

What is Plan for Achieving Self-Support?

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Note: The slides will advance automatically, but you may move or pause them manually by using the arrow buttons below.

What is a PASS?

- Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS)
- Social Security Work Incentive
- A way to support people who are interested in working and becoming self-sufficient
- Allows a person to set aside money while still being eligible to receive benefits

PASS & Starting a Business: Where might I look for the money to set aside?

- Example

Person eligible for SSI and SSDI

\$420/month SSDI

+ \$237/month SSI (reduced amount)

\$657/month (benefits total)

Continued

- Can set aside \$400/month from SSDI check

| |
|---------------------------------|
| \$420 SSDI |
| <u>- \$400 (PASS set aside)</u> |
| \$20 |
- New Monthly Benefits Income

| |
|------------------------|
| \$637 (full SSI) |
| <u>+ \$20 (SSDI)</u> |
| \$657 (benefits total) |
- \$657/month for living expenses + \$400/month set aside

What do I need to do to get started with PASS?

- Application form
 - SSA Form 545 (www.ssa.gov) suggested but not required
 - Submitted to your regional PASS specialist
- For self-employment
 - Include a business plan
 - Work goal + business details
 - Reviewed by an expert (i.e.- SBDC counselor, microenterprise counselor, or banker)

Continued

- PASS application should include (ideally):
 - SSA Form 545
 - Business plan
- The process
 - Submit application
 - Review by PASS specialist
 - PASS specialist sends application status letter
 - Can appeal if not approved

Where can I go to get help writing my PASS?

- PASS specialist
- Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Projects
 - Community Work Incentive Coordinators
 - Can assist with understanding and filling out the application
- Ask the PASS specialist for a list of local resources and supports

Have we missed anything you think people may be thinking about?

- PASS cannot go on indefinitely
- List some milestones and measurements on the application
- PASS must ending date
- For self-employment
 - The SSA expects a minimum of 18 months to become stable
 - Can be shorter or greater- must be justified in writing

Continued

- End date is based on:
 - Reaching the earning goal
 - paying for all the expenses needed to reach that earning goal
- In the rules there is *no* time limit
 - Based on the person and his/her needs
- For self-employment
 - Business plan needs to include financial projections
 - both with PASS and after it ends

What can PASS pay for?

- Any expenses related to your work goal
- Examples
 - Inventory
 - Vehicles
 - Support
 - Impairment related work expenses
- *Cannot* pay for debts that were incurred before a PASS began

Are there any limits as to how much money I can set aside?

- In a PASS account you slowly build up money over a series of months
- Amount is based on:
 - How much you can set aside monthly
 - How long your PASS plan lasts
- There is no maximum limit
- Not a lump sum but an accumulation of funds
- Can access monthly or after a number of months

Do I need to spend all of that money in the PASS plan before it ends?

- YES
- Money set aside is specifically for expenses that are approved by the PASS specialist
- PASS is approved for a specific work goal
 - Can request a change in the PASS for anything *but* the work goal

Continued

- Items that can change:
 - Allocation of money set aside
 - Length of PASS
- Put changes in writing and submit to the PASS specialist

What money could I set aside in a PASS to start a business?

- Earned income
 - SSA only looks at a portion of earned income wages and adjusts SSI check accordingly
 - You can set aside that income in a PASS
 - You can continue to receive an SSI benefit
- Resources
 - Limits- \$2000 (individual), \$3000 (couple)
- Unearned income
 - SSDI, adoption subsidy, and veterans benefits

Who would I go see to talk about setting aside that money into an account?

- Get the PASS approved first
- The approval letter will designate a beginning time and amount for setting money aside
- Based on the PASS application

Continued

- After approval you should:
 - Set up a separate bank account for PASS funds
 - Begin setting aside the money
- Ask for help if separating the money is confusing
- PASS specialists and Community Work Incentive Coordinators are happy to help

Can you give us an example?

- Joe Steffy
 - SSDI cash benefit
 - Set aside to pay for start-up costs
 - Other resources:
 - Developmental Disabilities Council grant
 - Vocational Rehabilitation services

Continued

- PASS is unique
- PASS could potentially pay for all expenses for the first 18 months
- All sales and earnings could accumulate and be a cushion for after PASS ends
- PASS is also used for equipment
 - Example
 - Engraver- bought equipment for working

Do you have any advice for people who are interested in using a PASS?

- Contact a Community Work Incentive Coordinator during the discovery stage
 - Ask about the feasibility of a PASS
 - If feasible, continue to work with the coordinator on PASS details
- Community Work Incentive Coordinators need:
 - General information and details about your plans
 - As you go along the process and you get more details about your business, they can give you more details about how PASS can work.