

# Working from home helped Lisa Seeley get out more.



For some people with a disability, being able to work from home would offer a solution that could allow them to meet career and financial goals. Working from home is just one of many job accommodations that can offer people the flexibility they need to enter the workforce. Through Social Security's Ticket to Work program, you can get free career counseling and guidance on job accommodations. That's what Lisa Seeley did when severe anxiety disorders restricted her life and her ability to work. Social Security's most recent Ticket to Work success story celebrates Lisa's recovery and the contribution that employment has made to her well-being.

*"Crowds and open spaces were very difficult for me to handle," she recalls. "... I had to move into a group home [because] my mom and I didn't know how to deal with my agoraphobia and panic disorder. I was lucky to be able to receive Social Security disability benefits, and ...the treatments I needed to get healthy again."*

With treatment, Lisa learned to do simple things that were not possible previously. As she recovered, she completed a year of college in 2002. Her self-esteem grew and she was determined to find work.



*"I wanted to help people in situations like my own," she recalls. "It was overwhelming at first: battling anxiety disorder; worrying about losing my benefits... I was very nervous about [working]. I knew my disability would require [job] accommodations, and I felt concerned about the anxiety interfering with long-term employment."*

Lisa knew she needed help understanding how work would affect her Social Security disability benefits. She did some research online and read about Social Security rules, known as "Work Incentives." Work Incentives make it easier for adults with disabilities to enhance their job skills through education, training and work experience. While preparing to find and sustain employment, SSDI and SSI recipients like Lisa can still receive Medicaid or Medicare coverage and some cash benefits from Social Security. Social Security disability beneficiaries (age 18 through 64) are also eligible to receive free employment support services through the Ticket to Work program.



With the right support, Lisa found her path to a better future. Find yours. To learn more, call the Ticket to Work Help Line at **1-866-968-7842 (V)** or **1-866-833-2967 (TTY)**, or visit **[www.socialsecurity.gov/work](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work)**.



Lisa decided to learn more about Ticket to Work and Work Incentives by calling the Ticket to Work Help Line.

She found help with an authorized Ticket to Work service provider known as an Employment Network (EN). Through the Ticket program, ENs across the country help job-seekers with disabilities prepare for the workforce, find employment, or advance in their current position. Because she was concerned about whether her condition would be compatible with working in an office environment or commuting, Lisa wondered whether working from home would be an option.

Lisa's EN, Employment Options, Inc. (EO), helped her plan her future. She received career counseling and advice about job accommodations. Together they developed an Individual Work Plan, and decided her best option would be to work from home. Then something out of the ordinary happened.

It is not common for an EN to hire the people they serve. But Lisa's EN had a need and recognized that she could fulfill it. Lisa now works from home and offers counseling services over the phone. Working from home accommodates Lisa's disability, and offers her the flexibility she needs now as a parent of two children. She is able to integrate work with running her household and says she has found the perfect job.

Lisa credits employment and the help she received through Ticket to Work with improvements in her life. She believes that working has been essential to her recovery. She no longer relies on Social Security benefits, and says that life is "wonderful."

*"Employment Options, by chance, had an opening for a job counselor. When they learned that I had related work experience and saw my qualifications, they hired me!"*

*"Working makes me feel empowered. It has helped me grow. I do not suffer any longer from agoraphobia. I actually travel to Florida for work meetings and look forward to the trips. I am now able to run a household while helping other people like me find their calling. I am so lucky to have found Employment Options. I would not have the ... courage to go back to work [without them]. Thanks [to] Employment Options and the Ticket to Work program, I have changed my life!"*



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