

B1a. Qualitative Outreach to Ticketholders – Program Participants



OMB # XXXX-XXXX
OMB Expiration Date: XX/XX/XXXX

[DATE]

[NAME]

[ADDRESS LINE 1]

[ADDRESS LINE 2]

[CITY], [STATE] [ZIP]

Dear [NAME]:

The Social Security Administration (SSA) hired Mathematica, a policy research firm, to help it learn more about the Ticket to Work (TTW) program. The TTW program provides services to help disability beneficiaries achieve steady long-term employment by providing them with greater choices and opportunities to go to work if they want to. It is funded by SSA and includes Employment Networks (ENs) (including Vocational Rehabilitation [VR] agencies), Work Incentives Planning Assistance (WIPA), and Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS).

The Mathematica study team needs your help to learn more about people's experiences with the TTW program. They would like to talk to a small number of Ticketholders like you. No matter how much or how little you have participated in the program, your thoughts and opinions are very important to the success of the study. If you decide to have a telephone conversation about your TTW experience, **Mathematica will send you a \$40 Visa gift card as thanks for talking with them.**

You might have seen other invitations to complete a survey about TTW. This invitation is different. It is an invitation to participate in a phone conversation about your experiences with TTW.

Please call Mathematica at the toll-free number [NUMBER] to:

- Take part in a 40-minute phone conversation about TTW with a Mathematica study team member, or
- Schedule a conversation for another time that's convenient for you

OR

- Let Mathematica know you are not interested in participating in a phone conversation about TTW.

Mathematica study team members are available to take your call Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. You can leave a voicemail outside of these hours, and a team member will call you back. **This opportunity is limited—please call now!**

Talking to a Mathematica study team member about your experiences in TTW is your choice. You may skip any questions you do not want to answer. To protect your privacy, Mathematica will not share your answers in any way that reveals who you are unless required to do so by Federal laws, regulations, and directives.

Sincerely,

[Placeholder]
Susan Wilschke



Associate Commissioner of the Office of Retirement and Disability Policy



Privacy Act Statement

Collection and Use of Personal Information

Section 1110(a) of the Social Security Act, as amended, allows us to collect this information, which we will use to conduct research and improve SSA programs. Providing us this information is voluntary; not providing all or part of the information will not affect you. As law permits, we may use and share the information you submit, including with other Federal agencies, contractors, and others, as outlined in the routine uses within System of Records Notice (SORN) 60-0218, available at www.ssa.gov/privacy. The information you submit may also be used in computer matching programs for Federal benefits eligibility and to recoup debts under these programs.

Privacy Notice: SSA's privacy, security, and accessibility policies are located on their official website at <https://www.ssa.gov/privacy>. Mathematica is taking precautions to protect your privacy and PII, such as by using secure equipment in a private location. To minimize any risk of access by unauthorized third parties, we recommend that you ensure no one enters the room with you during the meeting. General information about SSA programs may be found at <http://www.ssa.gov/>.

Consent Statement for Ticket to Work Evaluation Interviews



What is the Ticket to Work evaluation, and who is conducting it?

The Social Security Administration (SSA) is conducting an evaluation of the Ticket to Work (TTW) programs offered by Employment Networks (ENs) (including Vocational Rehabilitation [VR] agencies), Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA), and Protection & Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS). SSA hired Mathematica, a national research company, to carry out the evaluation.

Why are you conducting these interviews?

We want to learn about your experiences with the TTW program, no matter how much or how little you have participated. The TTW program provides services to help disability beneficiaries achieve steady long-term employment by providing them greater choices and opportunities to go to work if they want to.

What do you want me to do?

We ask for your consent to participate in a voluntary, one-time, 40-minute, one-on-one interview. There will be one interviewer, who will record the session with your consent. During this interview, we will ask you to discuss your experiences with Ticket Act programs and services. We are conducting the interviews by telephone.

We ask for your permission to take notes and record what you say to correctly capture what you tell us. By consenting to participate, you are agreeing to Mathematica maintaining any information that you share during your participation. If at any point you do not want to continue participating, you can leave the interview. We will use what we learn to provide SSA with information about the needs of people with disabilities.

How was I selected for this interview?

You are eligible to "assign your Ticket" to an EN or previously "assigned your Ticket" to an EN or received services from a WIPA provider.

Do I have to complete this interview?

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. The interview is being conducted for research purposes. If you decide to or not to volunteer, it will not affect any decision SSA makes about your current, or future, disability benefits or payments.

How will you protect my privacy?

We will follow Federal law and regulations to protect your privacy. SSA and Mathematica will protect your personal information collected during the interview consistent with Federal law, regulations, and directives. The information we collect will be used for research in limited ways, consistent with applicable Federal law, regulations, and directives. For example, we will use your thoughts and comments in the interview, combined with thoughts and comments from other people interviewed, to provide SSA with information about the needs of people with injuries or illnesses that can be used to improve employment programs.

What are the benefits of participating?

You will not benefit directly from participation. But you may help SSA to understand the experiences and challenges of people participating in its programs. This information may help SSA improve its programs.

Will I receive any money for participating?

After completing the interview, we will **mail you a sealed envelope with a \$40 Visa gift card.**

What are the risks of participating?

Although it is not likely, it is possible that some of the questions may make you feel anxious or frustrated. You can skip those questions or stop participating. **A list of toll-free phone numbers of helpful services will be included with your thank you letter after you complete the interview.** It is your decision whether to use the resources.

For more information

For more information about the TTW evaluation, please go to <https://www.ssa.gov/disabilityresearch/ticketevaluation.html>. Please contact Mathematica at 1-XXX-XXX-XXXX if you have any questions. The project director is Denise Hoffman. For questions about your rights and welfare as a research participant, you may contact the Health Media Lab Institutional Review Board at 1-202-246-8504. The Health Media Lab Institutional Review Board is responsible for overseeing the protection of your rights and welfare as a research participant in this study.

A. Introductory script for outbound calls

1. Current Ticketholders with an assigned Ticket or evidence of service use

Hi, this is _____ with Mathematica. May I please speak to [name]?

Hi [name]. My name is _____, and I work for a company called Mathematica. The Social Security Administration hired us to study the Ticket to Work program. You might have received a letter in the mail from us recently.

We are calling you to learn more about your experiences with the Ticket to Work program, no matter how much or how little you have participated. As part of the Ticket to Work program, you might have worked with someone to help you make progress on your employment goals or answer questions about how your income could affect your Social Security disability benefits. That person might have worked for an employment network or a vocational rehabilitation agency.

What we learn from you will help the Social Security Administration do a better job of making these programs work for Ticketholders like you.

I expect our conversation will last about 40 minutes. After we finish our discussion, we will send you a \$40 Visa gift card as thanks for your time. Is now a good time to talk?

If “No” —

I understand. Should I call you back at another time that works better for you?

[If “Yes”—proceed with rescheduling.]

[If “No”— We will remove you from our call list. Thank you for your time!]

If “Yes”—proceed with interview guide. [Conference the enrollee into the meeting platform to allow for recording if the enrollee agrees.]

2. Current Ticketholders without an assigned Ticket or evidence of service use

Hi, this is _____ with Mathematica. May I please speak to [name]?

Hi [name]. My name is _____, and I work for a company called Mathematica. The Social Security Administration hired us to study the Ticket to Work program. You might have received a letter in the mail from us recently.

We are calling you to learn more about your experiences with TTW program, no matter how much or how little you have participated.

What we learn from you will help the Social Security Administration do a better job of making these programs work for Ticketholders like you.

Before we go further, I'd like to ask you a few questions to see if your experiences are a good fit for this discussion. If you are a good fit and we have a discussion, it would last about 40 minutes and we would send you a \$40 Visa gift card as thanks for your time. Is now a good time to see if you're a good fit?

If “No” —

I understand. Should I call you back at another time that works better for you?

[If “Yes”—proceed with rescheduling.]

[If “No”— We will remove you from our call list. Thank you for your time!]

If “Yes”—proceed with screening questions:

There are no wrong or right answers to these questions.

1. Probe about recent work or interest in work
2. Describe the TTW program:

The TTW program provides services to help disability beneficiaries achieve steady, long-term employment by providing them with greater choices and opportunities to go to work if they want to. As part of the Ticket to Work program, people might work with a vocational rehabilitation agency or another provider to make progress on your employment goals.

Probe about awareness of the TTW program before today.

If the respondent confirms recent work or interest in work and expresses awareness of TTW program before today, go to 4 (offer interview).

If the respondent does not (1) confirm recent work or interest in work or (2) does not express awareness of the TTW program before today, go to 3 (end screener).

3. The discussion questions I planned will not be a good fit for your experiences. Thank you for talking with me today. I appreciate your time.
4. Your perspective will be a good fit for my discussion questions. As I mentioned previously, I expect our conversation will last about 40 minutes. After we finish our discussion, we will send you a \$40 Visa gift card as thanks for your time. Is now a good time to talk?

If “No” —

I understand. Should I call you back at another time that works better for you?

[If “Yes”—proceed with rescheduling.]

[If “No”—We will remove you from our call list. Thank you for your time!]

If “Yes”—proceed with interview guide.

[Conference the enrollee into the meeting platform to allow for recording if the enrollee agrees.]

B. Introductory script for inbound calls

We will create a dedicated phone line just for managing inbound calls related to the semi-structured interviews with beneficiaries. Because this phone number will appear only on the outreach letters sent to current Ticketholders, we know the inquiries will relate to the letter itself or the interview effort.

Current Ticketholders

Hi, this is _____ with Mathematica’s Ticket to Work study team. Thank you for your call today.

Are you calling about the letter you received from SSA and Mathematica asking you to participate in a conversation about TTW?

[Pause to listen]

What is your name?

[Pause to listen]

Thanks, [name]. My name is _____, and I work for a company called Mathematica. The Social Security Administration hired us to study the Ticket to Work program. You might have received a letter in the mail from us recently.

We reached out to learn more about your experiences with TTW. What we learn from you will help the Social Security Administration do a better job of helping people who have injuries and illnesses with staying at work or returning to work.

I expect our conversation will last about 40 minutes. After we finish our discussion, we will send you a \$40 gift card as thanks for your time. Is now a good time to talk?

If “No” —

I understand. Should I call you back at another time that works better for you?

[If “Yes”—proceed with rescheduling.]

[If “No”— We will remove you from our call list. Thank you for your time!]

If “Yes”—proceed with interview guide. [Conference the enrollee into the meeting platform to allow for recording if the enrollee agrees.]

If enrollee asks other questions about TTW—

- That is a good question, but I am not the best person to answer it.
- You can contact the Ticket to Work Help Line for more information (1-866-968-7842).

C. Voicemail scripts

For security reasons, **do not use a Ticketholder’s name** when leaving a message unless the individual uses it himself or herself in their voicemail recording.

1. Voicemails to current Ticketholders with an assigned Ticket or evidence of service use

Hi. This is _____ with Mathematica. I’m calling because my company is conducting a study for the Social Security Administration. I’m following up to a letter we sent you recently.

We’d like to learn about your experiences. If you agree to speak with us, we will send you a \$40 gift card as thanks.

Please call us at [TOLL-FREE NUMBER] to schedule a time that is convenient for you to talk. Thank you and have a good day.

2. Voicemails to current Ticketholders without an assigned Ticket or evidence of service use

Hi. This is _____ with Mathematica. I’m calling about a study we’re conducting for the Social Security Administration. I’m following up to a letter we sent you recently.

We’d like to learn about your experiences. If you are eligible and agree to speak with us, we will send you a \$40 gift card as thanks.

Please call us at [TOLL-FREE NUMBER] to see if you’re eligible and to schedule a time that is convenient for you to talk. Thank you and have a good day.

3. Interview reminder for “no shows” on scheduled interviews

Hi, this is _____ with Mathematica. I am calling today because we had scheduled this time to discuss your experiences for a study we’re conducting for the Social Security Administration.

Please call us at [TOLL-FREE NUMBER] to talk now, or to schedule a time that is more convenient for you. You will also find this phone number on the letter we recently sent you.

After our interview, we will send you a \$40 gift card as thanks for your time. I look forward to talking with you. Have a good day!

4. Voicemail recording for the 1-800 number while we’re fielding interviews:

“Hello. Thank you for contacting the Ticket to Work study team. The team is available to answer questions about participating in a conversation about the Ticket to Work program, Monday through Friday, from 9am to 5pm Eastern. We are unable to take your call right now, as our team members are either unavailable or busy speaking with other people. Because your time is important to us, we ask that you please leave a message with your name, phone number, and good times for us to call you back in the next 1 to 2 business days. We will return your call as soon as possible. Thank you and have a great day.”

5. Voicemail Script after all interviews are complete:

“Hello. Thank you for your interest in participating in a conversation about the Ticket to Work program. The conversation opportunity is now closed, and we will not be conducting any more conversations. Thank you again for your interest and have a great day.”

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OMB # XXXX-XXXX
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[DATE]

[NAME]

[ADDRESS LINE 1]

[ADDRESS LINE 2]

[CITY], [STATE] [ZIP]

Dear [NAME]:

On behalf of the Social Security Administration, we thank you for sharing your experiences with the Ticket to Work program. By participating in this conversation, you helped the Ticket to Work study team better understand what the Ticket to Work experience is like for Ticketholders like you.

We have included a \$40 Visa gift card with this letter to thank you for your time and participation.

Thank you again!

Sincerely,

The Mathematica Ticket to Work study team

Support Resources

Sharing your lived experiences can be empowering. However, participation could also lead to stress, anxiety, or emotional crisis. Below are resources available if you experienced distress from sharing your experiences with us.

Resource	Description
988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Phone: 988 TTY (hearing or speech impairments): 800-799-4889 Web: https://988lifeline.org/	The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline provides free and confidential support to callers. The lifeline connects callers to a counselor located in the crisis center closest to them. This allows the counselor to provide the caller with local resources and referrals.
Give an Hour Email: Info@giveanhour.org Web: https://giveanhour.org/	Give an Hour provides a variety of mental health services to individuals and communities.
National 911 Program Phone: 911 Web: https://www.911.gov/	The National 911 Program is the federal emergency response service. Text to 911 is only available in certain locations.
FindTreatment.gov Phone: 800-662-HELP (4357) Web: https://findtreatment.gov/locator	FindTreatment.gov is a comprehensive resource from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for people seeking mental health services. You can use the website or call the phone number to find local short or longer-term support, such as trauma-informed therapists.
PTSD Coach Online Produced by the National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Web: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/apps/ptsdcoachonline/	PTSD Coach Online is for anyone who needs help with upsetting feelings. Trauma survivors, their families, or anyone coping with stress can benefit.

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