

## Impairment Related Work Expenses

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### These Medically-Related Items/Services allow a Person to Work and Have Two Different Uses:

- ◆ To reduce countable earnings, thereby avoiding the \$1,180 substantial gainful activity (SGA) rule.
- ◆ To reduce countable income, thereby increasing the amount of the monthly SSI benefit.

### The Three-Part Test for an IRWE:

- ◆ The individual with a disability must pay for the item or service.
- ◆ The item or service must be related to the person's disability.
- ◆ If person did not spend the money and receive the item or service, he or she would not be able to work.

### The Following are Examples of Items or Services that Could Qualify as IRWEs:

- ◆ Transportation to work, including costs related to modified vehicles, operating a vehicle, or paying a driver or transportation company.
- ◆ Attendant care services at home (to get a person ready for work) or at the job.
- ◆ Medical devices (e.g., wheelchairs, walkers) and prosthetic devices (e.g., artificial arms or legs).
- ◆ Residential modifications for persons who work away from home or in the home.
- ◆ Prescription drugs, medical services, the full payment or co-payments if paid by the individual.

### Alternative Methods of Allocating IRWEs:

- ◆ The full amount can be deducted in the month it is paid.
- ◆ For large expenditures, the amount can be divided by 12 and deducted monthly.
- ◆ For long-term loans or credit card payments, the monthly payment is deducted.

### IRWEs and SGA:

- ◆ The \$1,180 SGA rule for 2018 (\$1,970 for persons who are statutorily blind) applies to SSI applicants and SSDI applicants and beneficiaries.
- ◆ Monthly amount of all IRWEs is deducted from gross monthly earnings to obtain countable earnings.
- ◆ If countable earnings are less than \$1,180, after IRWE deductions, the person is not performing SGA.
- ◆ Subsidies and paid time off (vacation, personal, holiday, sick pay) will also reduce countable income.

### IRWEs and SSI Budgeting:

- ◆ The monthly amount of all IRWEs is deducted from gross wages.
- ◆ Since IRWEs are deducted after the \$65 deduction, but before the additional 50 percent deduction, the result is that the SSI payment is increased by 50 cents for every \$1 of IRWEs.

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