

PASS TIMES

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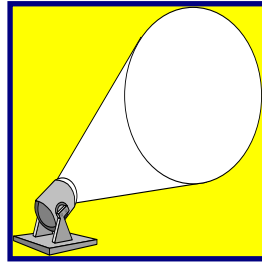
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If you have any questions about Plans for Achieving Self-Support (PASS), please contact us:

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SPOTLIGHT- AMERICA'S ONE-STOP SYSTEM



Connecting employment, education, and training services into a coherent network of resources at the local, state, and national level.

An exciting innovation called America's One-Stop Career Center System connects employment education, and training services into a coherent network of resources at the local, state and national level. This new system links the nation's employers to a variety of qualified applicants and provides job-seekers with access to employment and training opportunities next door and across the country.

Employment Service, education and training agencies, Unemployment Insurance, vocational education agencies, vocational rehabilitation agencies, community colleges, and other non-profit and for-profit organizations are united to furnish the customers with unified service. These partners are also making sure the system fully serves the disabled community.

Innovation and partnership have led to the transformation of traditional Job Service and Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) offices into One-Stop Career Centers. In many areas, community colleges and public libraries may also serve as convenient access points for the public. Customers can visit the Centers in person or directly connect to the Center's information holdings through PC or kiosk remote access. For many, an Internet browser is all that's needed! While State systems may reflect a range of titles – No Wrong Door, Workforce Development, Our State "Works!" – all are affiliated with America's One-Stop Career Center System.

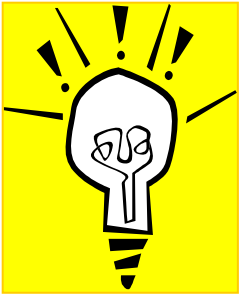
The partners in Center service teams may also vary from State to State, but there's always a dependable menu of services. Career counseling and assessment, employer and job-seeker access to automated job postings, information on job trends, assistance in filing Unemployment Insurance claims, and help in finding Federal or State dollars to cover some or all of the costs of training opportunities are some of the services offered. Job-seekers and employers can learn about the performance of various employment and training providers so they can make informed choices about usage.

The customer's input was critical to the creation of America's One-Stop Career Centers; it remains extremely important in determining the service offerings of the Centers. The local business community and job-seekers continue to provide commentary –and constructive criticism –on the quality of services at the Centers.

For more information on "One-Stop(s)" <http://www.doleta.gov/> or, in New York: <http://www.workforcenewyork.org/> or call: 212-337-2139.

To locate the One-Stop in your area:

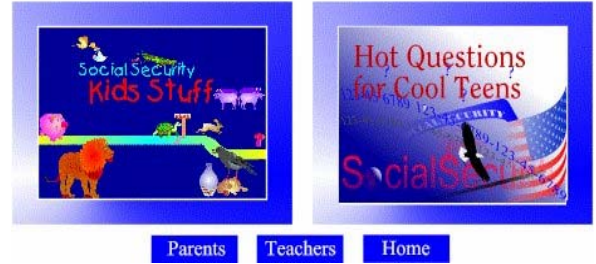
http://www.labor.state.ny.us/working_ny/workforce_development/wiaonestops.htm



DID YOU KNOW?

SSA's website has a section for parents, teachers, and kids. The "Kids Stuff" section is nicely animated. Small children can click on an animal to narrate the section. The children's sections are very basic and talk about saving and planning for the future.

<http://www.ssa.gov/kids/>



Parents Teachers Home

The parents section provides information on everything from obtaining Social Security numbers for children to financial planning and benefits advisement for parents of children with disabilities. The teacher's section contains lesson plans, fact sheets and sample quizzes.



Out and About in New York State

In addition to the job of processing requests for PASS, the PASS Cadre is active in participating in outreach activities to spread the word "work incentives can help people with disabilities while working". So far this year, we have participated in more than 20 meetings, workshops and conferences. The audiences consist of those who are interested in having more income or who work with beneficiaries who express an interest in having more income. Networking with Benefit Planning Assistance & Outreach Projects statewide and Local Work Incentive Networks throughout the region, our goal is to inform the audiences of the work incentives and encourage them to develop a plan for trying to work.

Knowledge of the use of work incentives can be a powerfully enabling tool. A person who identifies the "I could work but..." situations that keep them from working can see if there is a work incentive that can free them from their fear. Examples of things we hear: I could work but if I lose my health care...; I could work but special transportation cost too much and is unreliable; I could work but what if I have a relapse and I can never get my checks back.

Provisions such as the extension of Medicare, 1619(b) Medicaid eligibility, PASS, EPE and expedited reinstatement are just a few work incentives that can address the individuals needs. By getting "out and about" to increase the knowledge of the work incentives we hope to increase interest in working.

Number of PASSes increases ...

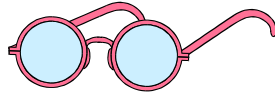
As of March 2002, there were 1649 PASS plans in effect nationwide. That's an increase of 49 since the last report in December 2001.

The states with the largest increases were Wisconsin, **New York**, Florida and Pennsylvania, in that order.

Congratulations and many thanks to everyone involved in promoting the PASS program as a valuable tool in helping persons with disabilities get the items and services they need to get the job they want!



At a Glance...



EXPEDITED REINSTATEMENT

Many individuals with disabilities would like to try to do some work but fear they will lose their benefits and then be unable to continue working or have to stop working. Before the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act was passed in December 1999, if an individual's benefits ended because of work, and then the work ended, the individual had to complete a new application for disability benefits and wait several months for a new medical determination.

Now, if an individual's benefits ended because of work and earnings, they can request to have their benefits started again without having to complete a new application. This process is called "*expedited reinstatement*." It was effective January 1, 2001.

An individual can request to have benefits start again if the individual:

- Stopped receiving SSDI or SSI benefits because of earnings from work;
- Is unable to work or perform SGA because of an impairment(s) that is the same as or related to the impairment(s) that allowed the individual to get benefits earlier; and
- Makes the request within 5 years from the month benefits ended.

While SSA determines whether the individual can get benefits again, SSA can pay provisional (temporary) benefits for up to 6 months. These benefits include payments, and Medicare/Medicaid coverage. If the expedited reinstatement request is denied, repayment of provisional benefits is usually not required.

SSDI-- For SSDI beneficiaries requesting expedited reinstatement of benefits, an eligible spouse and dependent children may also get benefits. If the request is approved, SSA can pay for up to 12 months before the request was actually filed, if the individual's condition kept them from working.

During the first 24 months an individual is eligible for benefits, SSA will not pay benefits for any month(s) in which the individual performs SGA, but Medicare coverage will continue. Once the individual has received 24 months of benefits, which do not have to be in a row, the individual qualifies for a new trial work period and extended period of eligibility.

<http://www.ssa.gov/work/ResourcesToolkit/redbook.html#BenAgain>

Using a PASS in Transition Planning

Any transition student who receives SSI benefits, or could qualify for them, can have a PASS.



The Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS) is a work incentive that allows an individual to set aside income and/or resources to obtain items and/or services that are needed in order to achieve a work goal. For example, an individual may set aside money for post-secondary education, job-coaching support, transportation, job-related equipment, or to start a business. Income and/or resources set aside in a PASS do not count in determining SSI benefits.

If a student under age 18 cannot satisfy the SSI income eligibility requirement *only* because his or her parent's income is too high (deemed income), the student may apply for a PASS through which the parents can set aside enough income to make the student eligible for SSI benefits. In New York State, the student would then qualify for Medicaid coverage as well.

A PASS is similar to the IEP/Transition Plan in that it establishes job-related goals and objectives.

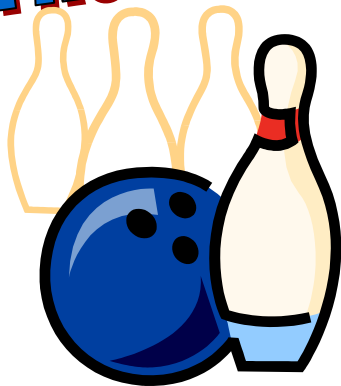
The basic requirements for a PASS include:

- 🕒 A specific, feasible occupational goal.
- 🕒 A defined timetable.
- 🕒 The need for income or resources, other than SSI benefits, to be set aside.
- 🕒 An explanation of expenditures to be covered by the set-aside funds.

A PASS can be used to pay for items and/or services that cannot be obtained from other sources such as TAP, PELL, scholarships, and VESID or CBVH. For example, VESID can cover the cost of vehicle modifications, but not the vehicle. A PASS can be used to obtain the vehicle. The average cost of a vehicle that meets modification requirements is \$25,000 - \$30,000. If a student will need a modified vehicle in order to work, funding of the vehicle should be included as early as possible in the IEP/Transition Plan. Many times the need for special transportation is not considered until the student is ready to begin their job search. There is not enough time to set aside sufficient funds to obtain a vehicle and the job search must be delayed.

For more information on work supports for transition aged youth, and helpful resource links, see SSA's website for youth with disabilities.

PASS in progress → **Chuck's Bowling and Sports Emporium**



The only thing Charles Hartmann liked more than running his own business was bowling. He had to stop both in 1985 because of a back injury. Chuck wasn't about to let anything keep him down forever. In addition to running a pro-shop, landscaping company and wood cutting business, he was a professional bowler for many years. He is used to long hours and hard work to get what he wants. He just had to figure out how he could be close to his passion (Sports) and support his family, despite his limitations. Chuck decided he wanted to have his own sporting goods shop.

Having owned and operated businesses previously, Mr. Hartmann was well aware of the time, hard work, and money involved in starting up and operating a business. Mr. Hartmann started working with VESID, New York State's Vocational Rehabilitation agency. VESID referred Mr. Hartmann to a business consultant for help in formulating a detailed business plan. After a lot of thought, research, and preparation, Mr. Hartmann's business plan was completed and approved by VESID. After completion of the business plan, it became apparent that VESID could not provide enough funds to cover all of the startup costs for his proposed business. Chuck submitted a Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS) for assistance with the business startup costs that were beyond VESID's means.

Chuck had already done his homework. He had a solid business plan that had already been approved by VESID. The next problem was that he did not have enough income of his own to cover the additional items he needed. (Many people are under the impression that a PASS is a grant and that Social Security gives them the money they need. It is the individual's own income or resources that go into a PASS.) However, Mr. Hartmann soon jumped that hurdle as well. He was able to obtain an Economic Development loan through the Greene County Planning Department. His PASS was amended to request assistance with repaying the loan he obtained to get the last of the items he needed. Chuck's Bowling and Sports Emporium was in business! His store is located at 233 Mansion Street in Coxsack, New York.

Chuck's business survived the first year. He had gross sales of almost \$32,000. He was able to pay the rent, utilities, and basic operating costs of the business. During his most recent progress review, Mr. Hartmann was asked what it would take to push the business into the profit zone. His statement, "I'm already working on that." Chuck has already expanded his business to include NASCAR items and has recently developed a website. He is trying different methods of advertising as well. His PASS was amended to help him obtain fund some of these items. By next year, we hope to move Chuck's PASS into our Success Stories column. Go Chuck!!!

Check out Chuck's website: <http://www.chucksnascarshop.com/>

Using a PASS to help startup a business...

For many individuals with disabilities, the thought of starting their own business is appealing. They feel they can control their own work environment and hours of work. Many would like to work out of their own homes, at their own pace. A PASS can be used to help with the costs of starting up a business. For more information on how a PASS can be used to help startup a business, contact one of our PASS Cadre's. (See page 1 for contact information)