

Exploring a New Career with Ticket to Work



TICKET
to Work | **WISE**
Work Incentive Seminar Event

JANUARY 28, 2026

Live Webinar Will Begin at 3 p.m. ET

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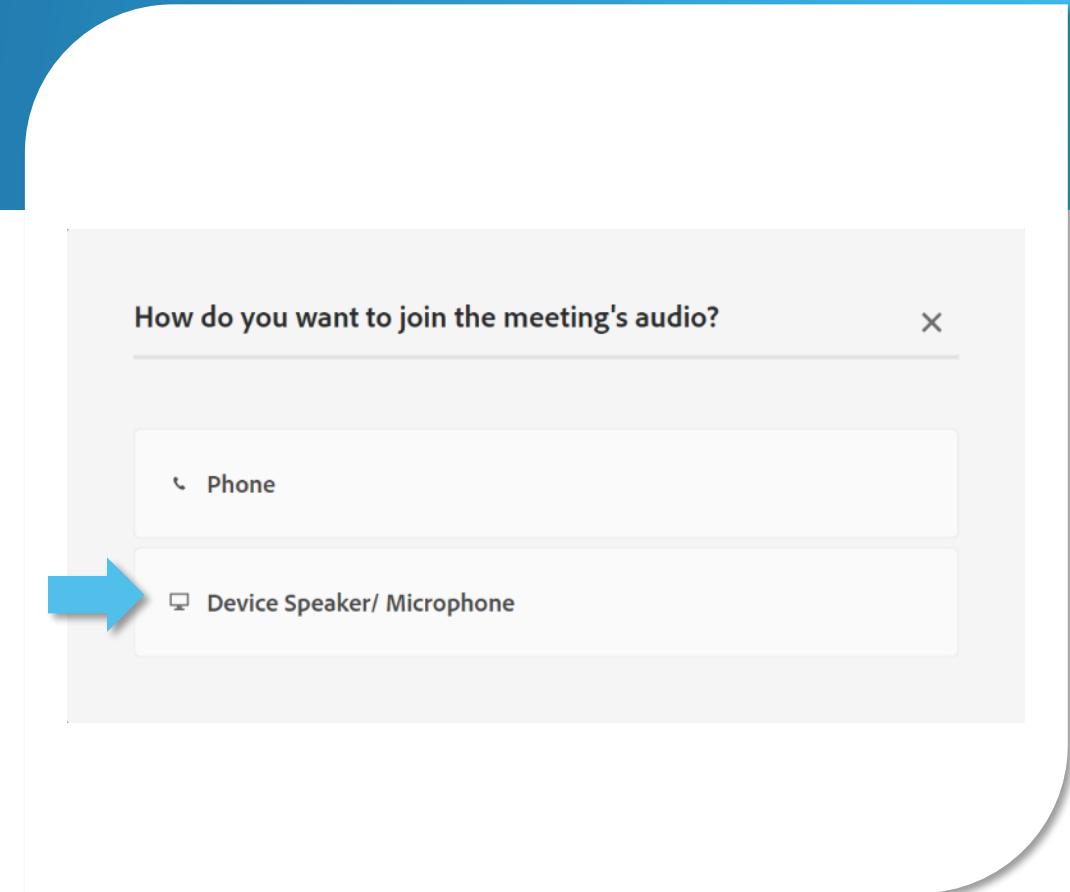
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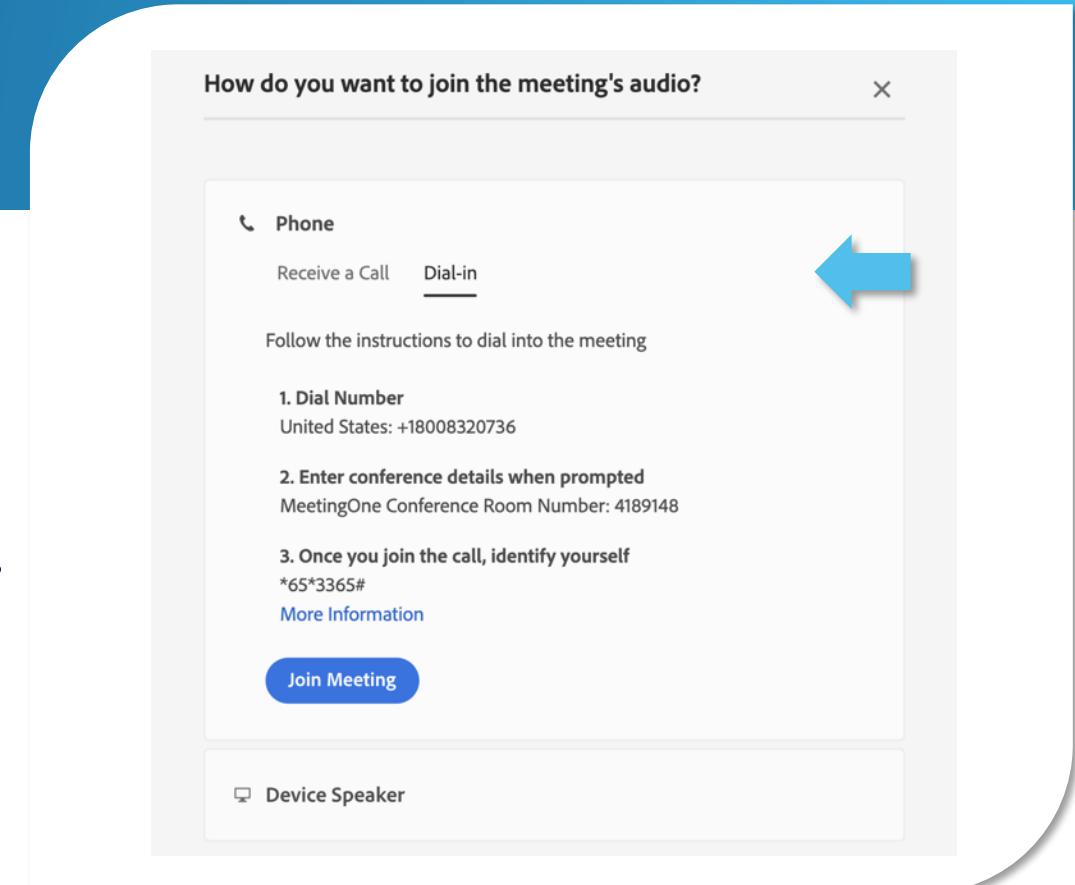
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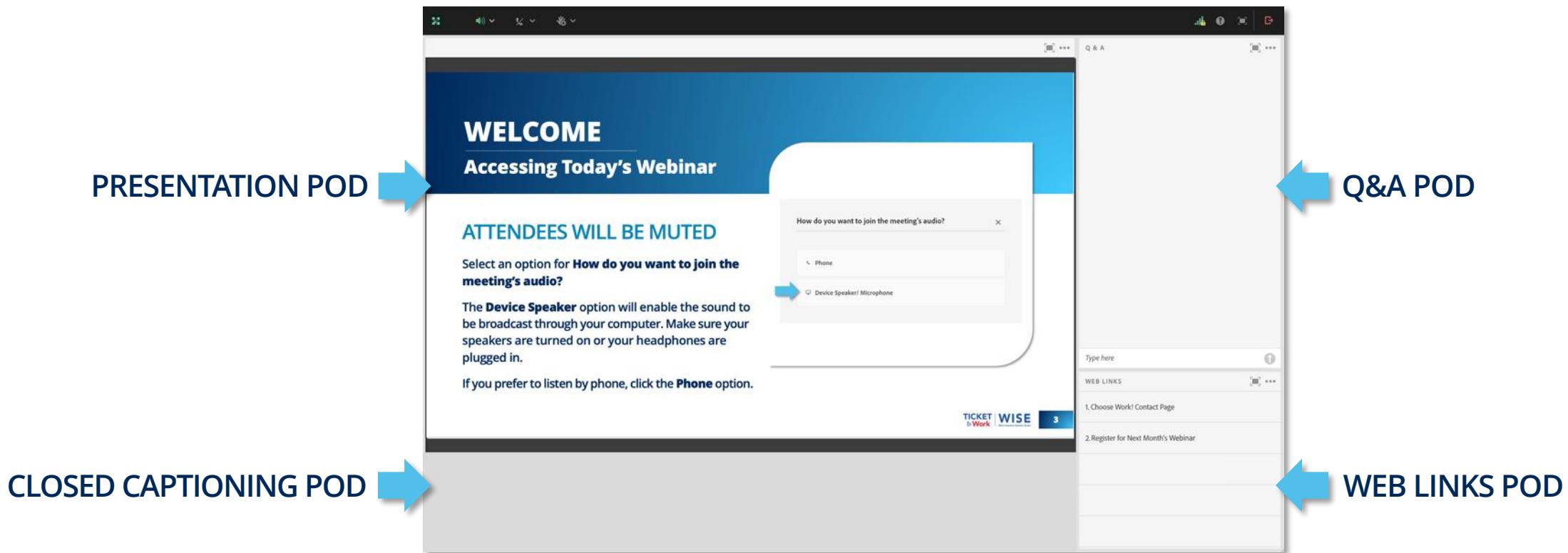
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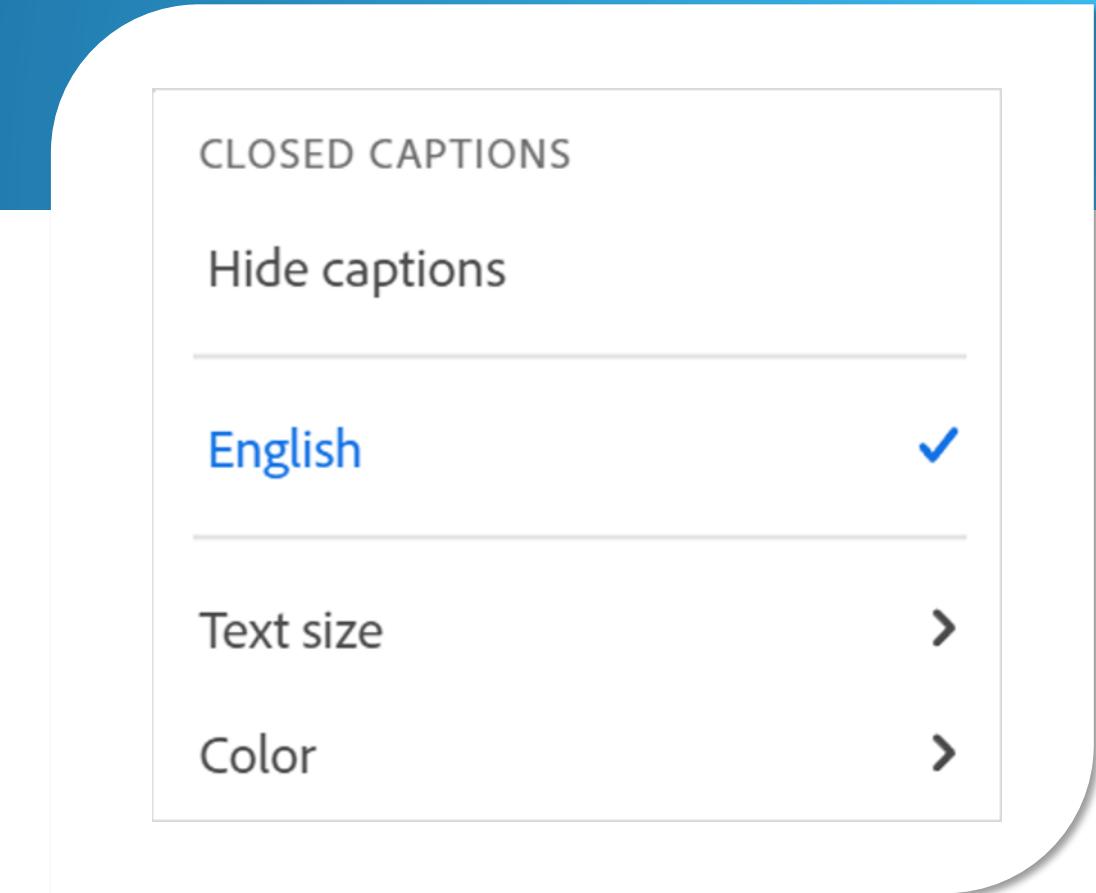
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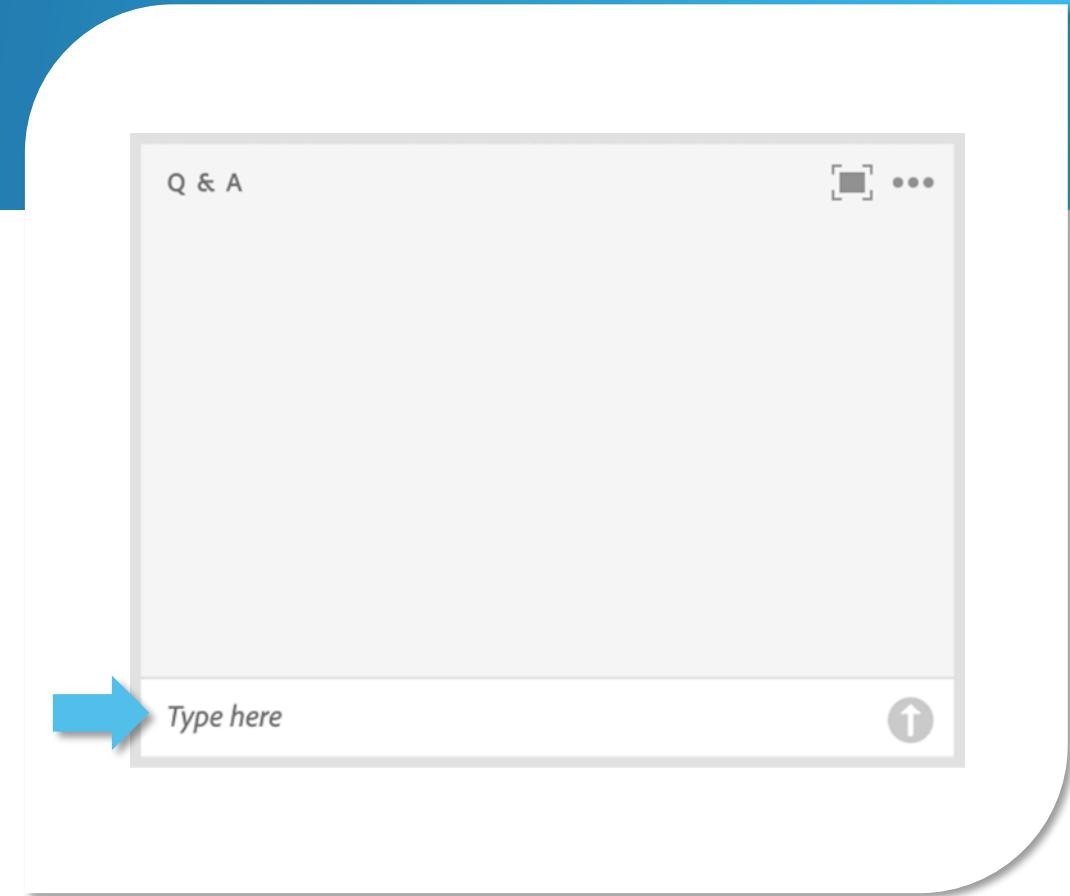


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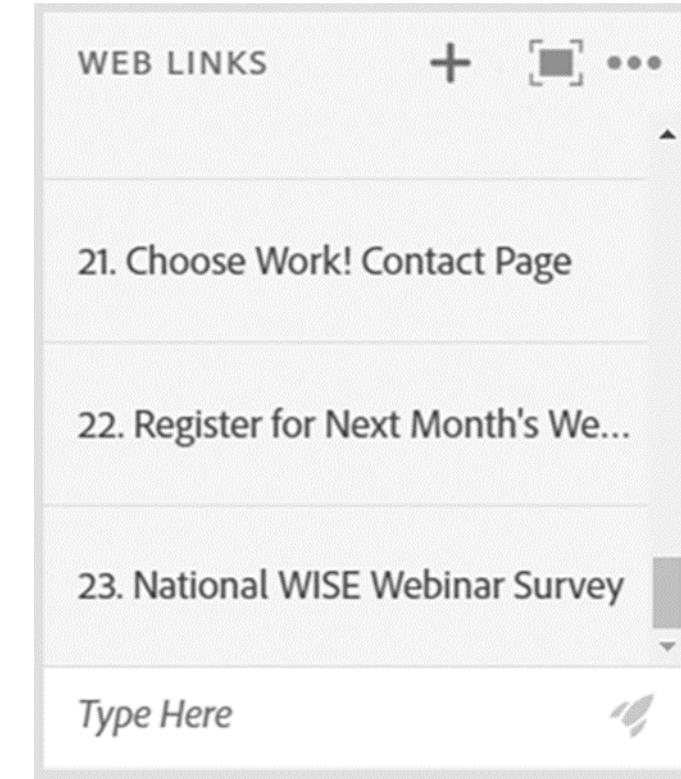


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WELCOME

Presenters



MODERATOR
Raymond A. Cebula, III, J.D.
Cornell University



PRESENTER
Derek Shields
Ticket Program Team

Webinar Overview

Exploring a New Career with Ticket to Work

Exploring a New Career

What is Social Security's Ticket to Work Program?

Who Can Help You Achieve Your Work Goals?

Tips for Changing Your Career

Exploring a New Career

Who Is Making a Career Change?

- A survey noted that 44% of the American workforce planned career transitions within the year 2025, and around 51% indicated they change jobs every one to five years.
- The average person changes careers 5 - 7 times in their working life, with around 30% of the workforce changing jobs annually.
- 67% of career changers report increased job satisfaction after transitioning.



Sources: gameofjobs.org/how-many-americans-switch-jobs-each-year.html, 54 Career Change Statistics for 2025

Why Career Change Is So Common

There are many reasons you may decide to explore a new career, including:

- Life changes, and your needs, education, and priorities may change
- Change in health
- Remote and other flexible types of jobs (including hybrid positions) are more common than in the past.
- People also want work that feels meaningful





Career Change Is Possible, Especially with Ticket to Work

You Can Change Careers

You may already have skills that can help you move into a new job.

- Soft skills like problem solving, staying organized, and helping customers are needed in many jobs.
- These skills can transfer to new careers, even in different fields.
- If you need to refresh or learn new skills, you can access training through online classes and certifications that let you learn new skills remotely and at your own pace.



Ticket to Work Can Help

You don't have to make a career change on your own.

The Ticket to Work (Ticket) Program:

- Is a free and voluntary Social Security program
- Offers career development for people ages 18 through 64 who receive Social Security disability benefits (SSDI and/or SSI) and want to work





**Who Can Help You
Achieve Your Work Goals?**

Achieving Your Goals with Ticket to Work

As you think about returning to work and possibly changing jobs or careers, you may have questions and need support.

- Connecting with a Ticket Program service provider can help you develop achievable goals and determine the steps you need to take to find and maintain employment in your new career.
- Ticket Program service providers can also help you identify the type of job or career you might enjoy and any transferable skills you may have.



Ticket Program Service Providers

Through the Ticket Program, You'll Have Access to a Variety of Ticket Program Service Providers, Including:



Employment
Networks
(EN)



State Vocational
Rehabilitation
(VR) Agencies

Employment Network (EN)

An **EN** is a private or public organization that has an agreement with Social Security to provide free employment support services to people who are eligible for the Ticket Program.

Many state public workforce systems, such as American Job Centers, are **Workforce ENs**.



How Can Working With an EN Help You?

ENs provide services and supports designed to help you on the path to financial independence through work. They may include helping you to:

- Identify your work goals
- Write and review your resume
- Prepare for interviews
- Request reasonable accommodations
- Receive benefits counseling
- Report wages



State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agency

A **State VR agency** provides a wide variety of services to help people with disabilities return to work, enter new lines of work, or enter the workforce for the first time. A State VR agency may offer benefits counseling and may also be able to help you with:

- Vocational rehabilitation
- Training and education



Some states have separate VR agencies that serve individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

How Can Working With a VR Help You?

VR agencies:

- Usually work with individuals who need more significant services.
- In some states, this includes intensive training, education, and rehabilitation.
- They may also provide career counseling and job placement assistance as well as counseling about how earnings from work may affect Social Security disability benefits.



How Do You Find a Service Provider?



For a list of service providers, call the Ticket to Work Help Line at **1-866-968-7842** or **1-866-833-2967 (TTY)**, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. ET



To find a service provider online, visit the [Find Help page](#). Search by:

- ✓ ZIP code
- ✓ Services offered
- ✓ Disability type
- ✓ Languages spoken
- ✓ Provider type
(EN, Workforce EN, VR)



Q&A

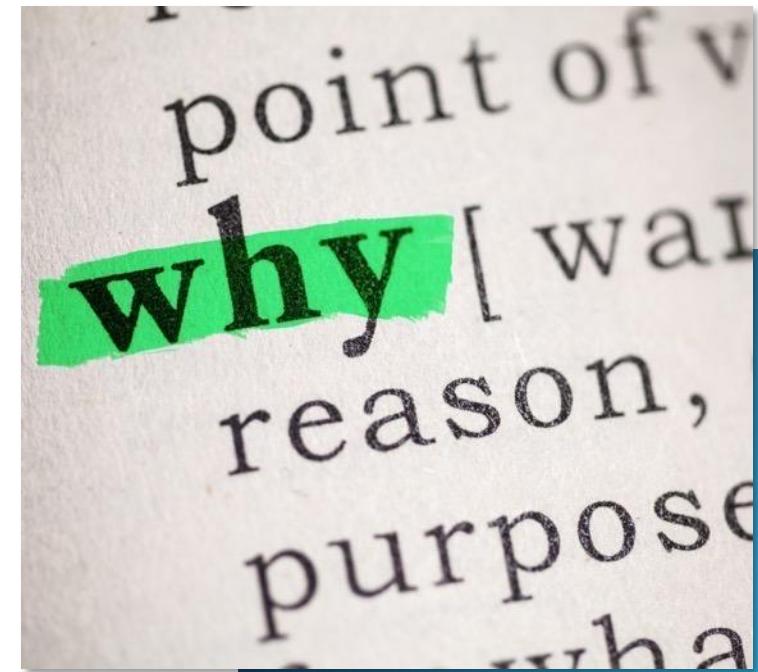


Practical Tips for Exploring a New Career

Identify Your Why

Get started by asking yourself:

- If you are working, what do you like and dislike about your current job? What are your likes and dislikes about a previous job?
- What are you looking for in a new field? Opportunity for growth, more income, more work-life balance?
- Do you want to change industries or find a new type of job in the same field?
- Do you need new skills or education?
- What are your interests, core values, and skills?



Make a Plan!

- Work with a Ticket Program service provider to develop an Individual Work Plan (IWP) — your roadmap to success!
- An EN or VR will help you create a plan, approve your plan, and provide resources to help you achieve your plan's goals.
- Identify **SMART goals** related to your career change. Make sure they are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time Based.
 - These goals can include saving money for a car or saving money for post-secondary education courses.



Build Your New Network

- Changing careers could mean working in a different industry. Looking for a new job may take some time, but you can use that time to your advantage.
- While you apply for jobs and wait for interviews, grow your network! Networking can help you find new opportunities and show you're serious about trying something new.
- Attending career fairs, alumni meet and greets, or reaching out to potential new companies for informational interviews helps you build professional relationships in the industry before you've even worked your first day.

Update Your Resume

- Now that you know what type of work you'd like to pursue and have the requisite skills, it's time to start applying for a new position.
- A hiring manager will use your resume to determine if you're a good fit for a position.
- Make sure your resume will stand out. It should match the job requirements and highlight your transferable skills.
- A Ticket program service provider can help you create a resume for your new career.



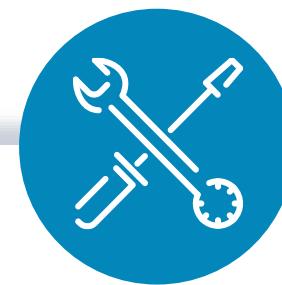
Make Your Resume Relevant

Demonstrate How Your Skills Could Be Applied To a New Position



School Teacher

- Strong, clear communication skills
- Familiar with various computer programs



Mechanic

- Understands importance of attention to detail
- Rapid problem-solving skills



Nurse

- Works well under pressure
- Comfortable with a variety of personality types

Develop a Compelling Cover Letter

- Why a cover letter matters when you change careers:
- It helps you explain your story
- It shows how your past work connects to your new goal
- It helps employers understand your strengths
- It shows motivation and confidence



Identify Your Transferable Skills

Transferable skills are useful in many jobs and are sometimes more important than experience in a particular field.

- Every job teaches you something useful.
- Knowing your skills can help build confidence and guide your career choices.
- Skills can come from many parts of life; you don't need recent work experience to have valuable skills.



What are Your Soft Skills?

- Think about the skills you use every day, no matter what job you've had.
- Soft skills such as communication, teamwork, or time management are essential for working in a collaborative environment.



Photo from Disability:IN

What are Your Technical Skills?

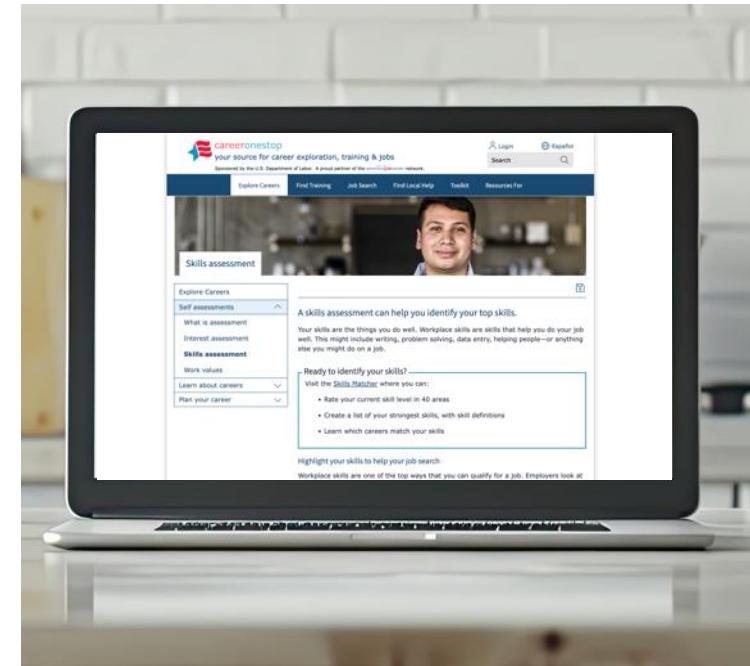
- Technical skills can also help you move more easily between industries.
- For example, a basic understanding of Microsoft Office, project management principles, or writing skills are useful in a variety of workplaces.



Photo from Disability:IN

Where to Find Help

- If you need help determining what skills you've gained at work or volunteering, Career OneStop has a helpful tool to identify transferable skills that you can highlight during an interview.
- You can also ask your Ticket Program service provider for help.



Meet Rebecca



A Second Chance Leads to a New Career

- After surviving aggressive cancer, Rebecca reassessed her future and decided she wanted to return to work in a new field.
- Although she had spent 20 years as a teacher, she felt ready for a fresh start and broader connections beyond the classroom.



Using Support Systems to Make a Career Shift

- Rebecca received a letter in the mail explaining the Ticket Program.
- With help from an Employment Network, she received:
 - Benefits counseling to understand how working would affect SSDI/Medicare
 - Career guidance, resume updates, and interview preparation
 - A personalized Individual Work Plan to map her transition into a new field
 - Work Incentives gave her the confidence to pursue a new direction while maintaining financial and medical stability during the transition



Launching a New Career

- Rebecca moved into a role with the American Kennel Club, conducting kennel inspections across the country.
- Rebecca's new career aligns with her interests, offers meaningful work, and represents a complete reinvention of her professional identity.



KEY TAKEAWAY

Rebecca's story shows how major life events can spark a successful career reinvention — and how the right support can make a bold transition achievable.

Your Next Chapter is Possible

- Career change is often just part of life. With the right support, it can be a positive and empowering experience. You deserve work that fits your life today.
- The Ticket Program will help you explore your options, build new skills, and move toward the future you want.



Q&A



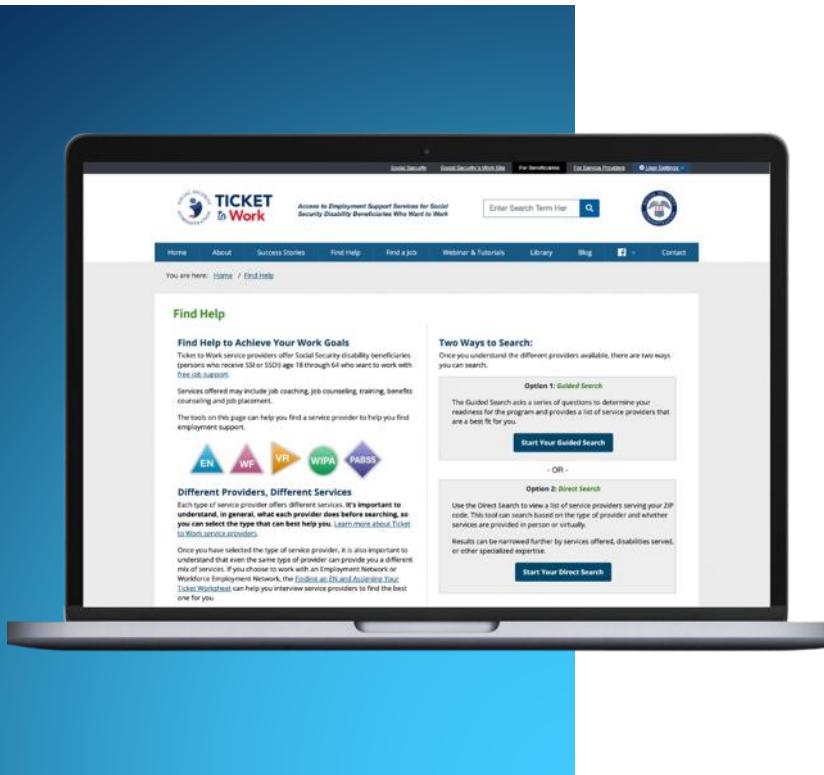
How To Get Started

Social Security's Ticket to Work Program has resources ready to help you get started!

Call the Ticket to Work Help Line
1-866-968-7842
1-866-833-2967 (TTY)

Visit Our Website
choosework.ssa.gov

Use the Find Help Tool
choosework.ssa.gov/findhelp



How To Connect



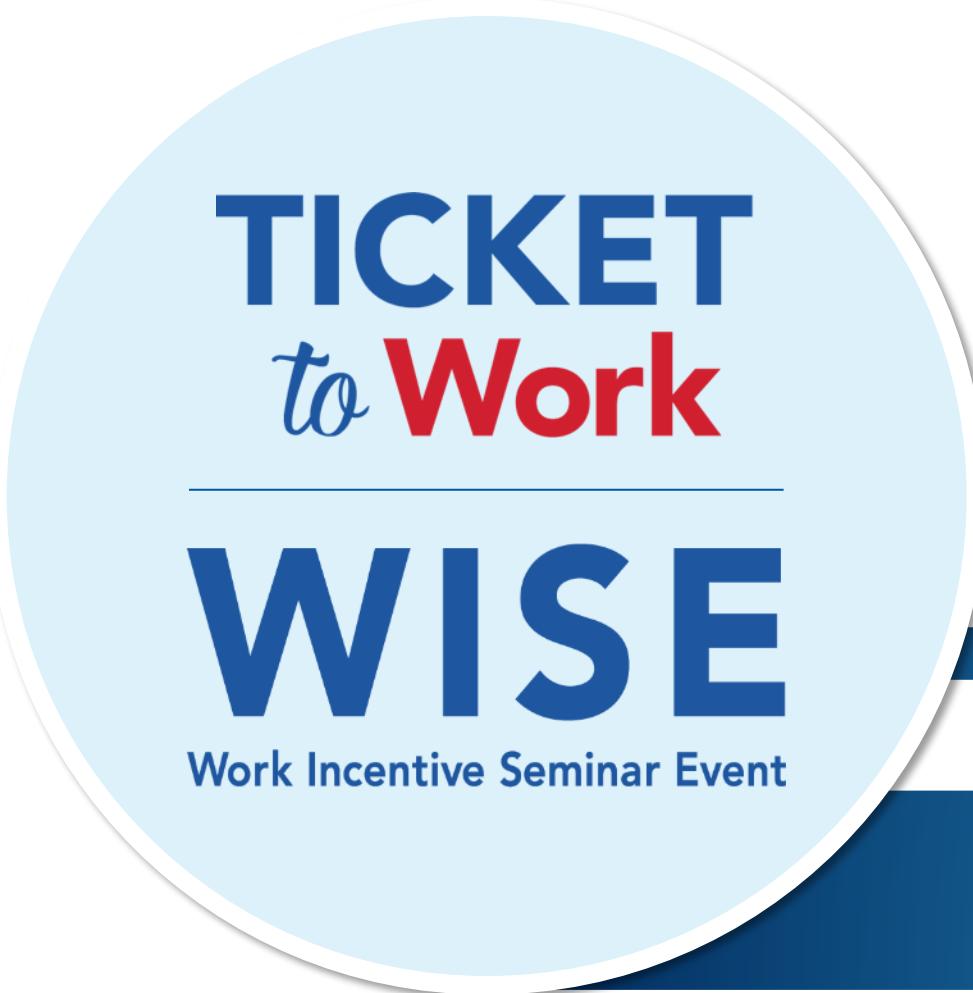
Visit the Choose Work! Contact page to find us on social media and subscribe to blog and email updates.



Opt-in to receive text messages by texting TICKET to 1-571-489-5292. Standard messaging rates may apply. You may opt-out at any time.



Email us at
TicketToWork@ssa.gov.



TICKET
to **Work**

WISE

Work Incentive Seminar Event

Join Us for Our Next WISE Webinar!

How Will Work Affect My Social
Security Disability Benefits?

February 25, 2026
3 – 4:30 p.m. ET

REGISTER ONLINE

or call **1-866-968-7842** or
1-866-833-2967 (TTY)