack of customers who possess marketable skills and who are job-ready. Moreover, most of the respondents stated that their EN is not actively recruiting customers. Most also reported that they are not receiving regular inquiries about the TTW program. Several respondents were unhappy that staff from their local SSA office was not more knowledgeable about the TTW program and, therefore, was not very helpful in assisting the ENs in implementing a strong program.

## Group B

Group B consisted of ENs that had a generated a relatively significant number of Ticket assignments but very little revenue. The challenges that ENs in Group B experienced were significantly different from the challenges ENs in Group A experienced. While ENs in Group A experienced difficulties implementing the TTW program, ENs in Group B reported that their concerns centered on being able to follow-through with and track Ticket holders once they secured employment. Similar to what the ENs in Group A reported, ENs in Group B reported not having operating funding to properly implement the TTW program. Also similar to ENs in Group A, ENs in this group were interested in building their capacity to serve as ENs. Respondents from this group stated that their greatest

need was for increased support services to assist their disabled customers in securing employment. Engaging Ticket holders in the support services available to them, streamlining administrative processes, and tracking Ticket holders' wages were also areas of concern.

## Group B: Successful Strategies

### Targeted Marketing in Other Government/Social Service Programs

Overall, ENs in Group B were more informed about the TTW program than the ENs in Group A, and reported trying to offer the strongest program they could given the resources they had available. While there were a number of respondents in Group B who reported that they are not conducting outreach activities, those that did reported employing a wide variety of recruitment strategies.

One respondent reported that his organization markets to people with disabilities, not Ticket holders specifically. He also reported that his EN conducts an annual disability job fair and attends WISE events. One respondent reported that her organization has a disability disclosure field in the state WIA database registration system, which then leads to further optional questions about whether or not a customer is the recipient of SSI/SSDI benefits. If a disabled customer checks "yes" to receiving SSI/SSDI benefits, he is referred to the person in the organization who handles those customers. The same organization gets many referrals from a listing of Ticket recipients on the MAXIMUS "yourTickettoWork.com" website.

### Building Partnerships and Collaboration

One respondent reported that building and maintaining partnerships is key to recruiting customers. Also, during the orientation that her EN offers, customers are informed and encouraged to apply for the TTW program. One respondent reported that staff from his organization networks with staff from the local SSA office. The staff from that EN also created an informal partnership with the local Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. Another respondent reported that staff from his office utilized the SSA beneficiary referral list and mailed the individuals on the list information about the TTW program, but, based on what he has observed, there has had no quantifiable outcomes from their recruitment activities.

Another respondent reported that the DPNs from several programs meet and collaborate to find customers. One of the ENs that conducts outreach to the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) groups reported that his staff ensures that each of their customers visits a WIPA program prior to receiving assistance at her EN. She also stated that her staff goes to WISE meetings. Another respondent reported that her organization has changed into becoming an EN mainly by expanding the activities of other workforce development agencies throughout the state. This organization holds monthly meetings with other TTW administrators to encourage, support and cajole them into assigning more Tickets and generating more revenue through TTW. The organization has also refined their business marketing strategies, particularly around the value of employees with disabilities. As a result of her organization's efforts, One-Stops in the region are now experiencing increased traffic.

## Group B: Challenges

### Lack of Funding and Capacity

One organization who reported that they are not actively recruiting individuals to apply to the TTW program, noted that they would like to do more recruiting but currently lack the capacity. The staff is well trained and the program is well defined, but they cannot prove that TTW will bring in a specific amount of dollars, thus cannot assign more of their budget to the program.

Other respondents stated that they lack the appropriate number of staff to focus on and implement the program because they lack the funding to hire more staff. These respondents noted a perception that the program is time intensive, and there is a need for more staff to provide follow-up services, verify wages, and encourage customers to stay active. As noted under Group A, the payment structure and length of time to get paid adds to these challenges.

One respondent stated that their DPN, who was responsible for Ticket activities, was laid off, and all of the DPN's previous responsibilities were transferred to someone as 20 percent of their duties. This downsizing does not allow for any recruitment, direct job placement services, or program development activities.

Like Group A, some respondents reported having trouble convincing customers to utilize their Ticket. Some respondents have been able to provide more informational and education assistance to the customer by working with other service providers. In some cases where an EN has identified a customer with a Ticket, a meeting with a CWIC (Certified Work Incentives Counselor) is arranged to help the customer understand his/her federal and state benefits and how to take advantage of work incentives. Another respondent recruits Ticket holders by leveraging his relationship with public VR. However, most do not have that option.

### Lack of Customer Job-Readiness

As with Group A, some respondents noted that many customers are not always work-ready and therefore they have to spend a significant amount of time preparing them for work. Another stated that his organization would continue with the program if Ticket holders were better screened, more 'work-ready,' better informed, had more realistic expectations about what the EN could offer, and how much effort they need to commit to their own job search. TTW is not helpful if the customer never worked previously and needs more intensive services, the respondent noted. Other respondents noted the need to be selective about whom they take a Ticket from, as few want to work above the Trial Work level (the earnings level that triggers initial payments to the EN). Moreover, another respondent stated, many SSI beneficiaries want to maintain their benefits, which means locating a job with a salary that falls between the SSA maximum and minimum requirements in order for them to be able to continue to receive benefits, thus making it difficult to generate little if any revenue from the Ticket.

Those ENs who have had some success with the customers have viewed themselves as partners with their customers. One respondent described his process for service delivery by stating that customers with Tickets are informally evaluated on their commitment to their own search. Those who work hard on their own and who frequently contacted the ENs staff received more assistance than those who regard the job search process as something that is being done for them. He described the relationship with the job seeker as 'more intense' and as more of a 'partnership' than it might be for a non-Ticket holder. The One-Stop's services are largely in support of the customer's efforts, rather than leading the customer toward an opportunity. As a result, customers typically have secured their own job and the partnership built with One-Stop staff made the customer more willing to provide information to the WIB in reporting to and getting paid by SSA.

## Recruitment and Follow-up

One respondent said that the lack of customer follow through was problematic. She stated that once a customer receives training, the organization often has a hard time locating them in order to track their progress. Another respondent had the same experience: their customer secures a job and then the customer does not send them a copy of their pay stub in order to have his or her income verified. Respondents stated that their inability to track outcomes for employed Ticket holders is frustrating because the EN does not always get credit for assigning the Ticket. Many respondents stated that the verifying employment/wages has been challenging.

## Challenges with Milestone Payments, Income Verification and MAXIMUS

Ticket milestone payments and income verification also prove to be an obstacle. One respondent stated that the confusing information about how the TTW program works often prevents or reduces their Phase I milestone payments. One respondent stated that her organization's greatest concern is the "18 months prior earnings" milestone requirement. The issue is with MAXIMUS' online tool which includes an earned income inquiry. The system looks at income on a quarterly basis, so a site could potentially place a Ticket holder in a job in October, but if the person is not working in December, the EN will not receive any payment, not even for the initial placement. (The EN should actually be able to receive payment for the initial placement, but the concern expressed indicates challenges in terms of the perceptions and reality of the administration of payments.) One respondent believes his site has earned over \$10,000, but they have not been paid due to technical glitches such as these. Such issues discourage sites from investing in serving more Ticket holders, especially those they do not believe will make it to the second milestone.

Regarding their interaction with MAXIMUS, one respondent stated that work with the MAXIMUS staff had been 'pleasant' but finds that they are often non-responsive to his inquiries. A respondent, who works for a State agency, reported that they have access to data about their customers that is collected by the state. This data as it relates to specific customers, however, is not accepted by MAXIMUS as a demonstration that the organization has met a payment milestone. In some cases, when a customer submits a pay stub, MAXIMUS has rejected it as insufficient proof of employment. The respondent did not understand why MAXIMUS made that decision.

Respondents stated that there are a several areas of assistance from which they could benefit. Most respondents stated "yes" when given a choice of nine responses to the question: "Are you interested in building your capacity to serve as an Employment Network and generate revenue under the Ticket Program?" Similar to Group A, they were interested in:

- 1) Basic knowledge regarding the TTW program.
- 2) Increasing services that will assist individuals with disabilities to find employment.
- 3) Building staff knowledge about Social Security and disability.
- 4) Creating mechanisms and incentives for keeping Ticket holders engaged in services.
- 5) Stronger understanding of public benefit issues by Ticket holders and linking with benefit experts.
- 6) Development of efficient system for tracking of placements and verification of wages.
- 7) Creating partnerships that will increase capacity to meet the needs of Ticket holders.
- 8) Determining how operating as an Employment Network can be financially successful.
- 9) Streamlining overall administrative processes for identification of Ticket holders, assignments of Tickets, and payments from Social Security.

## Summary of Findings for Group B

As ENs in Group A reported, ENs in Group B also reported that the lack of operating funds to get the TTW program started greatly affected their ability to implement the TTW program successfully. ENs in this group reported that the greatest consequence of the lack of up-front funding was not being able to implement the program effectively. Some respondents in Group B reported that ENs need a well-defined process for implementing the TTW program. Some respondents reported that staff at their EN sometimes has difficulty administering the TTW program because they lose sight of the purpose of the program and because of the various requirements that must be achieved before the EN can earn revenue.

As a result of the difficulty in implementing the TTW program successfully, ENs also reported the need for their staff to be better trained in the best strategies for implementing the TTW program. Unlike the ENs in Group A, there were less concerns by ENs in Group B about Ticket holders' fear of assigning their Ticket. However, similar to Group A, ENs in Group B encountered individuals who were fearful of losing their Social Security benefits if they became TTW recipients.

The additional support services ENs in this group offered its TTW recipients included intense one-on-one case management. Several ENs in this group experienced fruitful partnerships with other social service organizations and were able to utilize those partnerships to assign more Tickets. Some ENs in this group relied heavily on the WIPA and CWICs to inform potential customers about the TTW program. CWICs were incorporated within the ENs administrative structure and Ticket holders met with CWICs prior to assigning Tickets. The downside to a partnership such as this, one respondent reported, is that sometimes there was some confusion at times about how Ticket assignments were being split.

A recurring issue reported by ENs in this group was clarifying their responsibility to assist customers in securing employment versus customer's responsibility to conduct a job search, especially customers who were not "work-ready". Some ENs in this group struggled with the fact that they were not required to work with anyone who sought their services. Many stated that it was the mission of the organization to assist people in whichever way the organization could.

Several respondents expressed concern about needing strategies and incentives for keeping Ticket holders engaged with the EN after they secured employment. They reported that the difficulty of generating revenue was due to the payment structure of the program; respondents stated that meeting the milestones is tough since reaching milestones is dependent on tracking a Ticket holder after the Ticket holder becomes employed. Several ENs expressed interest in partnering with DPNs in their local area so that the DPNs could assist them with following-up with their customers. Lastly, ENs reported that they would like to better utilize SSA and MAXIMUS in administering a more effective TTW program.

One EN who has had a positive experience becoming an EN and administering the TTW program stated: "More people should use it. It is a great program. Organizations need help finding a way to fit it into the budget because the initial outlay of resources is so great. Illinois has many great service options, and agencies that are willing to collaborate to get the greatest amount of services to the greatest amount of people. But there is not room for more stretching of the budget."

## Group C

Group C consisted of workforce development programs that had been relatively successful with the Ticket program, both in terms of Ticket assignments and generating revenue. While fourteen ENs were identified as potential for this category, interviewers were only able to reach three to conduct interviews. As a result the results are based on a small sample, but still provide significant insights into reasons for EN success. The most successful EN in Group C generated over \$50,000 in revenue. This EN reported their success was due in-part to their decision to create a separate entity that focused its resources on providing more intensive services for all customers so Ticket holders were easily incorporated into their existing program.

### Group C: Successful Strategies

#### Changes to Current Processes to Better Identify Potential TTW Customers

Regarding the recruitment and retention of customers, one respondent stated that his One-Stop added questions to their registration form giving customers the option to disclose their disability. Those who disclose their disability are then targeted for recruitment for the TTW program.

#### Targeted Marketing in Other Government/Social Service Programs

Several respondents in this group reported that the WISE events and the general orientations of the TTW program typically generated more interest in the TTW program than the public announcements and the mass mailings. However, the more media outlets are used to advertise the TTW program, the greater the number of inquiries about the TTW program the EN received.

One respondent noted that his EN actively markets their program to their social service partners in the surrounding community, hosts and attends WISE programs, send letters to all of the individuals listed on the SSA compact disk of referrals, and posts flyers about the TTW program at job fairs.

#### Constant Contact with Customer

One respondent reported that, from his experience, staying in constant contact with SSI and SSDI beneficiaries was the most beneficial strategy for recruiting Ticket holders. One EN reported that their staff tries to inform its customers about the benefits of participating in the TTW program. Another respondent reported that her EN utilizes several activities to recruit customers including utilizing a mobile unit, staying in constant contact with customers thru the Employ-Florida Market Place database, sending post cards to customers in mass-mailings, receiving VR referrals, emailing existing customers, and devising brochures, post cards, and emails that emphasize the benefits of the TTW program.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> The Employ Florida Marketplace “offers job seekers access to thousands of employment listings and businesses access to thousands of job seekers looking for entry-level to executive positions. The Marketplace is the state’s most comprehensive database of job openings, pulling job listings from CareerBuilder.com, Monster.com and MyFlorida.gov, the website for Florida government job openings as well as from jobs posted directly by registered employers, and jobs listed on the Web sites of Florida businesses, among other sources.” Employ Florida Marketplace < <http://www.workforceflorida.com/PrioritiesInitiatives/EmployFlorida/EmployFlorida.php>>. Accessed February 25, 2011.

## Selective Enrollment

One of the respondents in Group C noted that staff does not enroll customers for the TTW program who are not motivated. This EN also reported that they do not recommend customers for the TTW program via the One-Stop who need the services of public Vocational Rehabilitation. The same respondent also reported that his EN typically does not recommend individuals who need job coaching and who are not “job ready” for the TTW program. The respondent reported that his EN used to devote a significant amount of time identifying each customer’s needs. Some customers required only core services while others required intensive core services and job training. By being selective, the respondent is able to more effectively deploy their resources. Similarly, another respondent also stated that her EN does not work with all Ticket holders – just with those Ticket holders who are job-ready. She said that because of their limited resources, her staff does not “waste time with people that are not interested in standing on two feet.” She also reported that staff at her EN will not assign a customer’s Ticket until the customer has met with the local CWIC. Another respondent indicated that part of their success was due to selective enrollment in the Ticket program.

## Leveraging Resources through Collaborations and Partnerships

One of the ENs in Group C, reported that those individuals who agree to move forward with the Ticket assignment process, meets with the CWIC staff at the One-Stop, where their benefits are explained to them in detail. Another respondent reported that her EN has a strong partnership with WIPA counselors and independent living service providers in area who provide similar assistance. Customers meet initially with a case manager at the One-Stop, after expressing interest in the TTW program. The case manager assesses a customer’s needs and based on that assessment, services are offered to the customer.

One respondent reported that his EN is trying to create partnerships with employers so that they can receive tax credits or some kind of incentive for hiring TTW program participants. This same respondent reported that the TTW program has led to customers receiving better pay and increased job security as compared to those who are not in the TTW program. Another EN reported providing para-transit services and additional non-specified resources for the TTW customers.

## Educating and Informing Customers About TTW

Despite their success compared to ENs in Group A and B, ENs in Group C also encountered individuals who are fearful that they will lose their Social Security benefits. Many potential customers think that SSA will consider them overpaid if they are working. In order to combat this fear, ENs in Group C increased staff training and partnered with other ENs in their local area to try to raise the profile of their TTW program and eliminate misconceptions. As a result of these efforts, one respondent reported, the number of participants in the TTW program has increased. Another respondent stated that his organization combats these fears, helping Ticket holders focus on the benefits of self-sufficiency.

Since ongoing contact with the customer is necessary for milestone payment verification, the ENs that are losing track of the Ticket holders after the first milestone will never maximize their TTW revenues. One respondent reported that his EN offers a \$200 incentive to TTW customers to remain employed and in contact with the EN for one year. Another respondent reported utilizing an automated certification process (AutoPay) available through SSA to verify a customer’s wages. The respondent reported that once the TTW recipient is in the automated system, the employment verification process is automatic and transfers the burden of tracking a customer after employment from the EN to the SSA. The respondent reported that the automated service is valuable because many customers do not see any tangible benefits for participating in the TTW program after they have secured employment.

However, the downside of that method is that payment takes up to six months. Also, the automated process requires registration and other eligibility requirements that were unclear to the respondent.

## Group C: Challenges

### Client Tracking Issues

Respondents in Group C reported that there are quite a few challenges to implementing the TTW program. One respondent stated that tracking a person for five years after they have secured employment is too long of a length of time to track a person and is too much of a burden on staff, especially if the TTW customer is no longer interested in participating in the program once they have secured a job. Some ENs reported losing track of most Ticket holders after the first milestone payment. Once a TTW customer has secured a job, the customer must have an incentive to maintain a part of the program (this can be addressed through the AutoPay system described above).

One respondent reported that in a bad economy there are many layoffs and company closings. As a result, he reported, it is hard to keep track of customers after they have found and lost job after job. Another challenge respondents in this group reported was trying to navigate through customer's different cultural perspectives on work, benefits, and financial independence. One respondent argued that some TTW customers need an incentive to stop claiming disability and work. He also argued that many TTW customers only want part time or seasonal jobs, avoiding giving up benefits.

### Lack Funds to Support Operations

Many ENs in Group C, despite their success relative to the ENs in Group A and B, lack the funds to increase the support services they offer. One respondent reported that he can only offer more services by double dipping into other budgets. Another respondent reported that his EN does not have an additional revenue stream and can barely fund the hours currently spent on the TTW program.

## Group C: Recommendations

### Sharing Best Practices

A respondent stated that she would like to know what strategies other ENs administering the TTW program are employing to implement a strong program (e.g. Jacksonville Workforce Development Board gives seminars). She reported that her EN is trying to find a way to make the TTW program both successful and sustainable.

### Suggested Improvements to the TTW Program

Respondents reported that there are quite a few things about the TTW program that need improvement. Suggestions for ways to make administration of TTW easier include: 1) creating a streamlined Ticket holder identification process, 2) simplifying the method of verifying customers' wages, 3) simplifying the reporting requirements, and 4) expediting the milestone payments from SSA.

## Summary of Findings for Group C

The ENs in Group C were more successful administering the TTW program than the ENs in Groups A and B. Generally, ENs in Group C were able to administer the TTW program effectively by providing the required support

services to TTW customers, training staff about the TTW program, educating potential customers about the TTW program, convincing Ticket holders to assign their Tickets, as well as being able to track their Ticket holders effectively after the Ticket holder secured employment. ENs in this group, however, still reported the need for technical assistance in administering the TTW program.

## Overall Analysis and Conclusions

It seems clear from the results, that those One-Stops and workforce development systems that have experienced success with the Ticket program have either consciously or unconsciously recognized both the opportunities and critical factors in successfully generating revenue via the Ticket. For those who have experienced challenges, there is a lack of clarity of how to implement the Ticket in a way that is going to best utilize the existing service structure and strengths of the workforce development system. Many of the responses by Group A and Group B also clearly indicate a lack of knowledge and understanding regarding the Ticket program, how it is intended to operate, and the resources available to support it.

The experience and responses of the workforce development system staff interviewed, provide a number of insights in terms of how to assist One-Stop Career Centers in building capacity to serve as Employment Networks. Most respondents across all three groups reported that since their organization became an EN, they increased the number of support services they offer their customers. Many also reported doing their best to administer a strong TTW program despite feeling that they lacked the appropriate amount of funding to be able to administer the program to its full potential. Many respondents across all three groups also stated that the TTW program is a great program in theory but felt that without funding for services prior to placement, implementing it successfully is difficult.

### Need for Clearer Understanding of Intent of Ticket Funding

The need for up front funding is a legitimate concern, given the resource challenges faced by workforce development systems in combination with the high demand for services. However, it also indicates a misperception in terms of how the Ticket program model is intended to operate. Essentially, the Ticket is based on the premise that service providers will be rewarded with funding, when a Ticket holder assigned to them finds employment. The EN will continue to receive ongoing payments, if that individual maintains employment at a sufficient earnings level. This funding is intended in part as compensation for the job search and other assistance that the Employment Network provided to the individual prior to the job placement, as well as compensation for any ongoing assistance and support the Employment Network provides after the individual becomes employed (including assistance in re-placement after a job loss). While the outcome based nature of funding via the Ticket provides a challenge in terms of both risk and cash flow, it is a misperception that Employment Networks are not being compensated for the services provided prior to placement – they are just not being compensated at the time these services are being provided, and will only be compensated if those services result in job placement. Service systems and service providers both within and outside workforce development, have little experience in outcome-based funding systems, like the Ticket, and often struggle in terms of how to both perceive and utilize them effectively. While the Ticket does require a level of risk-taking by the Employment Network, the Ticket program also provides a number of opportunities that are not typical of other funding streams, that help counter these risks:

- A Ticket assignment does not preclude receiving funding from other sources to fund services – i.e., the Social Security Administration has no issue with funding from the Ticket being combined with other sources. The only

exception to this is funding and services from public Vocational Rehabilitation, which must comply with the requirements of Partnership Plus.<sup>16</sup>

- The service requirements for individuals served under the Ticket are highly flexible and require minimal documentation, as compared to other funding sources.

Given the outcome-based nature of Ticket funding, it is important for Employment Networks to be strategic regarding who they will serve under the Ticket. These criteria include:

- Ticket customers who are interested and willing to work at wage levels that will reduce and eliminate reliance on cash benefits from SSI and SSDI
- Individuals who are ready and willing to undertake a job search that in the relatively short-term will result in placement in a job that results in sufficient wages to trigger Ticket payments
- Individuals who need a relatively modest amount of services and supports prior to placement, or have access to necessary pre-placement services and supports from other funding streams (e.g., eligible individuals in the workforce development system could get necessary job training via WIA funding).

In applying such criteria, it is important to avoid overly stringent or artificial criteria in terms of “work readiness”, particularly given that services systems can sometimes be inaccurate in their assessment of an individual’s ability to succeed in employment. At the same time, an informed professional judgment that is expansive in nature is appropriate for determining who to serve via the Ticket program. This is not to say that the One-Stop should not serve these individuals at all. This would be counter to the One-Stop requirement under WIA to be universally accessible, as well as the presumption of employability for all which is at the core of many employer efforts for individuals with disabilities. However, the Ticket program is not a fit for all job seekers with disabilities, and it is important to strategically consider who can best be served under the Ticket and focus on those individuals. For those individuals for whom the Ticket program is not currently a fit, the One-Stop can assist in finding service alternatives available via the One-Stop that will assist them with their employment needs.

## Recruitment: Focusing on Existing Customer Flow

In addition to the funding issues, many of the interviewees indicated challenges in terms of recruitment and identification of Ticket holders. While the identification issues are significant, these hopefully will be addressed via the new data matching systems being put in place by SSA. Many of these comments however, appear to indicate a misperception about the need to go outside the workforce development system to recruit individuals. Data clearly indicate that One-Stop systems are already serving individuals that have Tickets (whether the individual or systems knows it or not).<sup>17</sup> The focus should therefore be on serving individuals who are already part of the existing customer flow. External recruitment should be done judiciously, in part to avoid spending time and resources on external marketing when a sufficient base of individuals already exists within the current customer base, and to also avoid spending time and resources focusing on individuals whose needs are not well-served by the One-Stop system.

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<sup>16</sup> Under Partnership Plus, an individual cannot be served simultaneously by a VR agency and an EN. For details, go to [http://www.yourTickettowork.com/offsite?back\\_\\_url=%2Fprogram\\_\\_resources&href=http%3A%2F%2Fpartnershipplus.cessi.net%2Findex.asp](http://www.yourTickettowork.com/offsite?back__url=%2Fprogram__resources&href=http%3A%2F%2Fpartnershipplus.cessi.net%2Findex.asp)

<sup>17</sup> A 2008 examination of One-Stop data in Massachusetts by the Institute for Community Inclusion indicated that 4% of One-Stop customers (over 7,000 individuals) were on SSI or SSDI. An examination of Iowa, Maryland, and Colorado found percentages of 2.4% to 3.3%, and 3,500 to 5,800 individuals per year. See Livermore, G., Colman, S. “Use of One-Stops by Social Security Disability Beneficiaries in Four States Implementing Disability Program Navigator Initiatives.” Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, May 2010.

## Key Factors For Success

In analyzing the results of these interviews, in combination with other reports<sup>18</sup> on the Ticket to Work and One-Stops, the following appear to be key factors for success:

- Targeting individuals who are truly interested and capable of going to work at the income levels necessary to trigger Ticket payments, and who are typical of individuals that the One-Stop serves and experiences success with.
- Integration of the Ticket program within existing administrative and service delivery structures, and leveraging other workforce development resources and programs to help support individuals being served under the Ticket.
- A strong knowledge base by staff regarding Ticket program operations, and the resources and assistance available to support them via MAXIMUS and SSA.
- Having a staff person who serves as the “point person” on Ticket (likely in conjunction with other duties) with customers and other staff, and who understands the importance of integrating Ticket customers within existing services.
- An ability to clearly explain the Ticket program to potential Ticket customers that results in a strong understanding of how the program operates, the opportunities for and responsibilities of the customer, and that results in engagement of individuals and Ticket assignments.
- Strong linkages to knowledge and expertise on the impact of employment on public benefits, via WIPA programs and similar resources.
- Streamlined administrative processes for identification of individuals, Ticket assignments, and verification of wages, that maximize the efficiency of staff and resources.

## Technical Assistance Recommendations

Given the identified factors for success, the following are recommendations for areas of focus in the provision of technical assistance to One-Stop Career Centers and workforce development systems to build their capacity as ENs.

- 1) Ensuring that One-Stop and workforce development staff has a clear understanding of the Ticket program in terms of how it operates, the administrative requirements, etc.
- 2) Development of a service model that is as efficient as possible in terms of administrative process and staff time, while responding effectively to the needs of Ticket holders to ensure successful placements.
- 3) Incorporation of the Ticket program within the existing administrative structures (e.g., MIS, case management) and service flow (e.g., intake, orientation, core – intensive – training services, etc.) of the One-Stop and workforce development system, and leveraging and utilizing the resources and services from the existing service structure.
- 4) Development of benchmarks for Ticket assignments, placements, and revenue projections, to ensure both clear goals, and an understanding of the long-term nature of generating significant revenue under the Ticket.
- 5) Implementation of strategies for increasing the identification of Ticket holder among existing and new One-Stop customers. Strategies in this regard include both increasing self-identification by existing customers in terms of SSI/SSDI, and the implementation of data matching of One-Stop customer lists with the SSA disability roles, that is current being implemented.

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<sup>18</sup> Livermore, G. “One-Stop Participation in Ticket to Work.” Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, July 2010.

- 1) Implementation of strategies for streamlined verification of employment and wages, with an emphasis on the use of Auto-Pay and similar strategies that will result in accurate wage verification on an ongoing basis, with minimal investment of staff time.
- 2) Creation of service flow and strategies (e.g., customer interview protocols) that will result in identification of individuals who are appropriate for the Ticket program, and result in engagement and Ticket assignments. This includes internal marketing of the Ticket at all existing customer contact points (e.g., intake, orientation, resource library, etc.).
- 3) Creation of streamlined mechanisms for Ticket assignment, that incorporate existing One-Stop employment planning processes, and that utilize the processes currently being implemented by SSA for workforce development which eliminate requirements for filing of Individual Work Plans.
- 4) Creation of materials and mechanisms for clearly explaining the Ticket program to customers, the promote understanding about the program and how it operates from a customer perspective, addresses concerns regarding benefit issues, and results in engagement of individuals interested in participating in the Ticket program.
- 5) Development of internal knowledge base and materials on benefit issues, in combination with strong linkages with WIPA programs, to ensure that benefit issues and concerns are properly addressed.
- 6) Development of linkages and partnerships with organizations focused on individuals with disabilities, as a source of technical knowledge, and as possible partners under the Ticket.
- 7) Utilizing MAXIMUS and other resources to support ENs more effectively, and ensuring that this support is responsive to the specific needs of workforce development systems and One-Stops.
- 8) Utilizing existing recruitment strategies for Ticket holders (e.g., WISE seminars) and incorporating them within the general outreach and recruitment strategies of the One-Stop.
- 9) Creation of a general culture and atmosphere that believes that people with disabilities can succeed in the workplace, enables individuals to envision job and career goals, and assists individuals to believe they can reduce and eliminate their reliance on public benefits.

Addressing these areas within a comprehensive technical assistance effort, will position One-Stop Career Centers and workforce development systems to build the necessary infrastructure that will result in success as an Employment Network in terms of both revenue generation and service delivery over the long-term.

## Appendix A: One-Stop Ticket to Work Project Interview Questions

### General Questions (all Employment Networks):

1. What is your organization's role in workforce development and with the One-Stop Career Centers?  
Options: One-Stop, One-Stop partner, One-Stop affiliate, Workforce Board, Workforce Development Service Administration, WIA Administrator, Other
2. According to our records you have been an Employment Network since \_\_\_\_\_ (date), and have had \_\_\_\_\_ (number of Tickets assigned) and have generated \_\_\_\_\_ (dollar amount) in payments. Does that sound about right?
3. Why did you become an Employment Network?
4. Since becoming an Employment Network, what activities have you undertaken to operate as an Employment Network and serve individuals under the Ticket program?

### Group A: Organizations with little or no activity:

- A. Why do you feel you have had so little activity in terms of Ticket assignments and revenue?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Inability to focus on program, due to other priorities
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Lack of staff to operate program
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Lack of staff/organizational knowledge regarding Ticket program
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Lack of recruitment of Ticket holders
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Inability to identify Ticket holders
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Unwillingness of Ticket holders to assign their Ticket
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Overall lack of structure for program
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Concerns by Ticket holders over loss of benefits
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Lack of One-Stop capacity to meet employment needs of people with disabilities
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Payment structure and/or level of payments from Social Security makes program financially unfeasible
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Level of investment required to build and operate the program is too high, without a clear return
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Administrative burden for operating program (i.e., Ticket assignments, filing of employment plans, need for verification of wages, etc.)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other:
- B. Are you actively recruiting Ticket holders? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  
*If Yes:* How are you recruiting Ticket holders? What type of results are you having?
- C. Have you had regular inquiries from Ticket holders? If so, what has been the outcome of those inquiries?

D. If individuals have been unwilling to assign their Tickets to the One-Stop, what have been the reasons?

E. Are you interested in building your capacity to serve as an Employment Network and generate revenue under the Ticket program? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

*If Yes:* What specific areas do you feel need to be addressed in order to build that capacity?

\_\_\_\_\_ Basic knowledge regarding Ticket program

\_\_\_\_\_ Building staff knowledge regarding Social Security and disability

\_\_\_\_\_ Recruitment/identification of Ticket holders

\_\_\_\_\_ Developing incentives for getting individuals to assign their Tickets to the One-Stop

\_\_\_\_\_ Increasing services that will assist individuals with disabilities to find employment

\_\_\_\_\_ Creating partnerships that will increase capacity to meet needs of Ticket holders

\_\_\_\_\_ Determining how operation as an Employment Network can be financially successful

\_\_\_\_\_ Streamlining overall administrative processes: identification of Ticket holders, assignments of Tickets, verification of employment/wages, payments from Social Security, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ Other:

*If No:* Why not?:

F. Are there any additional comments you have regarding the Ticket to Work program?

Group B: Organizations with Ticket assignments, but limited or no revenue:

A. Are you actively recruiting Ticket holders?

*If Yes:* How are you recruiting Ticket holders? What type of results are you having?

B. Why do you feel you have you have experienced challenges in generating revenue from individuals who have assigned their Tickets?

\_\_\_\_\_ Lack of follow-through by Ticket holders in utilizing services

\_\_\_\_\_ Concerns by Ticket holders over loss of benefits

\_\_\_\_\_ Lack of success by Ticket holders in obtaining employment

\_\_\_\_\_ Lack of One-Stop capacity to assist individuals with Tickets with their employment needs

\_\_\_\_\_ Lack of ability to track outcomes for Ticket holders (i.e., individuals may be employed, but One-Stop/workforce development system is unaware)

\_\_\_\_\_ General lack of structure for program in terms of tracking Ticket holders, billing, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ Lack of staff resources to administer/operate program

\_\_\_\_\_ Inability to focus on program, due to other priorities

\_\_\_\_\_ Payment structure and/or level of payments from Social Security

\_\_\_\_\_ Other:

- C. Are there any additional services you have provided to individuals who have Tickets besides the core services that individuals are already entitled to? If so, what are those services?
- D. As part of serving individuals under the Ticket program, have you linked individuals with benefits counseling programs, such as the Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Program (WIPA)? If so, how has that process worked?
- E. Are you interested in increasing your capacity to serve as an Employment Network and to be able to generate revenue under the Ticket program? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

*If Yes: What specific areas do you feel need to be addressed in order to build that capacity?*

*Probe for specific answers and underlying details/reasons. Categorize answers in the list below.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Basic knowledge regarding Ticket program
- \_\_\_\_\_ Building staff knowledge about Social Security and disability
- \_\_\_\_\_ Increasing services that will assist individuals with disabilities to find employment
- \_\_\_\_\_ Stronger understanding of public benefit issues by Ticket holders and linking with benefit experts
- \_\_\_\_\_ Creating mechanisms and incentives for keeping Ticket holders engaged in services
- \_\_\_\_\_ Development of efficient system for tracking of placements and verification of wages
- \_\_\_\_\_ Development of follow-up services for Ticket holders who become employed
- \_\_\_\_\_ Creating partnerships that will increase capacity to meet needs of Ticket holders
- \_\_\_\_\_ Determining how operation as an Employment Network can be financially successful
- \_\_\_\_\_ Streamlining overall administrative processes for identification of Ticket holders, assignments of Tickets, payments from Social Security, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other:

*If No: Why not?*

- F. Are there any additional comments you have regarding the Ticket to Work program?

Group C: Organization that have generated at least a moderate level of Ticket assignments and revenue

- A. What mechanisms have you used to recruit Ticket holders?
- B. Have you focused on individuals already using the One-Stop system, or have you done additional outreach?
- C. What process do you have in place to identify Ticket holders from among existing One-Stop customers?
- D. What processes (if any) do you use to recruit Ticket holders who are not using the One-Stop system?
- E. What process and incentives have you used so that individuals are willing to assign their Tickets to the One-Stop?
- F. For individuals unwilling to assign their Tickets, what has been the reason(s) for resistance?

- G. Are there any additional services you have provided to individuals who have Tickets besides the core services that individuals are already entitled to? If so, what are those services?
- H. Are individuals served under the Ticket program utilizing intensive and training services such as those funded under WIA or other One-Stop funding sources/partners?
- I. As part of serving individuals under the Ticket program, have you linked individuals with benefits counseling programs, such as the Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Program (WIPA)? If so, how has that process worked?
- J. What partners (if any) have you used in serving individuals under the Ticket program?
- K. What mechanism have you used to verify employment and wages for individuals under the Ticket program?
- L. Have you provided any type of post-employment follow-up services to individuals?
- M. In general, what do you feel has been key to the success you have experienced under the Ticket program?
- N. What have been the biggest challenges as an Employment Network under the Ticket program?
- O. What would assist you to increase your success under the Ticket program?

*Probe for specific answers and underlying details/reasons. Categorize answers in the list below.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Streamlined process for identification of Ticket holders
- \_\_\_\_\_ Increased incentives for individuals to assign their Ticket to the One-Stop
- \_\_\_\_\_ Streamlined process for Ticket assignment and development of employment plan
- \_\_\_\_\_ Streamlined process for verification of employment and wages
- \_\_\_\_\_ Increased knowledge/capacity to assist individuals with disabilities to find employment
- \_\_\_\_\_ Increase in staff resources dedicated to Ticket program
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ability to provide post-employment follow-up services
- \_\_\_\_\_ Streamlined billing/payment system from Social Security
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other:

- P. From your point of view, what are the positive features of the Ticket program?
- Q. What are the biggest challenges with the Ticket program?
- R. Are there any additional comments you have regarding the Ticket to Work program?

## Appendix B: One-Stop Ticket to Work Project Sites Interviewed

### Group A: ENs that assigned little or no Tickets and earned little or no revenue

Hollywood Worksource: Managed Career Solutions Rehabilitation Incorporated, California  
Pasco Hernando Workforce Board, Florida  
Chipola Regional Workforce Development Board, Florida  
Heartland Workforce Investment Board, Incorporated, Florida  
Two Rivers Regional Council of Public Officials, Illinois  
Indiana South Central Regional Workforce Board, Indiana  
Columbia Industries, Washington Reach Incorporated, Indiana  
Partners for Workforce Solutions, Indiana  
River Valley Resources, Indiana  
Work One Alliance, Strategic Growth, Indiana  
Lafayette City Parish Consolidated Government: Disadvantaged Business Association, Louisiana  
LAT Workforce Investment Board Incorporated, Louisiana  
Future Works, Massachusetts  
Goodwill Industries of Western Michigan, Michigan  
Eastern New Mexico University Ruidoso Branch Community, New Mexico  
Delaware County DBA CDO Workforce NY Career Centers, New York  
North County Workforce Partnership Incorporated, New York  
Rochester Works, New York  
Town of Hempstead Workforce Investment Act Administrator, New York  
Workforce Essentials Incorporated, Clarksville, Tennessee  
Workforce Investment Board, Tennessee  
Northeast Texas Workforce Board, Texas  
Charlotte County South Central Workforce Investment Board, Virginia  
Skill Source, Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board, Virginia  
DC Department of Employment Services, Washington, DC

### Group B: ENs that assigned Tickets but earned very little revenue

Maricopa Workforce Connections, Arizona  
Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board, Incorporated, Connecticut  
City of Peoria Workforce Development Department, Illinois  
Workforce Investment Board SDA-83, Louisiana  
Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Employment Services, Maine  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Young Women's Christian Association, Pennsylvania  
South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce, South Carolina  
Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, Wisconsin  
Career Place Middlesex Community College, Woburn, MA  
Goodwill Industries of Knoxville, Tennessee

### Group C: ENs that assigned a significant number of Tickets and earned revenue

First Coast Workforce Development, Incorporated, Florida  
Worknet Pinellas, Incorporated, Florida  
Golden Crescent Workforce Centers, Texas